



1ST SATURDAY DEVOTION NEWSLETTER

FEBRUARY 2020

In this Issue

Remembering the Unquantifiable Love of God	1
Feasts for February Thank You	2
God Touched Me	3
Spiritual Enrichment Recommended Upcoming Events	5

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REMEMBERING THE UNQUANTIFIABLE LOVE OF GOD

By Christina Fox

When I was in elementary school, each year before Valentine's Day, we would bring in an empty shoebox. We would cover those boxes with pink and red papers and heart shaped cut-outs, and then add our names in big, sparkly letters. When Valentine's Day finally arrived, our classmates would drop cards into a slit cut out at the top of the box. Back then, kids only had to bring in cards for the people they liked. When you went home that afternoon, you counted your cards to see how many friends you had — it was a childish way to measure your worth.

These days, we don't need shoebox Valentines for that, we have social media. Based on the number of likes, follows, retweets, and pins, we can tally up how many "friends" we have, still boiling things down to numbers. We keep record of how much we are loved based on how others treat us. Our relationships are based on quid pro quo — scratching backs and procuring favors. "What have you done for me lately?" is the theme song that defines too many relationships. We only give as much as someone else has given to us. We like to keep the scales balanced. Not only that, but our memories are long. We never lose track of what we are owed.

REAL LOVE CANNOT BE MEASURED

I once found a book on numbers for my kids to read. It listed the names of numbers higher than billions and trillions. Now when they want to exaggerate and say that something is so big, bigger than they can count, they say "googolplex." Yet even a number that high is still quantifiable.

But real love isn't something you can measure. The love God has for us is beyond numbers and can't be tallied. When God promised to bless Abraham with countless children, he used the stars in the sky and the sand on the seashore as a metaphor. These are things people simply cannot count. Paul described the love of Christ as surpassing knowledge (Ephesians 3:19). And the psalmist wrote, "Your steadfast love, O LORD, extends to the heavens, your faithfulness to the clouds" (Psalm 36:5).

God's love for us goes farther than even time itself, into the deep recesses of eternity past. It stretched all the way from forever, forward to the cross, and will continue into eternity future. "He chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love he predestined us for adoption as sons through Jesus Christ" (Ephesians 1:4-5).

His love for us is a love that doesn't hold back. His love gives everything, to the point of sacrificing his very own Son. At the cross, the perfect eternal love of the triune God was shown most vividly as the Son bore all our sins for us. This is unquantifiable, immeasurable love.

Continued on Page 5

FEASTS FOR FEBRUARY

The feasts on the General Roman Calendar celebrated during the month of February are:

- | | |
|-------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 2 Presentation of the Lord, Sunday | 17 Seven Founders of the Orders of Servites, Opt. Mem. |
| 3 Blaise; Ansgar, Opt. Mem. | 21 Peter Damian, Opt. Mem. |
| 5 Agatha, Memorial | 22 Chair of St. Peter, Feast |
| 6 Paul Miki and Companions, Memorial | 23 Seventh Sunday in Ordinary Time, Sunday |
| 8 Jerome Emiliani; Josephine Bakhita, Opt. Mem. | 26 Ash Wednesday, Fasting and Abstinence |
| 9 Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time, Sunday | |
| 10 Scholastica, Memorial | |
| 11 Our Lady of Lourdes, Opt. Mem. | The feast of St. Polycarp (February 23) is superseded by the Sunday liturgy. ☐ |
| 14 Cyril and Methodius, Memorial | |
| 16 Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time, Sunday | |

THANK YOU

... a small and simple phrase that comes from a grateful heart!

Psalm 106:2

<p><u>Las Vegas, Nevada</u> 2000 Hail Devotion February 8, 2020 Robert & Evelyn Pua</p>	<p><u>Los Angeles, California</u> 2000 Hail Mary Devotion February 29, 2020 Jhun & Bless Buan Rudy & Teresa Casasola Norma Fuentes Oliver & Gladys Makabenta Marie Nguyen Carolina Pineda</p>
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OUR CENACLE CORNER

*Seeking a deeper relationship with God
through meditation of passages from Holy Scriptures*

**CREATING OUR CONFIDENCE
THAT GOD HAS GIVEN US**

JUDGES 6:12

GOD TOUCHED ME

MINISTRY IN PROGRESS

By Robert Pua

*For I am confident of this very thing,
that He who began a good work in you will perfect it
until the day of Christ Jesus.*

Letter of St. Paul to the Philippians 1:6

That fateful night, my wife and I took the first step to move to Las Vegas and fulfill the messages "Go to the City of Lights." "You will move on My Feast Day." "First, you will work for yourselves, then, you will work for me" and many more. Without further ado, we prepared for our move to fulfill God's plan. Challenges and blocks were all around us but through the Lord's guidance we were able to overcome them. Everything was orchestrated by the Lord – from the selling of our house in West Hills to the purchasing of our condo in Las Vegas. And the jobs we left behind to new jobs that awaited us. The first church where we held our First Saturday devotion was described by God as "the small church with a big heart." It was indeed a small church during that time and the parish priest there, Fr. James Swenson, now deceased, had a big heart. Some people we talked to then, when asked where the church with a big heart was, knew immediately that it was St. Bridget Catholic Church. Fr. Swenson allowed us to have our devotion there after we told him that there was no room in the inn at the other churches.

The next place the Lord directed us to go, was a small condo to be used as a Cenacle House. We purchased this place as He had said: "8-10 blocks from the church" "beside a market" and the floor plan was described in this manner: "when you open the door, there is a wall, and on the right side is a room which is across the bathroom." This place is where we now have our devotions and cenacle.

And the work continues up to this day through The Spiritual Army of God Ministry: organizing feast celebrations, 2000 Hail Mary devotion/800 Our Father devotion, First Friday, First Saturday and Eternal Father (on First Sundays) devotions, and Cenacle with L.A chapter via Skype. And may I add, starting in the late 90's, charisms captured in pictures touched our hearts and motivated our devotion and faith in God. Together with the devotees He has sent, all these we did and still do for the love of God. And we continually thank God for His guidance and Divine Providence.

To this very day, the manifestations continue keeping us in awe. God will decide what else will be forthcoming; but suffice it to say, we will be there to respond to God's will to continue His work entrusted to all of us. Let the blessings continue through His Ministry. ☐

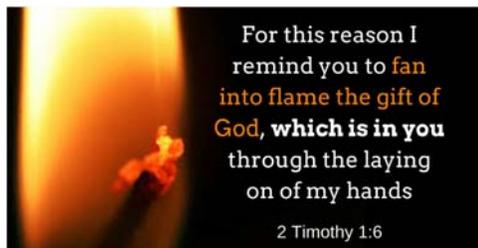
SPIRITUAL ENRICHMENT RECOMMENDED

SEEKING INSPIRATIONAL THOUGHTS AND PRAYERS THROUGH THE BIBLE

ASKING GOD FOR CONFIRMATION

by Victor H. Araneta

When we pray and ask God for some help, changes in our situation arise and confronts us with decisions on what course to take with regard to our life's problems and crises. God will provide the necessary tools to help us come up with a conclusion. First and



foremost this may come from friends or family. Second, through the Holy Scriptures leading us to the same path that prophets or even our Lord Jesus had traversed. Third, through our Dreams. DO NOT ignore

your psyche for in that peaceful moment of your slumber, God comes. Many times, God had spoken through dreams from Jacob to Saint Joseph. Pursue and follow the dream. If it is the right path, you will have peace in your heart.

Prayer: Lord make me an instrument of your plan and help me put your plan right in my path to lead me towards the perfection of my soul and spirituality, bringing peace in my heart. ☐

. . . I am your Mother Mary.

The direction by which others are trying to influence fellow brothers is everywhere in society. Be on the alert, when people think that God doesn't exist. This will result to no morals, no rules and no other things exist to check the actions of men.

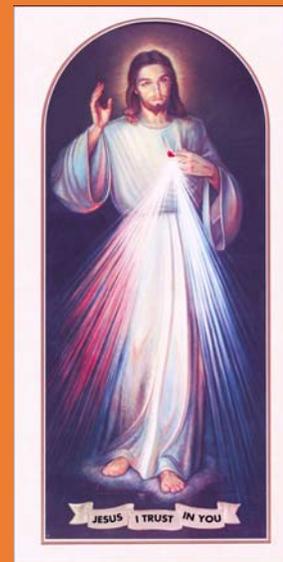
Soon they will learn God's existence. Their direction will destroy society. Do not join them in the direction of destruction that leads to hell.

Mary, Your Lady of the Rosary
02082020

Upcoming Events

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

FEAST OF THE DIVINE MERCY



SUNDAY, APRIL 19, 2020

IN LOS ANGELES:
THE MONASTERY OF THE ANGELES
1977 CARMEN AVENUE ON GOWER
LOS ANGELES, CA 90068

IN LAS VEGAS:
ST. FRANCIS DE SALES
CATHOLIC CHURCH
1111 MICHAEL WAY, LAS VEGAS

DETAILS OF CELEBRATION
TO BE ANNOUNCED LATER

Continued from Page 1

REMEMBERING THE UNQUANTIFIABLE LOVE OF GOD

Unlike many human relationships, we can't add to God's love for us. We can't do anything to make him "unfriend" us. His love for us is perfect and complete. It is not based on what we can do for him or what we have to offer. It can't be that way simply because he has no needs that we could ever meet. His love originates in himself and not in anything we have done or will do. This unconditional love is the love he set on Israel and it is the same love he has for us. "It was not because you were more in number than any other people that the Lord set his love on you and chose you, for you were the fewest of all peoples, but it is because the Lord loves you" (Deuteronomy 7:7-8).

OUR LOVE FOR OTHERS

In our own flesh, our love for others would always be conditional and dependent on how others treat us. But because God has poured out his immeasurable, unquantifiable love for us through Christ, we have been changed. Our hearts of stone have been transformed to hearts of flesh (Ezekiel 36:26). We've been given the Spirit who now lives within us. As the Spirit works in us, making us more like Jesus, he enables us to love in a new and different way. "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness" (Galatians 5:22). Through the work of the Spirit, we can give without expecting anything in return. We can be patient, kind, and compassionate. We can love as Jesus loves.

But there is an order to this love that we cannot forget. It originates with God. He is the beginning and source to our love. First John 4:19 says, "We love because he first loved us." We cannot truly love apart from him. Only as we abide in God's love can we extend his love to others.

So this Valentine's Day, as the world keeps a tally of love, may we never forget that God's love for us is greater than anything we can imagine. It is greater than googolplex and more than the stars in the sky. It is immeasurable, steadfast, and permanent. And that same amazing love has been given to us to extend it to others. May we give that love, without keeping score, knowing that God's love for us keeps no record, because in Jesus, our debts have been marked: "paid in full." □

Christina Fox (@christinafox) writes for a number of Christian ministries and publications including True Woman, ERLC, and The Gospel Coalition. She is the author of *Idols of a Mother's Heart* (forthcoming) and *Closer Than a Sister: How Union with Christ helps Friendships to Flourish*. You can find her at www.christinafox.com and on Facebook.