



TOGETHER IN THE SPIRIT

Bi-monthly Catholic Magazine

July 2022—Issue 11

TOGETHER IN THE SPIRIT

The Healing Prayer Ministry Team are delighted to resume publication of our bi-monthly magazine and we look forward to an uninterrupted run from here on. Thanks be to God for His help, support and encouragement through very difficult times.

We are very grateful the Team has managed to keep having our weekly prayer meetings throughout the pandemic, mostly via the internet and were happy to be back in Church at the earliest opportunity. We prayed throughout for our community and for all those who kept in touch and also for the many people we did not know but who appealed to us for healing prayer. May Almighty God continue to pour out His Healing Grace upon us all.

We are sorry to report that Father Tom is still ill and remains in hospital. We assure him of our prayers and hope he continues to make a good recovery. Father Tom has retired due to his poor health. A new priest, Fr. Michael Harwood, has been appointed Parish Administrator and will start in September. Please keep them both in your prayers.

You may contact the Healing Prayer Ministry Team, for any reason, on the numbers below.

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The need to care for and support each other will continue, and we are just a phone call or email away. We will continue to accept and pray for all your requests and look forward to seeing you at our events.

We have Praise, Adoration and Healing Ministry Prayer in the Parish Hall on Thursdays at 7.00 pm. We also have a Holy Hour at 3.00pm on First Fridays. A recent addition to our 'menu' is 'Chill and Chat' - refreshment and an informal chat in the Parish Hall, once a month, on a Monday morning, open to all. However, just as we were about to publish, we were told that we may have to move to a new location in the near future. Please watch for news on Facebook or the Church Bulletin or the website.

There will be a Holy Hour for Life on Saturday 3rd September in Holy Cross Church led by Fr. Martin Kershaw. For all other events please watch Facebook and the Church Bulletin.

RECOMMENDED VIEWING AND LISTENING



We would like to remind you of some of the people we recommended to you in previous editions and who have been encouraging us during the recent difficult times...



Fr. Don Galloway: From runaway teen to Marian Priest. Fr. Don has a fervent devotion to Our Lady, is a great supporter of the Rosary and has recently encouraged people to follow a great saint for our times, St. Joseph. He is an author and a regular on YouTube.

Fr. Chris Alar: He is another Marian Priest who is a well known author, he produced the popular "Divine Mercy 101" and "Explaining the Faith" DVD series. He is a regular on YouTube and he is host of the EWTN show Living Divine Mercy.



Fr. Mark Goring: A member of the Companions of the Cross and the host of his self-titled YouTube channel. He has hosted various TV shows on ministry and has hosted weekly Bible Teaching Series on Radio Maria.

... and would also like to introduce you to some new ones:

Ralph Martin is the president of Renewal Ministries, an organization devoted to Catholic renewal and evangelization. Renewal Ministries is the sponsor of a popular weekly Catholic television and radio program distributed throughout the world – and engages in a wide variety of mission projects in over 30 countries.



Peter Herbeck is the vice president and director of missions for Renewal Ministries. For the past 30 years, he has been actively involved in evangelization and Catholic renewal throughout the U.S., Canada, Africa, and Eastern Europe. He hosts and co-hosts weekly TV programmes. He is a writer and is also on YouTube.



GOSPEL REFLECTION

by Cathy Nolan,
Mary TV. May 23, 2022.

The Gospel for Holy Mass on Sunday, May 22, 2022 was from John 14:23-29. I want to quote one verse: “Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Do not let your hearts be troubled or afraid...” (Jn 14:27)

Jesus was very careful to explain to the Apostles that His peace is not the kind of peace that the world offers. They should not look for worldly peace. Only Jesus can give us peace. But don’t we still fall into the trap of looking for worldly answers to our anxieties? Hoping for peace from that source?

Here is a beautiful, inspired, and absolutely true description of where to find true peace, written by Caryll Houselander many years ago. Everything Caryll said so many years ago applies to us today! Please read this short excerpt slowly and prayerfully. She is speaking to us right now. Our Mother is speaking to us through her. This is how we will bring in the Triumph!

“Do not let your hearts be troubled or afraid.” Too many anxious Christians today think that their efforts to preach and teach and enter into outward activities can do more to save the world than the surrender of their souls to God, to become Christ-bearers. They believe that they can do more than our Lady did, and they have not time to stop to consider the absurdity of this.

They fear that if the world goes on hurling itself into disaster, as it seems to be doing now, Christ’s kingdom may be defeated. This is not so; Christ has given his word that he will be with us and in his little flock until the end of the world.

However dark our days seem to be for Christianity, they are not so dark as the night following the crucifixion must have seemed to the apostles. For that night Christ had already prepared them. He told them to wait: to wait for the coming of the Holy Spirit. He told them that he was going away, that they would no longer see him and know the consolation of his presence with them, but that it was better for them that

he should go, and that the condition for the coming of the Holy Spirit, through whom he would live on in them, was his going (Jn 16:7-8).

Christ himself prepared for his Resurrection by resting in the tomb, just as he had prepared for his birth by resting in his Mother's womb. He did not call the legions of angels he could have called to fight back the forces of evil that had crucified him; he simply lay in the tomb at rest and, at the appointed moment in time, rose from death to renew the life of the whole world.

The apostles, like the modern apostles, were afraid, and with good cause.... they, with the Mother of Christ, alone stood for Christ's kingdom, and the murderous hatred of Christ's enemies pointed straight at them.

But Christ told them simply to wait in the city until the Holy Spirit came to them; not to run away, not to make plans of their own, not to be troubled, with either their own recent failure and sin or concerning the danger that fenced them all around, but only to wait, with his Mother among them, for the coming of the Comforter who would make them strong, heal their wounds, wash the stains from their souls, and be their joy.

Christ does not change, the preparation for the coming of the Spirit is the same today as two thousand years ago, whether it be for the rebirth of Christ in one soul that is in the hard winter, or for the return of Christ from the grave, whose blood is shed again by the martyrs.

The preparation is the same: the still, quiet mind, acceptance, and remaining close to the Mother of God, resting in her rest while the life of the world grew within her towards the flowering of everlasting joy.

Caryll Houselander († 1954) was a British artist, poet, and spiritual author. From The Risen Christ. Sheed & Ward Publishers, 1958.

Our job is to remain close to the Mother of God, resting in her rest while the life of the world grows within her – Jesus, Our Life! This is how we will be safe and save others! Our Lady only wants one thing, to be with us and help us to wait for her Son. She said, early on in the apparitions:

Saturday, February 25, 1984: “Know that I love all of you. Know that you are all mine. To no one do I desire to give more than to you. Come to me all of you.

If we stay close to Mary, she will teach us to wait for her Son, to pray as she prays, and to believe as she believes. In this will be our hope and our victory. Do not let your hearts be troubled or afraid!

In Jesus, Mary and Joseph! Cathy Nolan, Mary TV.

SAINT OF THE DAY:



Early Christian martyr St Viviana (also known as Bibiana) and her sister St Demetria were both martyred for their faith in a purge of Christians conducted in 363 by the brutal prefect of Rome, Apronianus.

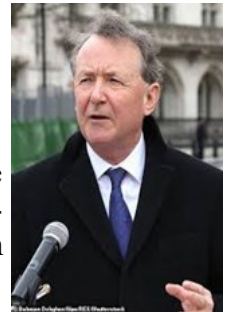
The Prefect had gone on the rampage after he lost an eye in an accident and became convinced that Christians were to blame. He killed large numbers of people, including the girls' parents Flavian and Dafrosa.

St Viviana and her sister were kept under house arrest for five months and virtually starved. When they were summoned to court, Demetria stood up and declared her faith once more before she fainted and died. Viviana continued to refuse to renounce her faith and was taken from the court and flogged to death. An ancient church in Rome is dedicated to her.

AMERICAN JUDGES EXPECTED TO CHOOSE LIFE ?

Lord David Alton, May 11th 2022.

Earlier this week, a document was leaked from the United States Supreme Court indicating that the Justices intend to overturn the country's national abortion law, commonly referred to as the Roe v Wade decision.



Roe v Wade is not supported by the majority of women. Some states, New York for example, have already indicated they would introduce more relaxed abortion laws. According to the think tank Guttmacher Institute, originally a subsidiary of Planned Parenthood, a total of 16 states (plus the District of Columbia) have laws that protect the “right”

to abortion to varying degrees. By contrast, 26 states are “certain or likely” to seek tougher restrictions or bans if *Roe v Wade* is overturned.

There are many — including those in our country — who have rushed to declare that the Supreme Court’s tentative decision somehow goes against the will of the people. This disingenuous argument claims that the law is settled, that there is little demand for change, and that it amounts to the unnecessary reopening of a wound that has long ago healed.

The data from polling suggests otherwise. A recent Marist Poll from January 2022 shows that over 60 per cent of Americans reject the 1973 *Roe v Wade* ruling, and support changes that either ban abortion or return the matter to the states. Crucially for those who dishonestly frame this debate as men telling women what they can and cannot do with their bodies, this was also the view of 60 per cent of women surveyed.

Indeed the polling shows the current status quo provided by Roe v Wade is not supported by the majority of women in America. Most women believe there should be significant restrictions on abortion. The polling shows that 69 per cent of women believe that abortion should be available, at most, during the first three months of pregnancy; allowed only in cases of rape, incest or to save the life of the mother; or not permitted at all.

The figures also suggest a more nuanced attitude in reality from people who describe themselves as pro-choice, with a majority (52 per cent) believing abortion should be restricted in the same circumstances described above.

Most women in America (82 per cent) think laws can exist that protect both the health and well-being of a woman and the life of the unborn baby. This view is supported by 76 per cent of people who consider themselves pro-choice, and 79 per cent of people who identify as Democrats. This polling shows real concerns about abortion from across the spectrum.

The same is true of public opinion in the UK. Polling from Savanta ComRes found that 60 per cent of people, including 70 per cent of women, believe that the current 24-week limit for abortion should be reduced. 93 per cent of women surveyed said someone considering

having an abortion should have a legal right to independent counseling from a source that has no financial interest in her decision, and 91 per cent of women agree that sex-selective abortion should be explicitly banned by the law.

Most topically for the UK, 76 per cent of people agree that doctors should be required by law to verify in person that a woman seeking an abortion is not under pressure from a third party — something that is, of course, much harder to detect under the current arrangements where abortion pills can be sent by post following a telephone consultation. Meanwhile, just one per cent support abortion up to birth — the long-cherished goal of pro-choice campaigners.

In Great Britain, there have been almost 10 million abortions since the passing of the Abortion Act in 1967. In 2020, there were over 200,000 abortions with an average of an abortion every two and a half minutes.

The US has one of the highest abortion rates in the world — beaten only by a small number of countries in a list of shame that includes China, Cuba and Kazakhstan. At least America is rare amongst developed countries for continuing public debate — albeit sadly often overheated — on the value of life with respect to abortion.

Nonetheless, many people are surprised to learn that the median time limit for abortion in US states far exceeds that of EU countries where the median is 12 weeks. How many would guess that Virginia, for example, allows abortions up to 25 weeks compared to Denmark, which allows them for up to less than half that time (12 weeks). Our own country, regrettably, has a poor record in this regard — something I hope will be addressed given that scientific evidence now accepts that foetal viability is 22 weeks, rather than the 24-week limit set in law.

What happens in the United States matters beyond its borders. Those of us who have been arguing against the UK's laws in this area for decades can hope this is the start of the tide turning. The draft decision from the Supreme Court represents a rare opportunity to push back against a law that has led to the deaths of over 63 million US babies since 1973.

The US Supreme Court overturned Roe v Wade on 24th June 2022. Justice Alito wrote: "the high court decisions reaffirming Roe "must be overruled" because they were "egregiously wrong," the arguments "exceptionally weak" and so "damaging" that they amounted to "an abuse of judicial authority."

PRAYER FOR STRENGTH AND HEALING

by Dave Caldwell

Every day I need you Lord, this day especially. I need some extra strength to face what is to come. This day more than any other day I need to feel you near me. Please fortify my courage and help me overcome my fear.

By myself I cannot meet the challenge of the hour. How much we frail human creatures need a higher power. Please sustain us in all that life may bring.

Dear Lord, please hold my trembling hand. Be with me Lord this day I need your guiding hand at work in all I do. I need to know your blessed presence ever near me. Amen.

THE HOLY SPIRIT PRAYER

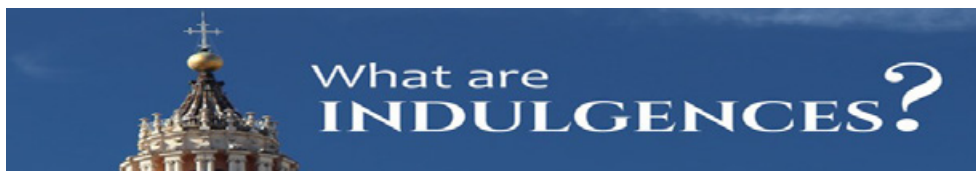
BY DAVID CALDWELL.

Holy Spirit, guide me.
Holy Spirit, love me as I am.
Holy Spirit, help me in all things.
Holy Spirit, teach me your ways.
Holy Spirit, lead me always to the
 Father and the Son.
Holy Spirit, protect me from all evil.
Holy Spirit, purify my heart.
Holy Spirit, prompt me when I speak.
Holy Spirit, be with me at rest.
Holy Spirit, guide me to Divine Truth.



AMEN.

When we pray for the Spirit's help ... we will simply fall down at the Lord's feet in our weakness. There we will find the victory and power that comes from His love.



Part 1 of 2

Indulgences are making a welcome reappearance in the spiritual life of Catholics. After centuries of slow decline in their use, punctuated by decades of almost complete neglect after the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965), the power of indulgences to enliven a sense of charity and to sharpen a healthy sorrow for sin is finally being rediscovered.

Three popes have led the way. In 1968, Pope Paul VI (1962-1978) laid the foundations for this renewal by simplifying the rules on indulgences and redrafting the list of designated works and prayers. Pope Paul's reorganization made it possible to share more deeply in the Church's "treasury of merit" by doing simple things such as bearing patiently the inconveniences of daily life in reparation for sin.

During his pontificate, Pope John Paul II (1978-2005) oversaw two revisions, including recognising the Akathist hymn of Eastern Catholics as an indulgenced prayer on par with the Marian Rosary prayed by Roman Catholics. Then, in 1998 he withstood strong criticism from some Protestant leaders when he announced that participation in millennial celebrations of the Catholic Church would be enriched by a plenary indulgence.

Finally, Pope Benedict XVI made several references to indulgences in his informal addresses. He granted a plenary indulgence to those participating in person or in spirit in the celebration of the 150th anniversary of the Marian apparitions at Lourdes.

Today, indulgences are grouped into only two types, partial (temporal) and plenary (eternal). The category depends on whether the indulgence in question applies to some or all of the punishment a given member of the faithful owes for sin. Temporal punishment for sin stands in contrast to eternal punishment for sin. Eternal punishment is due to unrepented mortal sin which is everlasting. Without end. Thus, eternal. That is the punishment due to mortal sin.

Temporal punishment for sin is a punishment which will have a definite

end, when the soul is purified and is permitted into heaven. Thus temporary. Temporal punishment for sin is that which is experienced in Purgatory. It stands in contrast to eternal punishment for sin.

The fact that indulgences apply only to the punishment for sin, and not to the forgiveness of sin itself, should not be overlooked. Indulgences are not, and never have been, ways to seek forgiveness for sins. The Church's constant teaching should be clear: Indulgences can be applied only to the punishment that is due for sins already forgiven, either in sacramental confession (in the case of mortal or venial sins) or by personal expressions of sorrow (in the case of venial sins only).

The Catechism says: 1035 The teaching of the Church affirms the existence of hell and its eternity. Immediately after death the souls of those who die in a state of mortal sin descend into hell, where they suffer the punishments of hell, "eternal fire." The chief punishment of hell is eternal separation from God, in whom alone man can possess the life and happiness for which he was created and for which he longs.

A good illustration of this is neglecting the Mass. The Catholic Church teaches that one needs to attend the Mass every Sunday, on pain of mortal sin. If we place such a low value upon the worship of God and the sacrifice of His Son for our salvation, that we miss it whenever there is a football game or whenever we want to get a new hairdo, then we have cut ourselves off from the grace of God.

If we persist in insulting God this way, until we die, without repenting that we have neglected the Mass, we will merit eternal punishment. However, if we repent and go to Confession, then God forgives the sin and the eternal punishment. Depending upon the intensity of your repentance and upon your behaviour the rest of your life, that determines whether you will have to suffer any temporary punishments in Purgatory.

We suffer temporary punishments for sin in the afterlife in order to purify the soul. Most of us will die in an imperfect state of grace. God, in His mercy, will cleanse us of the imperfections so that we can enter heaven to receive our eternal reward.

Some will not endure any punishments in the afterlife as they will suffer enough in this world to cleanse them of all their sins before they die. These are exceptional and heroic people, who dedicate themselves

to God and to love of their fellow man. This is actually the goal that we should all aim to achieve.

Any Christian who, in a spirit of penitence for sins, asks God for the deeper share in the infinite merits of Jesus Christ that indulgences offer can use them to move ever closer to God — who wants nothing else than for us to be happy with Him forever.

***Note: The authoritative document** in indulgences is the revised 'Enchiridion Indulgentiarum' and is the product of the Vatican Press. Pope Paul's Apostolic Constitution Indulgentiarum Doctrina of January 1, 1967, had enjoined that the redaction of the Enchiridion would keep only the outstanding devotional prayers and practices that are still relevant to our day.*

The 1968 edition, entitled "Enchiridion Indulgentiarum-Normae et Concessionones" is a remarkable fulfilment of the Holy Father's injunction. It is especially noteworthy because of its evangelical simplicity, its emphasis on Holy Scripture and contemporary expression of Church teaching, and above all in its insistence on the supreme importance of the individual's devout, loving acts.

<https://www.ewtn.com/catholicism/library/ways-to-gain-an-indulgence-4857>



DM Reflection 148

Mercy for those in Purgatory

When a loved one dies, it is easy to instantly presume they are in Heaven and are no longer in need of our prayers. But one of the greatest gifts we can offer to those who have gone before us is our prayers. It's true that every person who dies in a state of grace (meaning they do not have unrepented mortal sin), will enter into the glories of Heaven, eventually. However, what we may often forget is that in order to enter into the full glory of the presence of the Most Holy Trinity, every last sin, no matter how small, must be purged away. This is Purgatory, and Purgatory is a clear and definitive teaching of our faith. But Purgatory, itself, is so easily misunderstood. It's not a place we go to be punished as a result of God's anger. Rather, it's a state in which we enter our final purification on account of

God's love. It is His burning love that has the effect of purifying us of every last attachment we have to sin, every bad habit, every omission of charity, every foul thought, everything that cannot enter into Heaven with us. Purgatory is an act of God's Mercy and we are called to help pour forth that Mercy on others through our prayers, sacrifices, and indulgences offered on their behalf after they pass from this Earth (See Diary #748).

Think about your loved ones who have gone before you. Let your love for them compel you to pray for them, especially today. Trust that the prayers, sacrifices and indulgences you offer for them are the greatest gift of Mercy you can give.

Lord, I pray for (mention a loved one who has passed) and pray for Your Divine Mercy to flood his/her soul. Purify every sin away and grant entrance into the glories of Your Heavenly Kingdom. I pray also for all holy souls in most need of Your Mercy. Jesus, I trust in You.

Mother Teresa's Holy Hour of Eucharistic Adoration



Every Holy Hour we make so pleases the Heart of Jesus that it will be recorded in Heaven and retold for all eternity. It opens up the floodgates of God's Merciful Love upon the world.

Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament is the best time you will spend on earth. It will make your soul everlastingly more glorious and beautiful in heaven. A holy hour of Adoration helps bring everlasting peace to your soul and in your family. It brings us a greater love for Jesus, for each other, and for the poor. Every holy hour deepens our union with Him and bears much fruit.

Nowhere on earth are we more welcomed or loved than by Jesus in the Eucharist. When you look at the crucifix, you understand how much Jesus loved you. When you look at the Sacred Host you understand

how much Jesus loves you now. This is why we need Perpetual Eucharistic Adoration in every parish throughout the entire world.

What we need is for every parish to come before Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament in Holy Hours of prayer.

On the Cross Jesus said “I thirst”. From the Blessed Sacrament Jesus continues to say to each of us “I thirst”. He thirsts for our personal love, our intimacy, our union with Him in the Blessed Sacrament.

When the Sisters are exhausted, up to their eyes in work; when all seems to go awry, they spend an hour in prayer before the Blessed Sacrament. This practice has never failed to bear fruit: they experience peace and strength.

If you are looking for vocations, as a community have adoration often, every day if possible. Once the Missionaries of Charity undertook daily adoration, their vocations doubled.

I know I would not be able to work one week if it were not for that continual force coming from Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament (during my Holy Hour of Adoration). To be alone with Jesus in adoration and intimate union with Him is the Greatest Gift of Love – the tender love of Our Father in Heaven.

Perpetual Eucharistic Adoration offers to our people the opportunity to join those in religious life to pray for the salvation of the world, souls everywhere and peace on earth. We cannot underestimate the power of prayer and the difference it will make in our world. Jesus has made Himself the Bread of Life to give us life. Night and day, He is there.

If you really want to grow in love, come back to the Eucharist, come back to that Adoration. Our hours of adoration will be special hours of reparation for sins, and intercession for the needs of the whole world, exposing the sinful, sick and suffering humanity to the healing, sustaining and transforming rays of Jesus, radiating from the Eucharist. Each one of us is a co-worker of Christ – we must labour hard to carry Him to the hearts where He has not yet been known and loved...But, unless we have Jesus, we cannot give Him; that is why we need the Eucharist. Spend as much time as possible in front of the Blessed Sacrament and

He will fill you with His strength and His power.

Perpetual adoration is the most beautiful thing you could ever think of doing. People are hungry for God. Imagine for a moment that we are living in Jesus' time and He has invited us to visit with Him and spend some quiet time getting to know Him better. Being aware of who He was, we would be humbled and honoured by such an invitation. The good news is that Jesus is here with us TODAY – body, blood, soul and divinity – in the Holy Eucharist. Although Jesus comes to us under the appearance of bread and wine, His presence is as real to us NOW as He was flesh-and-blood-real to His disciples when he walked this earth. He can perform miracles, heal us, teach us, and love us. We can talk to Him and He can speak to us through His Word and through the Holy Spirit who lives in us through our baptism and confirmation.

Jesus has made Himself the Bread of Life to give us life. Night and day, He is there. If you really want to grow in love, come back to the Eucharist, come back to that Adoration.

From: 'Thoughts and Prayers for the Faithful' (Internet) March 2 2021

THE SONG OF VERONICA

by John Harwood-Stevenson.

There you are girl, in the upper room given to you by your parents on your 14th birthday. Now a young woman, a daughter of Israel, soon to be married. The window looks out on to the street, light comes through it. On your knees fine cloth of white silk. Embroider it for your wedding. You look at it and wonder what pattern.



Noise in the street outside gathering a crowd, shouts fiercely full of hatred. The noise grows, then the tread of Roman soldiers, your heart grows cold. What cruelty is coming. The shouting now a storm. Words take shape.

“Crucify him!” Again and again, the voice of the crowd.

What poor man are they hating? What has he done? Dare she look out of the window? She will dare, she rises trembling. She looks out, looks down. There below is a space in the crowd, soldiers surround it.

In it a man lying. A beam of wood across his back. Blood on the robe he is wearing. She knows what the beam is for, the man will be nailed to it. Then it will be fixed on a post, his feet will be nailed to that.

Sight often seen in a land ruled by Romans. The man staggers to his feet. He raises his head. He looks up at Veronica, she knows him. She heard him preaching in the Temple. People said “No man ever spoke as this man speaks.” His look pierces her more than his words.

She is carried as if by a great wind, out of her room, down the stairs. She opens the door onto the street. How will she dare? What will the neighbours say? Will she be safe in the crowd? She forces her way past men and women. She sidesteps a soldier; he looks at her amazed. She stands in front of the man. His face bruised. Bloody from a crown of thorns.

That face – what can she do? She can show love. With the fine silk cloth, she wipes that face. For a moment the crowd falls silent, in that silence he says her name. Then the soldiers hurry him on, push her out of the way.

She gets back to the house, shuts the door behind her. In her room she looks at the cloth. His face is on it. She weeps but not with fear. She weeps for love. She weeps with courage. He called me by my name.



The Bread of Life:

God provided the mysterious food called manna for the Israelites during their time in the desert. However, they were told not to stockpile the manna but to gather only what they needed for one day. Jesus told his disciples not to worry about tomorrow. He said: When you pray to your heavenly Father you are to say ‘give us this day our daily bread’ no matter how difficult life may be, for those who trust in God, and who live a day at a time, the manna falls every day.

THE CRIB AND THE CROSS

Deacon Dave (Retired)



GENESIS 1 v 1 ‘In the beginning God created the Heavens and the Earth’.

BOOK OF REVELATION 1 v 8 ‘I am the Alpha and the Omega’ says the Lord God, ‘who is and who was and who is to come. The Almighty’.

The BIBLE is God’s Word; revealing His eternal Love for all humanity – His loving creation.

In my music and prayer room, I am surrounded by my favourite religious pictures and statues and many religious books that I can refer to any time when writing articles and homilies. In front of me there is a beautiful crib with lovely figures of Mary, Joseph and baby Jesus and, perhaps strangely you may think, there is a crucifix next to the crib.

As I meditated one day, focusing on these two items, the crib and the crucifix, I thought on salvation history: Mary’s fiat, the birth of the Christ Child, the Holy Family, the ministry of our Lord, and then finally - His Passion, Death and Resurrection. The Alpha and the Omega. The Crib and The Cross.

In those two wonderous objects salvation history is summed up: God the Father’s redemptive love through His Son, Jesus. In the crib I see the young Jewish girl, chosen by God the Father to have an immense role in His plan of redemption for humankind. But still, God gives free will to everyone, and all creation waited for Mary’s response to the Archangel Gabriel. And what a response: ‘Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord, let it be to me according to your word’ (Lk 1 v. 38). Mary submitted herself totally to the Will of God. The little Jewish girl had no idea what was to come, but she had no hesitation in trusting in God.

And looking back to the Cross, there I see Jesus, having given His everything. Not just in His passive will, but because HE LOVES US! He wanted to suffer and to die so that we might have life and have it to the

full. To do that He submitted Himself totally to the Will of His Father: ...'not my will, but yours be done'. (Luke 22 v. 42).

And so much more can come from that simple meditation on the Crib and the Cross.

In the Gospel of Matthew (Ch 16 v 24) Jesus says:... 'if any man would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me..'. Mary took up her cross when she said yes to God: no place to give birth to the Saviour of the world except a stable, a prophecy telling her heart would be pierced with sorrow, her sharing in His Passion.

Jesus' words are for us too: take up your cross and follow me. One of the problems in our western world today is that we have forgotten or perhaps never heard those words of Jesus. We don't want to take up our cross, we would rather enjoy life as we want it, remove anything that stops us having our own way, forget that our actions always have consequences, make everything about us and forget God. All in an attempt to gain happiness. It doesn't work. Jesus told us what we must do, and that is the way to eternal life.

Instead of running away we should offer up our sufferings, trials and joys to Jesus who gave His life so we could have ours and have it to the full. St. Therese did just that. She discovered the heart of the Gospel message through her Little Way: GOD LOVES US! ALLELUIA AMEN!



REFLECTION:

Disturb us, O Lord, when we are too pleased with ourselves;
When our dreams have come true because we dreamed too little;
When we have arrived safely because we have sailed too close to the shore.

Stir us, O Lord, to dare more boldly, to venture to more seas, where storms shall show your mastery, where on losing sight of the land we shall find more stars.

In the name of Him who pushed back the horizon of our hopes and invited the brave to follow him.



UNIVERSALISM

Definition: *"Christian universalism would insist that Christ's atonement did atone for everyone's sins" It would suggest that hell may be empty.*

An explanation of the heresy of Universalism was given recently in a Catholic Church Bulletin on July 3rd, 2022.

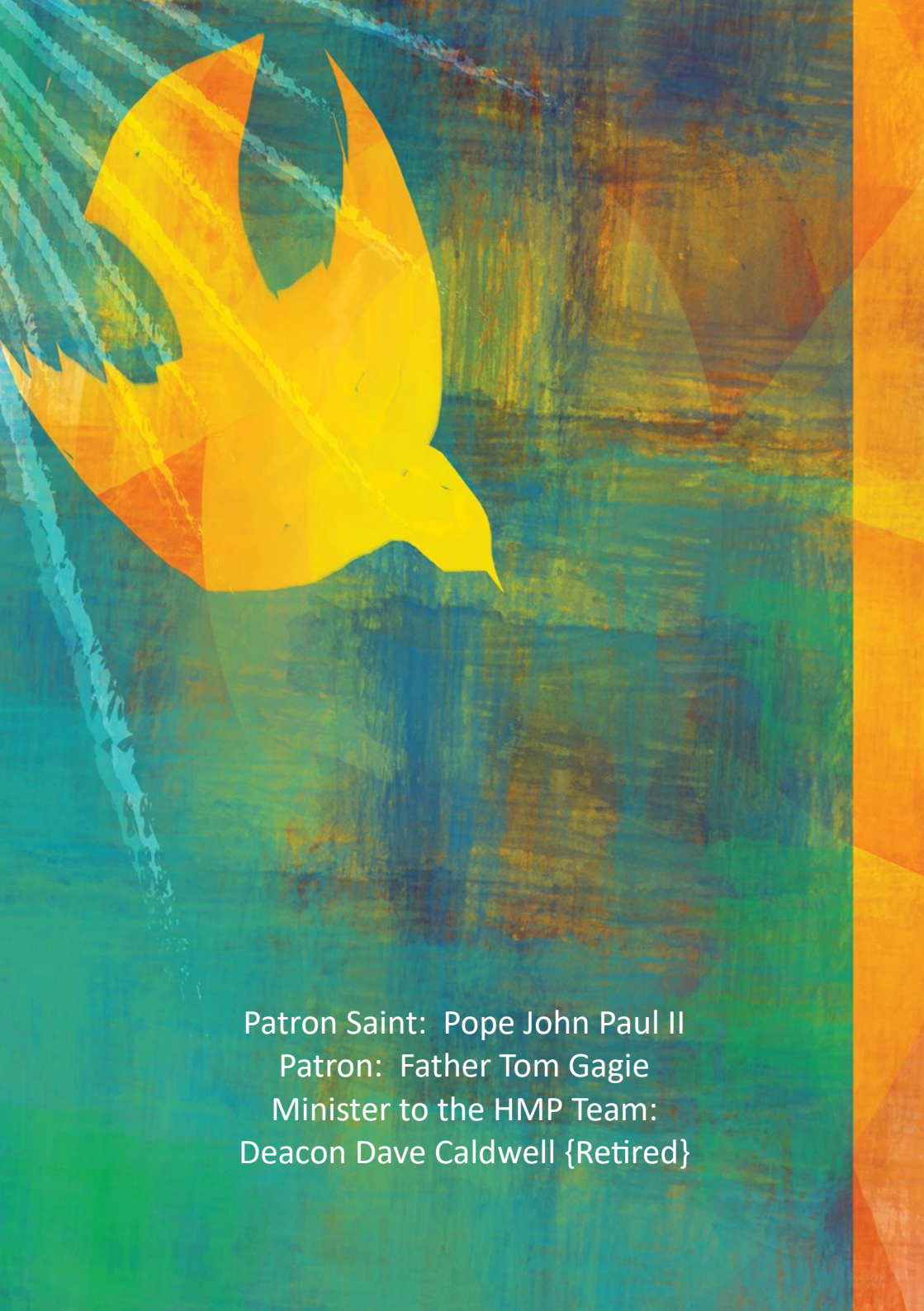
The most common heresy today is called “Universalism” which basically means that God will save all of us as long as we are good. This is not the Christian faith. We are not robots; God gave us free will which means we must make use of it and choose rightly.

Today’s Gospel underlines the fact that some people will refuse the message of salvation for all kinds of reasons. Our Lady at Fatima appeared to the three shepherd children in 1917 and showed them a vision of hell. Not a pretty sight for little children! Our Lady said “Behold hell, where poor sinners go, make sacrifices and pray for the conversion of poor sinners.” Our Lady is not too PC, is she? She laid it on the line what the consequences of refusing the gift of salvation entails. The world has not changed, people are still going to hell. We need to still pray for people and their eternal salvation, especially if they are living a lifestyle contrary to the Gospel.

The devil still tempts us to take the easy way and accept the values of universalism. Jesus said “say yes if you mean yes and no if you mean no.”

JESUS TALKED ABOUT HELL:

Even a cursory read through the Bible shows Jesus talked about Hell plenty. In fact, Jesus talked about hell more than any other person in the Bible. In Luke 16, he describes a great chasm over which “none may cross from there to us.” In Matthew 25, Jesus tells of a time when people will be separated into two groups, one entering into his presence, the other banished to “eternal fire.” Jesus doesn’t only reference hell, he describes it in great detail. He says it is a place of eternal torment (Luke 16:23), of unquenchable fire (Mark 9:43), where the worm does not die (Mark 9:48), where people will gnash their teeth in anguish and regret (Matt. 13:42), and from which there is no return, even to warn loved ones (Luke 16:19–31).



Patron Saint: Pope John Paul II
Patron: Father Tom Gagie
Minister to the HMP Team:
Deacon Dave Caldwell {Retired}