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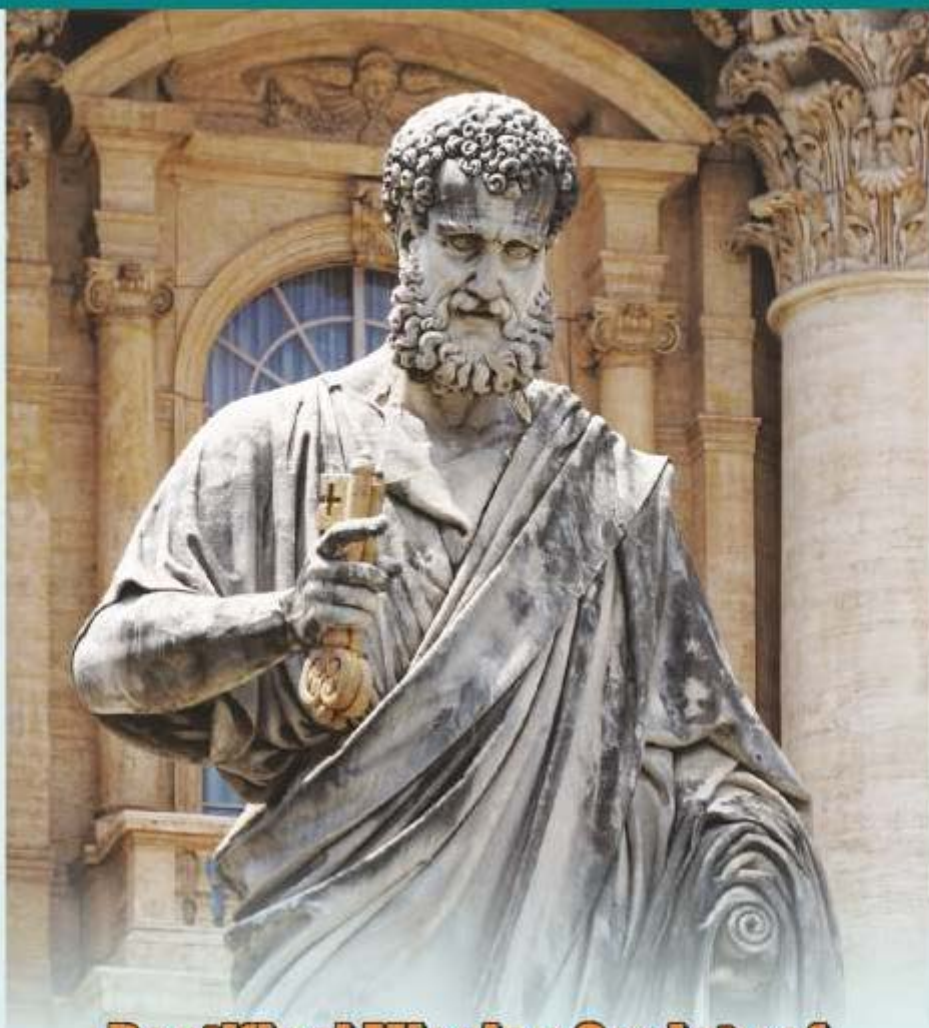
PROCLAIM

A magazine for Missionary Animation



Amoris Laetitia
Family Year 2021 - 2022

"Go out to the whole world and PROCLAIM the GOOD NEWS to all creation" Mark 16:15



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St Peter The Apostle (POSPA)
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**"The Counsellor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father
will send in my name, he will teach you all things,
and bring to your remembrance all that I have said
to you." – John 14:26**

FROM THE DIRECTOR'S DESK

Family – Locus of Faith and Mission

Pope Francis has announced “Amoris Laetitia Family Year” from 19 March 2021 to 26 June 2022 on the occasion of the 5th anniversary of the Apostolic Exhortation Amoris Laetitia. The intention is to focus on the salient points of the exhortation and facilitate the families around the world to understand that they are the privileged community of the Church and the Church is with them in all their difficult moments.



The pandemic continues to prevent parish churches from functioning effectively. Covid-19 has intensified the difficulties in the families in our parishes. We are requested in this family year to concentrate on the families, to give them hope amidst the crisis. Families are the backbones of the Church. If the 'family churches' are strong the Parish and the universal Church will be stronger in its life-giving mission.

The Pope insists that the families should be given importance this year so that the shattered families may receive hope amidst pandemic and at the same time they can become also proclaiming missions. Since the members of families are now so close to each other for a longer period at home (work from home, online classes and so on), difficulties and tensions create struggles in family life. It is the right moment for us to focus on the families which would help them overcome the struggles and would help the members of the family to grow in hope, Love, faith and the missionary spirit.

The primary role now is to help the families to understand the important teaching of the Amoris Laetitia through online seminars in every parish which will help them to actively engage in their Christian life. The local parishes know the difficulties families undergo in their regions, therefore instead of following a summary prepared by somebody else, every parish could prepare what is essential and relevant to that particular parish. The idea is not simply to memorise or simply finish reading it. It will have no impact at all. Every parish has to focus on the document as to what is essential for that parish and help the families engage themselves with the document actively.

There are many important themes that could be dealt with. The document speaks about the formation of right conscience in the members (#37) that they may understand that in every decision-making they actively discern what they are planning to do. It speaks about the duty of the parents (chapter 7). The most important aspect is found in chapter 4 which speaks about 'love' in marriage. The marital relationship is compared to friendship and he gives very practical suggestions to keep love glowing in the families. The pope continues to say “In the family, “three words need to be used. I want to repeat this! Three words: 'Please', 'Thank you', 'Sorry.' Three essential words!” [133].

Every diocese may devise plans in which the document becomes familiar and influences the way they understand marriage, family and Christian life. The family church then becomes the origin of mission with its witnessing love for one another and for Christ. At this juncture we could think of venerable Pauline Marie Jaricot, the foundress of the Propagation of the Faith. As a young Catholic woman, she was interested in helping the missions all over the world by organising help from friends and neighbours and contributed to the missions. Now the Propagation of faith is under the direct care of the Pope. A family member can certainly make a difference.

May the family year bring more people like Pauline Marie Jaricot.

Fr Dr Ambrose Pitchaimuthu
National Director (PMO-India)

Amoris Laetitia

Meeting people where they are

By Fr James Martin SJ



Pope Francis's ground-breaking new document “*Amoris Laetitia*” asks the church to meet people where they are, to consider the complexities of people's lives and to respect

people's consciences when it comes to moral decisions.

The apostolic exhortation is mainly a document that reflects on family life and encourages families. But it is also the pope's reminder that the church should avoid simply judging people and imposing rules on them without considering their struggles.

Using insights from the Synod of Bishops on the Family and from bishops' conferences from around the world, Pope Francis affirms church teaching on family life and marriage, but strongly emphasizes the role of personal conscience and pastoral discernment. He urges the church to appreciate the context of people's lives when helping them make good decisions. The goal is to help families — in fact, everyone —

experience God's love and know that they are welcome members of the church. All this may require what the pope calls “new pastoral methods”.

Here are ten things to know about the pope's ground-breaking new document:

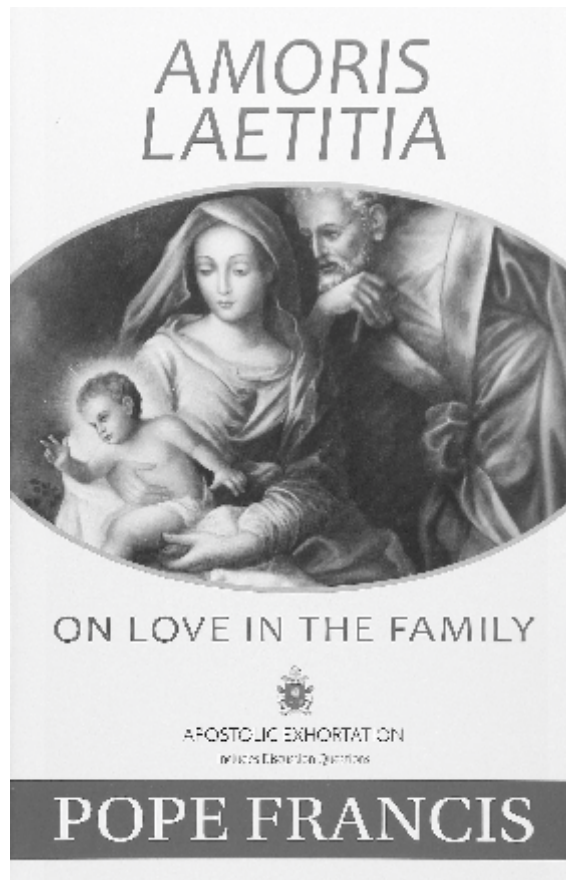
1. The Church needs to understand families and individuals in all their complexity.

The church needs to meet people where they are. So pastors are to “avoid judgements which do not take into account the complexity of various situations”. People should not be “pigeonholed or fit into overly rigid classifications leaving no room for personal and pastoral discernment”. In other words, one size does not fit all. People are encouraged to live by the Gospel, but should also

be welcomed into a church that appreciates their particular struggles and treats them with mercy. “Thinking that everything is black and white” is to be avoided. And the church cannot apply moral laws as if they were “stones to throw at people's lives”. Overall, he calls for an approach of understanding, compassion and accompaniment.

2. The role of conscience is paramount in moral decision-making.

“Individual conscience needs to be better incorporated into the church's practice in certain situations which do not objectively



embody our understanding of marriage”. That is, the traditional belief that individual conscience is the final arbiter of the moral life has been forgotten



here. The church has been “called to form consciences, not to replace them”. Yes, it is true, the Pope says, that a conscience needs to be formed by church teaching. But conscience does more than to judge what does or does not agree with church teaching. Conscience can also recognize with “a certain moral security” what God is asking . Pastors, therefore, need to help people not simply follow rules, but to practice “discernment,” a word that implies prayerful decision making.

3. Divorced and remarried Catholics need to be more fully integrated into the church.

How? By looking at the specifics of their situation, by remembering “mitigating factors,” by counseling them in the “internal forum,” (that is, in private conversations between the priest and person or couple), and by respecting that the final decision about the degree of participation in the church is left to a person's conscience. The reception of Communion is not spelled out here, but that is a traditional aspect of “participation” in church life.

Divorced and remarried couples should be made to feel part of the church. “They are not

excommunicated and should not be treated as such, since they remain part” of the church.

4. All members of the family need to be encouraged to live good Christian lives.

Much of “Amoris Laetitia” consists of reflections on the Gospels and church teaching on love, the family and children. But it also includes a great deal of practical advice from the pope, sometimes gleaned from exhortations and homilies regarding the family. Pope Francis reminds married couples that a good marriage is a “dynamic process” and that

each side has to put up with imperfections. “Love does not have to be perfect for us to value it”. The pope, speaking as a pastor, encourages not only married couples, but also engaged couples, expectant mothers, adoptive parents, widows, as well as aunts, uncles and grandparents. He is especially attentive that no one feels unimportant or excluded from God's love.

5. We should no longer talk about people “living in sin.”

In a sentence that reflects a new approach, the pope says clearly, “It can no longer simply be said that all those living in any 'irregular situation' are



living in a state of mortal sin”. Other people in “irregular situations,” or non-traditional families, like single mothers, need to be offered

“understanding, comfort and acceptance”. When it comes to these people, indeed everyone, the church need to stop applying moral laws, as if they were, in the pope's vivid phrase, “stones to throw at a person's life”.

6. What might work in one place may not work in another.

The pope is not only speaking in terms of individuals, but geographically as well. “Each country or region...can seek solutions better suited to its culture and sensitive to its traditions and local needs”. What makes sense pastorally in one country may even seem out of place in another. For this reason and others, as the pope says at the beginning of the document that for this reason, not every question can be settled by the magisterium, that is, the church's teaching office.

7. Traditional teachings on marriage are affirmed, but the church should not burden people with unrealistic expectations.

Marriage is between one man and one woman and is indissoluble; and same-sex marriage is not considered marriage. The church continues to hold out an invitation to healthy marriages. At the same time, the church has often foisted upon people an “artificial theological ideal of marriage” removed from people's everyday lives. At times these ideals have been a “tremendous burden”. To that end, seminarians and priests need to be better trained to understand the complexities of people's married lives. “Ordained ministers often lack the training needed to deal with the complex problems currently facing families”.



8. Children must be educated in sex and sexuality.

In a culture that often commodifies and cheapens sexual expression, children need to understand sex within the “broader framework of

an education for love and mutual self-giving”. Sadly, the body is often seen as simply “an object to be used”. Sex always has to be understood as being open to the gift of new life.

9. Gay men and women should be respected.

While same-sex marriage is not permitted, the pope says that he wants to reaffirm “before all else” that the homosexual person needs to be “respected in his or her dignity and treated with consideration, and 'every sign of unjust discrimination' is to be carefully avoided, particularly any form of aggression or violence.” Families with LGBT members need “respectful pastoral guidance” from the church and its pastors so that gays and lesbians can fully carry out God's will in their lives.

10. All are welcome.

The church must help families of every sort, and people in every state of life, know that, even in their imperfections, they are loved by God and can help others experience that love. Likewise, pastors must work to make people feel welcome in the church. “Amoris Laetitia” offers the vision of a pastoral and merciful church that encourages people to experience the “joy of love.” The family is an absolutely essential part of the church, because after all, the church is a “family of families”.

Source: *America*, the Jesuit Review ♦

Amoris Laetitia Family Year

What every Catholic should know

By Hannah Brockhaus

1. When is this year being celebrated?

The Amoris Laetitia Family Year begins on March 19, the Solemnity of St. Joseph, because that is the day that Pope Francis signed his post-synodal apostolic exhortation *Amorislaetitia*. The letter, which was on the theme of love in the family, was released about three weeks later.

The year 2021 marks the fifth anniversary of *Amorislaetitia*'s publication.

Though it is being called a “year,” the *Amorislaetitia* celebration will actually last around 15 months, ending on June 26, 2022, with the 10th edition of the World Meeting of Families in Rome.

2. What is the year about?

Pope Francis has said “it will be a year of reflection on *Amoris Laetitia* and it will be an opportunity to focus more closely on the contents of the document.”

The Dicastery for Laity, Family, and Life, headed by Cardinal Kevin Farrell, is coordinating the Vatican's initiatives for the special year.

Farrell said that the year had been organized because there are many couples and families around the world in crisis, experiencing poverty, or feeling alone, and they “need pastoral care, dedication.”

“Many families need to be helped to discover in the sufferings of life the place of Christ's presence and of his merciful love,” he said. “This year, therefore, is an opportunity to reach out to families, to not make them feel alone in the face of

difficulties, to walk with them, to listen to them and to undertake pastoral initiatives that help them to cultivate their daily love.”

3. I'm confused, I thought this was the Year of St Joseph?

Yes, it is also the Year of St. Joseph, which began on Dec 8, 2020, the Feast of the Immaculate Conception, and will end on Dec 8, 2021.

In a press conference about the Amoris Laetitia Year, Farrell said “it was providential that the Holy Father dedicated this year to St. Joseph, husband and father, who was so loved that he was chosen by God to care for the Holy Family.”

“The pandemic has had very painful consequences for millions of people. But the family itself, despite being hit hard in many respects, once again showed its face as 'keeper of life,' as was St. Joseph. The family

remains forever 'guardian' of our most authentic and original relationships, those that are born in love and make us mature as people,” he said.

4. Is anything special happening for this year of the family?

The Dicastery for Laity, Family, and Life is coordinating many different initiatives for the Amoris Laetitia Family Year, starting with a webinar on March 19 dedicated to pastoral and theological reflections on the family.

The opening of the webinar will also include a video message from Pope Francis.

The dicastery announced that it will also



Hope that does not disappoint



In his traditional Easter message *Urbi et Orbi* – to the city and the world – Pope Francis underscored how on Easter Sunday we celebrate the event that gives us the hope that does not disappoint: “Jesus who was crucified has risen”.

Throughout the world, the Church proclaims the joyous news that “Jesus, who was crucified, has risen as He said. Alleluia!”, Pope Francis said at the start of his Easter message broadcast live around the world.

He delivered the message inside St. Peter's Basilica, just like last year, due to coronavirus safety measures.

He had just concluded presiding over the Easter Sunday Mass at the Altar of the Chair with a small congregation participating.

The Basilica featured arrays of Avalanche roses given by Dutch florists who traditionally filled St Peter's Square with flowers on Easter every year, but had to stop temporarily due to the pandemic.

The Easter reality of the Resurrection offers concrete, tangible hope and consolation, the Pope noted, but its message does not offer us “a mirage or reveal a magic formula” we might wish as an escape exit to the world's difficult realities.

Among them, the spread of the pandemic, social and economic crisis hitting the poor especially, but also, he noted the “scandalous” fact that “armed conflicts have not ended and military arsenals are being strengthened.”

Hope that does not disappoint

The Easter message of hope tells us concisely that “the crucified Jesus, none other, has risen from the dead”, Pope Francis said, adding that God the Father raised Jesus, who accomplished His saving will by taking upon Himself our weakness, infirmities, the weight of our sins, even our death. Because of this, the Pope said, “God the Father exalted Him and now Jesus Christ lives forever; He is the Lord.”

The wounds Jesus bears in His hands, feet and side are “the everlasting seal of His love for us”, the Pope noted, and all who experience trials in body or spirit can find refuge in them and “receive the grace of the hope that does not disappoint.”

Hope and solidarity in pandemic times

Pope Francis went on to say that the Risen Christ gives hope and comfort for those suffering



from the pandemic, the sick and those who have lost a loved one. He also prayed that the Lord might “sustain the valiant efforts of doctors and nurses”.

He stressed that everyone, especially the vulnerable, needs assistance and has a right to care, and vaccines are essential. He appealed to the international community “to commit to overcoming delays in the distribution of vaccines and to facilitate their distribution, especially in the poorest countries.”

The Risen Lord is comfort for the unemployed and those suffering economic difficulties, the Pope said. He prayed that Christ might “inspire public authorities to act so that everyone, especially families in greatest need” can be provided with help in order to avoid sliding into poverty, a sad reality the pandemic has dramatically worsened.

The Pope referred also to the psychological weight of the pandemic on young people, who are often forced to stay at home without attending school or visiting friends in person. He expressed his “closeness to young people throughout the world”.

Hope that brings peace to our world

Quoting Saint John Paul II when visiting Haiti, “the poor of every kind must begin once more to hope”, he said as his thoughts also turned to the “beloved Haitian people”, urging them “to look to the future with confidence and hope”, and not be overwhelmed by current difficulties. He underscored his closeness to them and that their problems may be definitively resolved.

Pope Francis prayed for the young people of Myanmar “committed to supporting democracy and making their voices heard peacefully,” so that “hatred can be dispelled only by love.”

He recalled migrants fleeing from war and extreme poverty and that the “light of the risen

Jesus be a source of rebirth” for them, as we see in them the “marred and suffering face of the Lord” on the path to Calvary. This calls for concrete signs of solidarity and human fraternity” on the part of all, he noted, and he thanked nations receiving those who seek refuge, citing Lebanon and Jordan which have taken in so many refugees fleeing violence in neighboring Syria.

May the people of Lebanon, he prayed, “find support from the international community” in these tough times and persevere in being “a land of encounter, coexistence and pluralism.”

And “may Christ our peace” halt the clash of arms in “beloved and war-torn Syria”, the Pope underscored, where millions are suffering.

He also pointed out the “deafening and scandalous silence” regarding the suffering in Yemen.

Looking to the nation of Libya, he noted the hopes there are finally for an end to the decade of bloodshed and unrest. In all these lands, he encouraged all parties involved to “commit themselves” to end these conflicts and

allow “war-weary peoples to live in peace” and rebuild their lives and communities.

Living as brothers and sisters

The Resurrection takes us to Jerusalem, the Pope went on to say, where “we ask the Lord to grant peace and security,” so it can “embrace its calling” to be a place where “all can see one another as brothers and sisters”. He encouraged Israelis and Palestinians to “rediscover the power of dialogue” so a solution can be found to “enable the two states to dwell side by side in peace and prosperity.”

Pope Francis also recalled his visit last month to Iraq, and prayed that the nation continues on the



“path to peace” and “fulfil God's dream for a human family hospitable and welcoming to all his children.”

Overcome the mindset of war

The Pope's thoughts then turned to Africa, especially places suffering from internal violence



and international terrorism in areas of the Sahel, Nigeria, Tigray and the Cabo Delgado region of Mozambique, and prayed the conflicts may be resolved peacefully through “dialogue in a spirit of reconciliation and true solidarity”.

Too many wars and too much violence plague our world, the Pope lamented. He prayed, “May the Lord, who is our peace, help us to overcome the mindset of war.”

May prisoners of conflicts be freed in eastern Ukraine and Nagorno-Karabakh, he added, and

may the arms race be curbed. He recalled that Sunday, 4 April, marks the International Awareness Day against anti-personnel landmines, and said these “insidious and horrible devices” kill or maim many innocent people each year. He also stressed “how much better our world would be without these instruments of death!”

Healed by the wounds of Christ

In conclusion, Pope Francis recognized how in so many places Christians have celebrated Easter under severe restrictions, sometimes unable to attend liturgical celebrations. He prayed that these, and all restrictions on freedom of worship and religion worldwide, may be lifted so all are allowed to pray and praise God freely.

Amid these many hardships, the Pope said, we must always remember that “we have been healed by the wounds of Christ” and in light of the Risen Lord, “our sufferings are now transfigured...where there was death, now there is life”.

He concluded, saying: “We pray that the benefits of that healing will spread throughout the world. Happy Easter to all of you!”

After delivering his Urbi et Orbi Easter message, the Pope imparted his apostolic blessing. ♦

Continued from Page 6: *Amoris Laetitia* Family Year



project with Pope Francis on each of the chapters of *Amorislaetitia*.

“Pope Francis intends to address all ecclesial communities throughout the world, exhorting each person to be a witness of family love,” the dicastery said in December.

organize
o t h e r
“spiritual,
pastoral,
and cultural
initiatives,”
including a
v i d e o

The Vatican office will share resources with dioceses, parishes, and other Church groups and family associations on themes related to marriage and family life, such as family spirituality, marriage preparation, and holiness for married couples.

It also plans to hold international academic symposiums to examine different aspects of *Amorislaetitia* in depth.

5. Where can I find out more?

The dicastery has created a webpage for the year at www.amorislaetitia.va, where more information about events and resources can be found. ♦

The Spirit sanctifies

By Paul Andrew

There is a saying: If you have the Word without the Spirit, you dry up.

If we don't let air in or fan the embers or charcoal until they glow, we can have no BBQ. 2

Timothy, Chapter 1 Verse 6 mentions: "That is why I am reminding you now to fan into a flame the gift of God that you possess through the laying on of my hands."

...The grace, which St Paul here exhorts Timothy to stir up in him, was the grace he had received by imposition of hands, either in his confirmation, or at receiving the sacrament of orders, being a bishop.

We fan into flame our Sacrament of Confirmation by praise and worship music, or bible study or Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, prayer with the heart — whatever we need to-make the words and works of Jesus real and obvious in our lives and thereby to help us to strengthen others in their faith and commitment to Christ.



A charismatic renewal leader named Randy said that he faced a jealousy temptation with his first intern, who was only 20 years old at the time. The first time this intern ministered with Randy, Randy gave several words of knowledge. He asked the intern if he had any words, and the young man went on to give twice as many words as Randy

had. Immediately, Randy could feel insecurity rise up, and he began distancing himself.

He remembers clearly what the Lord told him: "And the Holy Spirit spoke to me and said, 'If that were your son'—who was exactly [the intern's] age in years—'would you be distancing yourself now? Or would you be so grateful to Me that your son is getting more than you have?'"

The Lord went on to tell Randy that he can't be a spiritual father until he feels for his spiritual sons as if they were his own flesh and blood. When raising up the next generation, there's no room for feeling threatened by others' anointing. [source: Charisma Magazine]

Helping others thrive shines a positive light and helps us thrive.

A Jesuit priest was talking about stepping back and removing oneself from the equation to look at things objectively, saying that St. Teresa of Avila said God gave her the grace of dis-identifying herself with herself. You hear children talk that way. A two-year-old says, "Billy had his breakfast this morning". He doesn't say "I ", although he is Billy. He says "Billy" - in the third person.

Saying "Jane, you can do this!" instead of "I can do this!" creates helpful distance between you



The allure and glamour of sin wants us to discharge our soul's energy to leave us drained, with less or even nothing that it had before.

The Holy Spirit puts light and fire into us.

and your situation — distance that helps you see a situation more rationally and zoom in on what you can control.



Talk to yourself out loud. There is research which suggests that talking through your excuses, problems and obstacles out loud may motivate you take action by blocking out distractions and help you keep on task. Talk to the Holy Spirit out loud, too. [Source: Omada]

There is another saying that goes, If you have the Spirit without the Word, you can blow up.

The spirit blows where it wills, it's a current of grace. Pope Francis says that the charismatic renewal was born ecumenical and creates unity. And the Holy Spirit helps us to live the Word of God.

When the Sacred Scriptures are read in the Church, God himself speaks to his people; the vehicle God uses to reveal himself to us, the means by which we come to know the depth of God's love for us, and the responsibilities entailed.

Lastly, there is saying that “if you also have

the discerning charism, you grow up.”

There is no contraction between institution and charisma/prophecy.

The bible alone does not suffice because it does not self-interpret.

Read the Apostolic faith of the early Christian writers to see what the NT meant --- e.g. St. Ignatius of Antioch: “do nothing without the bishop and be subject to the presbytery.”

Jesus says expressly that the teaching office of the Holy Spirit will guide the Apostles into all truth, with all its consequences.

This is the Magisterium of the Catholic Church.

Conclusion

Many of you have probably never driven a car that doesn't have power steering. If you had ever driven a truck or bus without power steering, you'd realize how difficult it is to steer the vehicle, especially at slower speeds. You are constantly fighting the vehicle's natural desire to go where it wants to go rather than where you want it to go.

That is how it is if we do not surrender to the power of the Holy Spirit in our life and try living a Christian life without His power. Your carnal desire is to go in the wrong direction.

The Catechism of the Catholic Church calls this inclination to sin concupiscence” (No. 1264). Concupiscence is not itself sin. It's just the tendency and it's why we need the Holy Spirit in our life.



Fan into flame the Holy Spirit. The Spirit is perpetually present, like wind. Pope St John Paul II said,

“The Holy Spirit is the wind in the sails of the Church.” We can't direct the wind, but we can adjust the sails.

Source: Sermon Central ♦

My Body.....My Blood

(A reflection on Holy Eucharist compiled from different sources by Mahesh H Lobo)

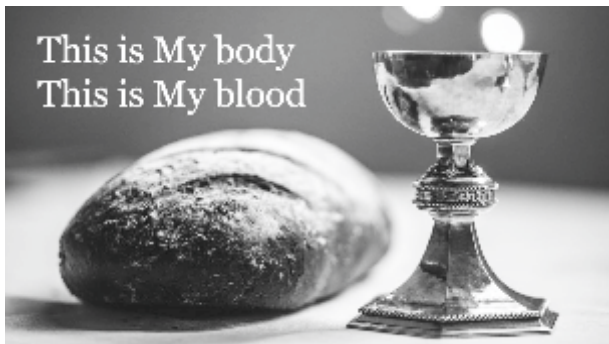
THE solemn feast of *Corpus Christi* is *three feasts in one*: the feast of the Eucharistic sacrifice, feast of the Sacrament of the Eucharist and the feast of the Real Presence of Jesus.

It is a doctrinal feast established for three purposes:

- 1) to give God collective thanks for Christ's abiding presence with us in the Eucharist and to honour him there;
- 2) to instruct the people in the Mystery, Faith and devotion surrounding the Eucharist, and
- 3) to teach us to appreciate and make use of the great gift of the Holy Eucharist, both as a Sacrament and as a sacrifice.

Our belief in this Real Presence of Jesus in the Holy Eucharist derives from the literal interpretation of the promise of Christ to give us his Body and Blood for our spiritual food and drink, as found in St John's Gospel, Chapter 6, and also in the four independent accounts of the fulfilment of this promise at the Last Supper (Matthew 26; Mark 14; Luke 22; 1 Corinthians 11).

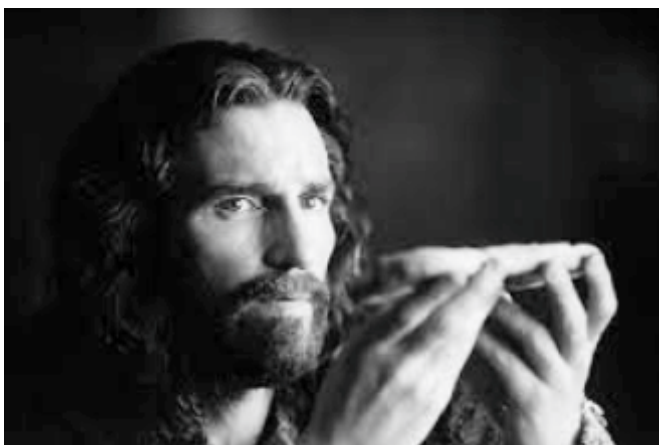
In the Holy Eucharist, the bread becomes truly the body of Christ and the wine the blood of Christ. Some of the Jews were so familiar with Jesus that many of them did not believe him when he said that he had come down from heaven. They retorted: "Do we not know his father, Joseph the carpenter, and the mother as well? How can he claim he has come down from heaven?" (John 6:35-42). Similarly, some of us have become so familiar with the Holy Communion that we sometimes doubt whether it is truly the body and blood of Christ.



John 6 tells us that the day after the multiplication of loaves to feed the 5,000 men, Jesus told the crowd that they should look not for the food that perishes but for that which gives eternal life. Then when the people requested for this bread of life, Jesus

told them that he is the bread of life that has come down from heaven. They then started grumbling. But Jesus' further statements were to shock the people the more: 'If anyone eats this bread, he will live forever. The bread that I will give him is my flesh, which I give so that the world may live. This started an angry argument among them. "*How can this man give us his flesh to eat?*" they asked. Jesus said to them, "*I am telling you the truth, if you do not eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood; you will not have life in yourselves.... For my flesh is real food and blood is real drink*"' (John 6:51-55).

Consequently, many of his followers left him. Now if Jesus did not mean what he was saying --- that he will give us his flesh and blood --- or if he were using a mere figure of speech, he would have called the deserting followers back to clarify his



teaching. Rather, he turned to the twelve apostles and asked them if they also wished to leave him. Peter, then, responded: *'Lord, to whom would we go? You have the words that give eternal life. And now we believe and know that you are the Holy One who has come from God!'* (John 6:68-69).

However, it was not until the Last Supper that Jesus gave us the sacrament of his body and blood.



At the Last Supper, Jesus did not say: 'Take and eat, this is LIKE my body'; neither did he say: '...this REPRESENTS my body'; nor did he say: '...this is a SYMBOL of my body.' He simply said: '...this IS my body.' Likewise, with the cup of wine, he did not use the words LIKE/ REPRESENTS/ SYMBOL; rather, he simply said: 'This IS my blood' We, therefore, believe that in the Eucharist, the bread becomes the true body of Christ and the wine the true blood of Christ.

Vatican II states that as a sacrifice "the Holy Eucharist is the *source and summit of Christian life*" (Lumen Gentium, 11).

Why?

- 1) Because it enables us to participate in Christ's sacrifice as a present reality and to benefit from its fruits in our own lives.
- 2) Because it helps us to worship the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit in the most perfect way.
- 3) Because it strengthens our charity and unity with Jesus and each other in a joint offering of his Body and Blood to the Father.
- 4) Because it gives us a lasting memorial of Christ's suffering, death and Resurrection,

reminding us of our obligation to make loving sacrifices for others.

The Eucharist is the Mystery of our Faith, the mystery of our Hope, the mystery of our Charity.

Jesus replaces the Old Covenant with the New Covenant:

Jesus instituted the Eucharist in deliberate allusion to, and fulfilment of, what happened on Mount Sinai. He replaced Moses as the God-chosen mediator, establishing the New Covenant promised through the prophet Jeremiah (31:31-34), by using his own Blood rather than that of sacrificial animals. By sacramentally consuming the Body and Blood of the God-Man, we, the final-age people of God, are interiorly transformed through the most perfect possible union with God. Jesus creates a faithful people intimately united with God by means of his sacramental Blood.

The Jewish Passover is transformed into the Eucharistic celebration:

Jesus instituted the Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist while eating the Passover meal, the feast on which the Jews gathered annually to commemorate their ancestors' deliverance from Egyptian slavery. This foundational event began the night God "passed over" the Israelites to punish their oppressors who resisted His will. Israel was "saved through blood" of sacrificial lambs sprinkled on doorways.

In the second half of today's Gospel, Jesus' words and gestures are understood as mediating the fullness of salvation *through Blood* that would be his own. That night he offered "*the Blood of the (New) Covenant,*" as Blood to be drunk rather than sprinkled. Moreover, since it was his own, this Blood needed no further identification with God by splashing against an altar. Finally, the Blood was "*to be poured out for you and for many* (a Semitism for 'all')." Thus, the new and perfect Paschal Lamb accomplished for people of every nation what Mosaic sacrifices only imperfectly achieved for the Jews. Giving of both "Body" and "Blood" establishes the context of Jesus' sacrificial

St Joseph the Worker Man of Faith and Prayer

By Pope Saint John Paul II



Pope John Paul II's homily given at a Mass celebrated during his pastoral visit to an industrial area of Italy on the Solemnity of St. Joseph.

By the work of his own hands

Today the Church is honouring St. Joseph, the "just man", who in the humility of the shop in Nazareth *by the work of his own hands*, provides support for the Holy Family. Today, therefore, is above all the day of men of work. To you, therefore, workers, farmers, artisans, fishermen, to you workers of the land and the sea, who with daily sweat earn what is necessary for your families, I wish to address in a special way my thought and my word in order to point out for your reflection the example of one who, having shared your experience, can understand your problems; take up your anxieties, direct your efforts toward the building of a better future.

Saint Joseph stands before you as *a man of faith and prayer*. The Liturgy applies to him the word of God in Psalm 89: "He shall say of me, 'You are my father, my God, the rock, my Saviour'" (v. 27). O yes: how many times in the course of long days of work would Joseph have raised his mind to God to invoke him, to offer him his toil, to implore light,

help, comfort. How many times! Well then, this man, who with his whole life seemed to cry out to God: "You are my father", receives this most special grace: the Son of God on earth treats him as his father.

Joseph invokes God with all the ardor of his soul as a believer: "my Father", and Jesus, who worked at his side with the tools of a carpenter, addressed him calling him "father".

A profound mystery: Christ, who as God directly experienced the divine fatherhood in the bosom of the Most Blessed Trinity, had this experience as a man through the person of Joseph, his foster father. And Joseph in his turn, in the home in Nazareth, offered the child who was growing beside him the support of his well-balanced virility, his far-sightedness, his courage, his gifts which every good father has, deriving them from that supreme source "from whom every family in heaven and on earth takes its name" (Eph 3:15).

The great role of fatherhood

A great role, this role of fatherhood, which not a few parents today have tried to abdicate, opting for a relationship on a par with their children, which ends up depriving the children of that psychological support and that moral backing which they need to successfully get through the precarious stage of

childhood and early adolescence. Someone has said that today we are experiencing the crisis of a "fatherless society". We notice ever more clearly



the need to be able to count on fathers who can fulfill their role, combining tenderness with seriousness, understanding with strictness, camaraderie with the exercise of authority, because

home in Nazareth witnessed, since it is also said in the Gospel that thanks to that obedience, the Child "progressed steadily in wisdom, age and grace before God and men" (ibid. 52)



only in this way will children be able to grow harmoniously, overcoming their fears and preparing themselves to meet courageously the unknown factors in life.

But where, dear fathers, will you be able to draw the energy necessary to assume in various circumstances the right attitude that your children, even without knowing it, expect from you? Saint Joseph offers you the answer to this: it is in God, the source of all fatherhood, it is in his way of acting with men, which is revealed to us by Sacred Scripture that you can find the model of a fatherhood capable of making a positive impression on the educational process of your children, not smothering their spontaneity on the one hand, nor abandoning their still immature personality to the traumatizing experiences of insecurity and loneliness on the other.

Specific moral value

Joseph and his most chaste spouse, the Virgin Mary, did not abdicate the authority that was theirs as parents. It is very significantly said of Jesus in the Gospel: "... and he was obedient to them" (Lk 2:51). A "constructive" obedience, which the walls of the

In this human growth Joseph guided and supported the boy Jesus, introducing him to the knowledge of the religious and social customs of the Jewish people and getting him started in the carpenter's trade, whose every secret he had learned in so many years of practicing it. This is an aspect that I feel compelled to stress today: *Saint Joseph taught Jesus human work*, in which he was an expert. The Divine Child worked beside him, and by listening to him and observing him, he too learned to manage the carpenter's

tools with the diligence and the dedication that the example of his foster father transmitted to him.

This too is a great lesson, beloved brothers and sisters: if the Son of God was willing to learn a human work from a man, this indicates that there is in work a specific moral value with a precise meaning for man and for his self-fulfillment. In the Encyclical *Laborem Exercens*, I mentioned precisely that "through work *man not only transforms nature*, adapting it to his own needs, but he also *achieves fulfillment* as a human being and indeed, in a sense, becomes more a human being" (n. 9)



How can we not recognize then the *great dignity* of work, whatever kind it may be in its

concrete expression? How can we not see the fundamental role that it fulfill in the life of the individual, of the family, of society? Unfortunately, greed and egoism have often pushed men to abuse the intellectual and physical talents of their fellow men and to impose upon them working services that are revealed in various ways to be harmful to their personal dignity. Against these deteriorations of labour relations unions justly arise to defend those whose legitimate rights they see trampled.

If this is just and merits approval, an attitude would be incomprehensible that would succeed in questioning work as such, not recognizing its providential role' indicated in the first Biblical command: "Subdue the earth!" (cf. Gen 1:28). This role Saint Joseph recognized and accepted in his life, transmitting to the young Jesus who was growing at his side the spirit of joyful readiness with which he resumed his daily task every morning. For this too Saint Joseph stands before the Christian people as a shining model of life, to whom every father can and must look in the concrete choices that are imposed upon him by the responsibility of a family.

Call on St Joseph

"I have made you father of many nations" (Rom 4:17), was proclaimed a short time ago in the First Reading of the Mass. The words which God spoke to Abraham, at the time already old and still without offspring, the Liturgy applies today to Saint Joseph, who did not have any carnal offspring at all. And we who are reflecting on his personal experiences can quite appreciate the

suitability of this approach. After having been a special instrument of Divine Providence with regard to Jesus and Mary, above all during Herod's persecution, Saint Joseph continues to carry out his providential and "fatherly" mission in the life of the Church and of all men.

"Father of many nations": the devotion with which Christians of every part of the world, encouraged in this by the Liturgy, turn to Saint Joseph to confide their troubles to him and to implore his protection confirm the singular fact of this limitless fatherhood.

Therefore look with confidence to Saint Joseph, you men and women of Molise and



Abruzzo, persevering in a devotion that is so deeply inscribed in the traditions of your ancestors. Is he not a magnificent example for every committed

lay person who within the parish and the various ecclesial movements wants to give courageous witness to Christ?

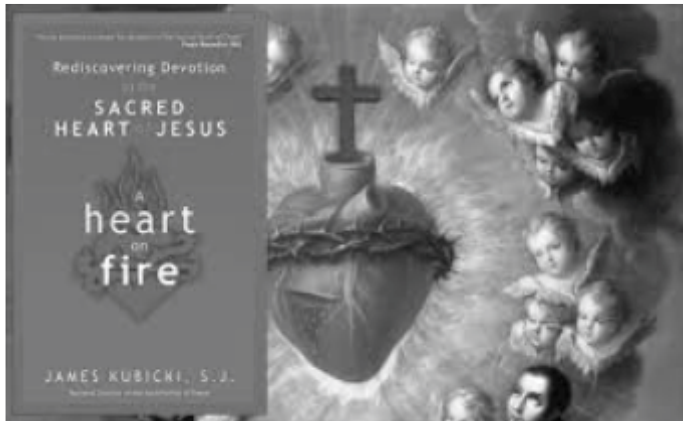
Have recourse to St. Joseph, particularly you priests and religious, you consecrated souls, who in his virginal chastity and spiritual fatherhood see the highest ideals of your vocation reflected. He teaches you love for meditation and prayer, generous fidelity to commitments assumed before God and the Church, selfless dedication to the community in which Providence has placed you, however small and unknown it may be. In the light of his example you will be able to learn and appreciate the value of all that is humble, simple, hidden, of what is accomplished, without show and without clamor, but with decisive results, in the unfathomable depths of the heart.

Devotion to Sacred Heart of Jesus

By Fr William P Saunders

The *Catechism*, quoting Pope Pius XII's beautiful encyclical on the devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, *Haurietis Aquas* (1956), states, “[Jesus] has loved us all with a human heart. For this reason, the Sacred Heart of Jesus, pierced by our sins and for our salvation, 'is quite rightly considered the chief sign and symbol of that... love with which the divine Redeemer continually loves the eternal Father and all human beings' without exception (#478).

To appreciate this rich symbolism of the heart, we must remember that in Judaism the word *heart* represented the core of the person. While recognized as the principle life organ, the heart was also considered the centre of all spiritual activity. Here was the seat of all emotion, especially love.



As the psalms express, God speaks to a person in his heart and there probes him. This notion of the heart is clear when we read the words of Deuteronomy 6:5-6: “Therefore, you shall love the Lord, your God, with all your heart, and with all



your soul, and with all your strength. Take to heart these words which I enjoin on you today.”

The heart has even greater depth when contemplated in light of the incarnation. We believe that Jesus Christ, second person of the Holy Trinity and consubstantial with the Father, entered this world taking on our human flesh—true God became also true man. While Jesus' heart obviously served a

physiological function, spiritually His *sacred* heart also represents love: the divine love our Lord shares with the Father and Holy Spirit in the Trinity; the perfect, divine love which God has for us; and the genuine human love Christ felt in His human nature.

I think one of the most beautiful passages of the Gospels is our Lord saying, “Come to me, all you who are weary and find life burdensome, and I will refresh you. Take my yoke upon your shoulders and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble of heart. Your souls will find rest, for my yoke is easy and my burden light” (Matthew 11:28-30). Therefore, while meditating on the Sacred Heart of Jesus, we are called to share in the love of the Lord and strive to express our own genuine love for God, ourselves, and our neighbours.

Throughout the gospel, we see the outpouring of Jesus' love from His heart, whether in the miracle stories, the reconciliation of sinners, or the compassion for the grieving. Even on the cross, our Lord poured out His love for us: there the soldier's lance pierced His side and out flowed blood and water (John 19:34).



St. Bonaventure said the Church was born from the wounded side of the Lord with the blood and water representing the Sacraments of the Holy Eucharist and Baptism.

The early Church Fathers clearly cherished this meaning of the Sacred Heart of our Lord. St. Justin Martyr (d. 165), in his *Dialogue with the Jew Trypho* said, “We Christians are the true Israel which springs from Christ, for we are carved out of His heart as from a rock.”

Likewise, St. Irenaeus of Lyons (d. 202) said, “The Church is the fountain of the living water that flows to us from the Heart of Christ” (*Adversus Haereses*). St. Paulinus of Nola (d. 431) in his *Letters* (#21) added, “John, who rested blissfully on the breast of our Lord, was inebriated with the Holy Spirit, from the Heart of all creating Wisdom he quaffed an understanding which transcends that of any creature.”

Although these are just a few brief examples from the times of the early Church, we find a profound respect for the Sacred Heart of our Lord as a font of His love which gave birth to the Church and continues to nourish its members.

The devotion continued to grow during the Middle Ages, and in 1353 Pope Innocent VI instituted a Mass honouring the mystery of the Sacred Heart. During the age of the Protestant movement, devotion to the Sacred Heart was practiced in hope of restoring peace to a world shattered by political and religious persecution.

Shortly thereafter, the devotion escalated due to the fervour surrounding the apparitions of our Lord to St. Margaret Mary Alacoque (1647-90). For example, on December 27, 1673, our Lord revealed, “My Divine Heart is so passionately inflamed with love... that, not being able any longer to contain within Itself the flames of Its ardent charity, It must let them spread abroad through your means, and manifest Itself to man, that they may be enriched with Its precious treasures which I unfold to you, and which contain the sanctifying and salutary graces that are necessary to hold them back from the abyss of ruin.”

The four apparitions provided the catalyst for the promotion of the devotion to the Sacred Heart: a feast day in honor of the Sacred Heart, and the offering of our Lord's saving grace and friendship if the individual attended Mass and received Holy Communion on nine consecutive first Fridays of the month.

In 1899, Pope Leo XIII consecrated the world to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. Since then, his successors have exhorted the faithful to turn to the



Sacred Heart and make acts of personal consecration. They have also begged the faithful to offer prayers and penances to the Sacred Heart in

reparation for the many sins of the world.

Considering our present day and age, the temptations and sins of this world, the growing apathy and secularism, we too should turn again in loving devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus and ask Him to pour forth His grace. We must strive to make our hearts like His own, for He said, "Blessed are the pure of heart, for they shall see God" (Matthew 5:8).

May we remember the words of the *Preface* of the Mass in honor of the Sacred Heart of Jesus: "Lifted high on the Cross, Christ gave His life for us, so much did He love us. From His wounded side flowed blood and water, the fountain of sacramental life in the Church. To His open heart the Savior invites all men, to draw water in joy from the springs of salvation."

<https://catholicstraightanswers.com> ♦

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death, a New Covenant sealed with his Blood.

The Sacrament and the sacrifice:

Jesus instituted the Holy Eucharist during the Last Supper as a Sacramental banquet and a sacrificial offering. As a Sacrament, the Holy Eucharist is an outward sign in and through which we meet Jesus who shares his life of grace with us. "In the Most Blessed Sacrament of the Eucharist the Body and Blood, together with the soul and Divinity, of our Lord Jesus Christ and, therefore, the whole Christ is truly, really, and substantially contained"



(CCC#1374).

The Eucharistic Meal is a great mystery because during the Eucharistic celebration the substance of bread and wine are converted into the substance of the risen Jesus' Body and Blood, while their appearances (or "accidents") remain. We believe in this transformation of bread and wine (called Transubstantiation), because Jesus unequivocally taught it and authorized his apostles to repeat it. As a Sacrament, the Holy Eucharist imparts to us Jesus' abiding presence in our souls. ♦

Continued from Page 16: Man of Faith and Prayer

And you, families of today, who are experiencing rapid changes in modern society and suffering their sometimes worrying repercussions, you can find in the family of Nazareth, which Joseph watched over with anxious care, the ever-present model of a community of persons in which love assures an understanding that is daily renewed. Invoking Jesus, Mary and Joseph, the members of every family of your ecclesial communities can rediscover in the various moments of their lives the joy of the reciprocal gift, the comfort of solidarity in trials, the serene peace

of those who know how to count on the omnipotent, even if mysterious, Divine Providence.

"He shall say of me, 'You are my father'". Like Saint Joseph, you too must invoke the heavenly Father with persevering and fervent prayer, and you will experience, as he did, the truth of the following words of the Psalm: "Forever I will maintain my kindness toward him, and my covenant with him stands firm" (Ps 89:29).

Courtesy: <https://www.catholicculture.org> ♦

SAINT OF THE MONTH - I

St Judith of Prussia

1200 - 12 May 1260

Feast Day: 05 May

Saint Judith of Prussia, also known as Jutta, born in Thuringia (now part of central Germany), was a member of the very noble family of Sangerhausen with which the dukes of Brunswick were related. She was espoused to a nobleman of equal rank, but in the married state she was more intent upon virtue and the fear of God than upon worldly honor.

Judith was married at fifteen to a wealthy young nobleman. Judith tried to be a good Christian wife. She was especially generous with the poor. Her husband was a good man, but he was satisfied with his wealthy lifestyle. He expected his wife to dress and live like a rich woman. He felt that their well-dressed look would win them respect. But Judith gently persuaded him to live and dress more simply. By doing this, they would have more to give to people less fortunate than themselves.

In the beginning the piety of Judith displeased her husband, Freiherr Johannes Konopacki von Bielczna. But later he learned to value it and was heart and soul with her in her pious endeavors. He made a pilgrimage to the holy places in Jerusalem and died on the way. Judith received the news of his death with deep sorrow, but also with the most perfect conformity with the will of God, and resolved to spend her widowhood in a manner pleasing to God.

After Judith had provided for her children, who had all been reared in the fear of God, with the consent of her confessor, disposed of the costly clothes and jewels she had until then worn in accordance with her rank, as well as all her



expensive furniture. She entered the Third Order of St Francis, and wore the simple garment of a religious. She devoted herself entirely to the care of the sick, especially the lepers, and the poor, whom she visited in their hovels and provided with all necessities. The crippled and the blind she led by the hand to her home and took care of their needs.

Many people laughed at the distinguished lady who made herself the servant of the poorest. But she recognized in the poor her Divine Lord, and

deemed herself happy and highly honored that she could render them such services. Once when she was at prayer, Christ Himself appeared to her and said to her lovingly: "All My treasures are yours, and yours Mine." That spurred Judith on to still greater devotion in serving the poor of Christ.

On the eastern boundary of Germany, at the mouth of the Vistula, the Prussians were still living as pagans. St Adalbert, archbishop of Prague, had indeed attempted to convert them to Christianity, but all in vain; he was martyred in 997. Since 1226 the German Order of Knights labored to bring these stubborn pagans under the yoke of Christ. To offer assistance in the great labor which this undertaking required, God wished someone to pray.

It pleased God that Prussia and the adjacent province of Masovia should at this time receive a special protector and patron from Germany, in the person of Judith. She came to Prussia in 1256, to lead a solitary and austere life in its thick and dark forests, while Boleslaw the Chaste and St Cunegund were reigning in Poland. She chose for

SAINT OF THE MONTH - II

St Francis Caracciolo

13 October 1563 – 04 June 1608

Feast Day: 04 June



St Francis Caracciolo was born in a noble family on October 13, 1563, in Villa Santa Maria (Abruzzo Region). His parents, Ferrante Caracciolo and Isabella Barattucci, baptized him as Ascanio. His mother was a relative of St Thomas Aquinas. He lived a virtuous life as a youth and seemed inclined towards a religious vocation. When he was 22 he contracted a form of leprosy which he begged God to cure him of. He promised to follow what seemed clear to him as his calling to the priesthood immediately upon being cured.

He was cured instantly upon making the promise, and left immediately for Naples to study for the priesthood. After being ordained a priest in 1587, he entered the confraternity of the Bianchi della Giustizia (the white robes of Justice) who ministered to prisoners who were condemned to

death. The confraternity was devoted to helping condemned criminals to die a holy death, reconciled with God.

His real work was revealed to him, however, in 1587, when he mistakenly received a letter addressed to a relative of the same name, Father Fabrizio Caracciolo, the Abbot of St. Mary Major in Naples. He learned from it that the writer, Father Augustine Adorno of Genoa, was planning to found a religious Order of priests whose work would combine both active and contemplative life. The project appealed to Ascanio, and he soon joined forces with Augustine Adorno and Fabrizio Caracciolo.

It was the period after the Council of Trent and Ascanio felt strongly the ideals of the Catholic Reform and saw this opportunity as a providential sign from God and immediately made himself available to the initiatives of Augustine and Fabrizio.

The three fathers retreated to the Camaldolese hermitage in Naples to write the first Constitutions of the Order. In addition to the three evangelical counsels of chastity, poverty and obedience, they contemplated a fourth vow: the renunciation of any ecclesiastical dignity. A particular dedication to the divine worship centered in the Eucharistic Devotions nourished by the Circular Prayer and an austere life expressed in the Circular Penitence were indicated as the main qualities of the spirituality of the new religious Order.

After their stay in the hermitage, Ascanio and Augustine went on foot to Rome to ask for the Papal approval. Sixtus V granted their petition and on July 1, 1588, the new Religious Order was approved under the name of Clerics Regular Minor.

Augustine Adorno and Ascanio Caracciolo made their Religious Profession in the chapel of

the White Servants of Justice (I Bianchi) in Naples on April 9, 1589. Ascanio took the name Francis in honor of his devotion to St Francis of Assisi. They chose the motto: Ad Maiorem Resurgentis Gloriam (For the greater glory of the Risen Christ).

The first community of the Clerics Regular Minor lived and carried out their apostolate at the Church of Mercy in Naples. A few days later, they went for a journey to Spain with the intent of establishing the Order there. They were unsuccessful in establishing the Institute, but they made contacts with other religious orders and leaders. They came back to Naples after a very tiring trip which caused Francis enormous suffering.

The congregation lives both an active and contemplative life, perpetual adoration of the Blessed Sacrament being one of the pillars of their life. They work with the sick, poor, prisoners and

as missionaries. In addition to the vows of chastity, poverty and obedience, they have a fourth which forbids them to seek or accept ecclesiastical honors.



Francis was noted for his ardent devotion to the Blessed Sacrament, often being found in ecstasy. He died of a severe fever on the eve of Corpus Christi in Agnone, on June 4 in 1608, uttering the words: "Let's go, let's go to heaven." His oft repeated words of the Psalm were: "Zeal for Thy house has consumed me." Those same words were found burned into the flesh of his heart when his body was opened after his death. Francis Caracciolo was beatified in 1769 by Pope Clement

XIV. He was canonized on May 24, 1807 by Pope Pius VII.

Source: www.franciscanmedia.org/saint-francis; www.newadvent.org; www.catholicnewsagency.com; www.adornofathers.org ♦

Continued from Page 20: St Judith of Prussia



her dwelling a ruined building, not far from Culm, near a great pond or marsh called Bielezna. The neighbors observed that she was sometimes lifted up from the earth and suspended in the air while she prayed, and that when she went to the new church at

Culm, she sometimes went through the wood a long way round, by the edge of the lake, and sometimes she walked straight across the water by a path which could still be seen after her death.

After Judith had lived here for four years, her holy life came to a close in 1260. With deep

contrition she again confessed to the bishop all, even the smallest, faults of her entire life, received the holy sacraments, and surrendered her soul to God with the words, "It is consummated." Her body was brought to the church at Kulm, where without being informed, so many people at once gathered as had not been seen in that city for many years. Thirteen priests were present at the funeral, a great number at that time, when none but missionaries had settled there, and most of those had been massacred by the barbarians. The church was filled with a wonderful odor.

Since very many miracles were wrought at her grave, a special chapel was built in her honor, in which Judith has been venerated for centuries as the special patron of Prussia.

Source: www.roman-catholic-saints.com; <http://catholic.net>; <http://reginamag.com/saint-jutta-of-thuringia-widow> ♦

Nothing can separate



From her bedroom window, Rebecca eyed the children playing in the snow enviously. How she longed to play with

them!

“Now, Rebecca,” she remembered her father telling her that morning. “You can’t play in the snow today.”

“Why not, Father?” Rebecca had asked.

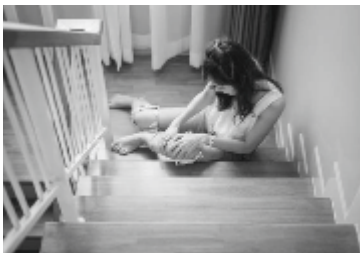
“Just trust me, Rebecca. It’s not what’s best for you today,” her father had replied.

At the time, Rebecca had responded by kissing her father on his cheek and assuring him that she would stay inside and read. But now she was having second thoughts: It is beautiful outside, she thought to herself. The sun was shining brilliantly. Why wouldn’t her father let her go play?

Why should she have to miss out on all the fun?

Leaving her book on the table, Rebecca slipped outside. She tried to tell herself she was having a good time, but all the while her heart felt uncomfortable. She kept looking this way and that, fearful lest her father see her.

After a few hours, Rebecca finally said her goodbyes and headed back towards the house. She



wanted to be safely lodged in her room before her father came home.

Intent on getting to her room as quickly as

possible, Rebecca didn’t see the mitten someone had left on the stairs until her foot slipped on it.

Next thing she knew, she had fallen several stairs. To her horror, she noticed that she had hit her father’s favorite picture when she fell! A huge gash ran along the front of the picture.

Normally, Rebecca would have hurried immediately to her father after such a fall so he could doctor her up and make her feel better. But not this time. How could she face her father right now? She had disobeyed him and ruined his favourite picture! Biting her lips to keep from crying out, Rebecca grabbed the ruined picture and hobbled to her room.

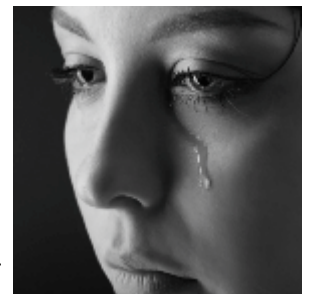
For the remainder of the day, she lay in agony. Her body ached from the bruises she received on her fall. But her heart — ah, that ached worse of all! She felt certain that her father would no longer love her. She had messed up in the past, but surely this time she had gone too far! He would probably never want to speak to her again. How could he still love her?

She sobbed uncontrollably on her pillow. She had always been close to her father. But not now. No, she felt certain that all those wonderful times were over.

Who knows how long she would have lain, thus had not her nanny come in to check on her. Rebecca’s nanny had a way about her of finding out exactly what was wrong and offering solid, wise counsel. Tonight was no exception.

“Rebecca, dear,” she said firmly, but gently. “You’ve been very wrong. But you must not continue in your wrongness by sitting here. You must go to your father with the broken picture in your hand and tell him everything.”

“Oh, but I can’t! I’m not worthy of His love!” Rebecca sobbed.



Her nanny sighed patiently. “You were no more worthy of it yesterday than today, child. Your father loves you because you're his daughter, not because of anything you do or don't do. Hasn't he told you every day since you were a little girl, 'I love you'? Do you doubt his word? Do you really think his love is dependent on you?”



Doubt his word — that was an angle Rebecca had never thought of before. Maybe she should go see her father...yes, she must go see him, for if she didn't, she'd

never be able to rest.

So, still shaking and trembling with fear, Rebecca limped down the hall to the living room. She paused at the doorway. Her father was sitting in his favorite chair, just like he did every night. He looked up when she entered, and a smile radiating with love illuminated his face.

“Ah, you've come at last! I've been waiting. Come, sit here on my lap.” As he spoke, he opened his arms widely.

Rebecca couldn't stand it. “Oh, you don't understand, Father! You can't love me anymore. I've been terribly wicked and—” Rebecca held up the picture frame for her father to see.

“I know, Rebecca — more than you think. I watched you go outside. I watched you fall and hit the picture frame. I saw it all.”

“You did?” Rebecca was flabbergasted. “But— but weren't you at work?”

Her father shook his head. “I took the day off to spend some special time with you. That's why I told you not to go outside to play. Ever since I saw you fall, I've been longing for you to come to me so I could bandage your wounds and help you. Won't you come now?”

Rebecca could hardly believe her ears. Her father had planned to spend the afternoon with her...and she had missed it. Oh, what foolishness! Yet her father knew it all...and loved her anyway. Could it be? “But, Father, how can you love me now?”

Rebecca's father smiled a smile she would never forget. “Rebecca, dear, I loved you before you were born. You're my daughter. And I will always love you. Although sometimes your actions will result in consequences you could have avoided, nothing can ever separate you from my love. Now won't you come and let me help you with those bruises?”

“Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us.” Romans 8:35-37



Courtesy: www.christianperspective.net ♦

Holy Father's Prayer Intentions

May 2021: The world of finance

Let us pray that those in charge of finance will work with governments to regulate the financial sphere and protect citizens from its dangers.

June 2021: The beauty of marriage

Let us pray for young people who are preparing for marriage with the support of a Christian community: may they grow in love, with generosity, faithfulness and patience.

What a joy it is to serve in the house of The Lord

As we celebrate consecrated life and mission this St Peter the Apostle Day, we are looking up to St Rita of Cascia, as an exemplary saint who was destined to combine two vocations through the offering of her life.

With the fires of COVID-19 fuelling anxiety and sadness among us, we pray with her for the closure of the pandemic, which seems impossible at the moment.

Here is a short gist of her life: St Rita (1381 - 1457) was born into a noble and pious family at Margherita, Italy. In her youth, she wanted to join a religious order but was dissuaded and instead, entered into an arranged marriage at the age of 12yrs - not unusual at that time.

St Rita had two sons, the first child when she was still 12yrs old. Her rich husband was very abusive to her and he had many enemies. St Rita endured his insults, physical abuse and infidelities and, slowly over time he began to change. However, a historical family feud persisted and although her husband believed peace had been finally agreed, he was tricked and stabbed to death.

St Rita feared that her sons, now in their mid-teens, would take revenge. Although that may have been their early banter, it was not their intention. However, fate dealt them an unfortunate hand when, about a year later, they both died from dysentery.

After great persistence and a public reconciliation with her husband's murderers, St Rita was finally allowed to enter the St Augustinian Order, aged 36. In the convent, she lived a life of penance and prayer and remained there until her death. She received partial stigmata when praying in front of a crucifix; suddenly a wound appeared on her forehead as if from a thorn of Jesus' 'crown of thorns'. She was then about 60yrs and the wound remained with her for the rest of her life.

St Rita is the Patron Saint of abused and heartbroken wives and, along with St Jude, lost causes. St Rita's incorrupt body is interred in the Basilica of Cascia. Her Feast Day is the 22nd May, the anniversary of the date of her death. (From www.daily-prayers.org)

"Go out to the whole world and PROCLAIM the GOOD NEWS to all creation" Mark 16:15

Come! Make MISSION a MOVEMENT



Pontifical Mission Organizations

works through **FOUR** Mission Societies

**PONTIFICAL SOCIETY
FOR THE
PROPAGATION OF
THE FAITH (PPF)**
was founded in 1822 by
PAULINE MARIE
JARICOT, in Lyon



PROMOTES MISSIONARY
ENTHUSIASM &
PASTORAL CARE

**PONTIFICAL SOCIETY
OF SAINT PETER THE
APOSTLE (POSPA)**
was founded 1889 by
JEANNE BIGARD, in Caen



SERVES FORMATION OF
APOSTOLIC PERSONNEL

**PONTIFICAL SOCIETY
OF MISSIONARY
CHILDHOOD
ASSOCIATIONS (MCA)**
was founded in 1843 by
BISHOP H E CHARLES DE
FORBIN-JANSON, in Nancy



FOSTERS "CHILDREN
HELPING CHILDREN"

**PONTIFICAL
MISSIONARY UNION of
the clergy, religious and
the consecrated laity
(PMU)**
was founded in 1916 by BL
FR PAOLO MANNA, in Rome



ANIMATES TOWARDS
MISSIONARY DISCIPLESHIP

In 1922, Pope Pius XI proclaimed the first three Societies Pontifical.

In 1956, Pope Pius XII proclaimed the fourth one Pontifical.

Let us continue to pray for those affected and suffering due to covid-19 pandemic

ST RITA OF CASCIA (Feast day: 22nd May)

O Powerful St. Rita,
rightly called Saint of the Impossible,
I come to you with confidence in my great need.
You know well my trials,
for you yourself were many times burdened in this life.
Come to my help, speak for me, pray with me,
intercede on my behalf before the Father.
I know that God has a most generous heart
and that he is a most loving Father.
Join your prayers to mine
and obtain for me the grace I desire:

(Share your request...)

You who were so very pleasing to God on earth
and are so much more now in heaven,
I promise to use this favour, when granted,
to better my life, to proclaim God's mercy,
and to make you more widely known and loved. Amen.



For more information contact:

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