



1ST SATURDAY DEVOTION NEWSLETTER

June 2016

In this Issue

Saintly Marriages The Good, The Bad & the Holy	1
Overview of the Month Feasts for June Cenacle Corner	2
Highlights of the Month	3
God Touched Me	5
Spiritual Enrichment Recommended	6
Spiritual Army Dispatch	7
Thank You	11
Devotion Schedule	

THE EDITORS OF THE SPIRITUAL ARMY OF GOD THE FATHER'S 1ST SATURDAY NEWSLETTER ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR MAINTAINING THE CONSISTENT QUALITY AND ACCURACY OF THE SPIRITUAL ARMY OF GOD THE FATHER'S 1ST SATURDAY NEWSLETTER AND AS SUCH RESERVE THE RIGHT TO REJECT OR EDIT THE CONTENT OF ALL SUBMISSIONS FOR PUBLICATION. EDITING MAY INCLUDE, BUT IS NOT LIMITED TO, CHANGES TO GRAMMAR, SYNTAX AND STYLES, REMOVAL OF OFFENSIVE CONTENT AND REMOVAL OF PERSONAL NON-PUBLIC INFORMATION. SUBMISSION OF YOUR ARTICLE SIGNIFIES YOUR AGREEMENT TO THE TERMS AFOREMENTIONED.

SAINTLY MARRIAGES: THE GOOD, THE BAD & THE HOLY

By: Karee Santos
www.catholicdigest.com

The saints are our cheering section in heaven, rooting for us to finish the race and win the victor's crown. They can show us how to be better people, better Catholics, and better husbands and wives. Although many saints come from the ranks of the priesthood and the religious life, there are more than 100 married saints and blessed who show us how to live up to the beautiful but difficult vocation of marriage and parenthood.

Some saints had great marriages, and other saints had dreadful ones. But in every one of their life stories, these men and women reached sainthood through the grace-filled choices they made as spouses and parents.

Doing little things with great love.

It's easy to be intimidated by the perfection of the Holy Family and wonder how ordinary people can ever imitate their example. It helps to think that God's notion of perfection may not match up exactly with ours. For Mary



perfection probably didn't mean she whipped up five-star recipes every day and had the best decorated house in town. For Joseph perfection most likely didn't mean out-earning everyone in Nazareth or becoming head of the local carpenters' guild. Instead Mary and Joseph did little things with great love—and we can, too.

The basic routines of Mary and Joseph's daily lives mirrored ours. Mary was a stay-at-home mom. She cooked, cleaned, and took care of her home and family. St. Joseph worked to support his wife and son with his strong back and skilled labor.

Like any parents, Joseph and Mary wanted the best for their child. They showed Jesus how to pray and how to obey and respect them. They made sure he learned how to read the Holy Scriptures so he could speak before the assembly in the temple when he was older (see Luke 4:16–17). They trained him to be a carpenter like his father.

They didn't hitch up the donkey and trot Jesus around to extracurricular activities or push for Jesus to get into the best schools in the best towns in Israel. They didn't urge him to enter into the most prestigious profession. All those things can be good, but none of them are necessary.

Continued on Page 8

OVERVIEW FOR THE MONTH

www.catholicculture.org

The month of June is dedicated to The Sacred Heart of Jesus. This month falls within the liturgical season of Ordinary Time, which is represented by the liturgical color green.

Ordinary Time, the longest of all the seasons, is the hour to “go out to all the world and tell the good news.” The feasts of June highlight this expansion of the Church. At least ten times, the Church vests in the red of the martyrs whose blood is the very seed

of her growth. She also celebrates the feasts of the apostles Peter and Paul, and the birth of St. John the Baptist, proto-disciple and prophet.

We too are called to be witnesses like the apostles and martyrs. May the Heart of Jesus inflame our hearts so that we may be worthy of our Baptismal call to holiness. Immaculate Heart of Mary, pray for us. ☐

FEASTS FOR JUNE

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

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1 Justin, Memorial | 24 Nativity of John the Baptist, Solemnity |
| 2 Marcellinus and Peter, Opt. Mem. | 26 Thirteenth Sunday of Ordinary Time, Sunday |
| 3 Sacred Heart of Jesus, Solemnity | 27 Cyril of Alexandria, Opt. Mem. |
| 4 Immaculate Heart of Mary, Memorial | 28 Irenaeus, Memorial |
| 5 Tenth Sunday in Ordinary Time, Sunday | 29 Peter and Paul, Solemnity |
| 6 Norbert, Opt. Mem. | 30 First Martyrs of the Church of Rome, Opt. Mem. |
| 9 Ephrem, Opt. Mem. | |
| 11 Barnabas, Memorial | |
| 12 Eleventh Sunday in Ordinary Time, Sunday | |
| 13 Anthony of Padua, Memorial | |
| 19 Twelfth Sunday in Ordinary Time, Sunday | |
| 21 Aloysius Gonzaga, Memorial | |
| 22 Paulinus of Nola; John Fisher and Thomas More, Opt. Mem. | |

The feasts of St. Boniface (June 5) and St. Josemaria Escriva (June 26), and are superseded by the Sunday liturgy. The feast of St. Charles Lwanga and Companions (June 3) is superseded by the Solemnity of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. ☐

OUR CENACLE CORNER

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

MATTHEW 12:43

THAT THERE ARE LEVELS OF WICKEDNESS IN SATAN'S KINGDOM.

REV 2:20

CHARACTERISTICS AND SPIRIT OF JEZEBEL

2 KINGS 9:22;

1 KINGS 16:31;

2 KINGS 9:30-37

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE MONTH

CLOSE TO THE HEART OF THE SON IS THE HEART OF THE MOTHER

By Rev. Luciano Alimandi | Agenzia Fides June 13, 2007

The Church, in this month of June, giving us the solemnity of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, wishes us to understand the consequential devotion to Our Lady traditionally lived in the Marian month par excellence: the month of May. The Heart of Jesus is the See and Throne of Divine Mercy, revealed to the world in the passion, death and resurrection of Christ.

The Holy Father Pope Benedict XVI speaking of the solemnity of the Sacred Heart of Jesus two years ago said: "In biblical language, "heart" indicates the centre of the person where his sentiments and intentions dwell. In the Heart of the Redeemer we adore God's love for humanity, his will for universal salvation, his infinite mercy. Practising devotion to the Sacred Heart of Christ therefore means adoring that Heart which, after having loved us to the end, was pierced by a spear and from high on the Cross poured out blood and water, an inexhaustible source of new life" (Benedict XVI, Angelus 5 June 2005).

The call which comes from this important feast day is first of all a call to Eucharistic adoration, because in the Sacred Host the Lord Jesus is truly present and He offers each of us His Heart, His Merciful Love. To spend time in the Presence of the Eucharistic Lord, to adore Him, is the best expression of devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus which, as we know, spread all over the world thanks to Jesus' revelations to Saint Margherita M. Alacoque in the 17th century: "Behold the Heart which so loved mankind"!

As a prolongation and accomplishment of this message, the Lord appeared to another Sister in the 20th century revealing the abyss of His unfathomable mercy; she was Saint Faustina Kowalska who wrote in her Diary, now world famous, these words of Jesus: "I have opened my Heart as a living source of Mercy, from it all souls draw life, all approach with deep confidence this sea of Mercy. Sinners will obtain justification and the just will be strengthened in goodness. I will fill the souls of those who put their trust in My Mercy with My divine peace at the hour of their death. My daughter, continue to spread devotion to My Mercy, in doing so you will refresh My

Heart which burns with the fire of compassion for sinners. Tell my priests that hardened sinners will be softened by their words if they speak of my boundless Mercy and of the compassion which My Heart feels for them. I will give priests who proclaim and exalt My Mercy wondrous power, unction to their words and I will move all the hearts to which they speak" (Book 5, 21 January 1938).

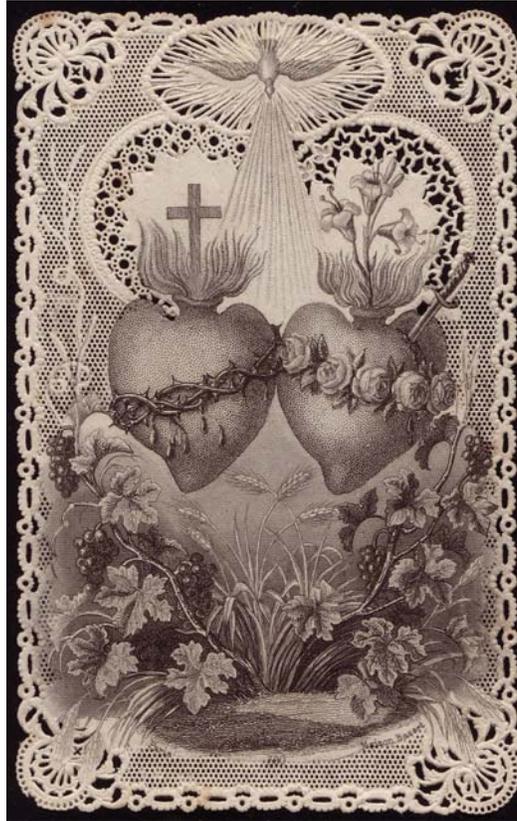
The deepest longing of Christ's Heart is that we discover how much he loves us, the extent of his tender love for creatures who, cooled by their selfishness, look only inwards at themselves, as if they were afraid to let themselves be loved unconditionally by their Creator, who asks nothing and gives all!

How society, culture, economy, politics today need this Heart! It is really true, the more man distances himself from God-Love the more he becomes 'heartless', agitated about a thousand things because he has mislaid the principal one: to let oneself be loved by Christ and to respond to this Love with our love.

Many times during history the Supreme Pontiffs have reminded humanity that without the Lord Jesus life has no real meaning, man gropes in the dark to find himself! The

Servant of God John Paul II introduced the Church into the Third Millennium with a mandate to become "Apostles of Divine Mercy". The Holy Father Pope Benedict XVI picked up where his Predecessor left off and never tires to remind us of the necessity to rediscover the merciful Heart, this infinite Love of God, who reveals Himself in our lives if we open to Him. "Open, open wide the doors to Christ" the voice of the Holy Spirit continues to say. By means of Eucharistic adoration we are "opened" from within by His invisible working in us. The Most Holy Eucharist, celebrated and adored, as the Church teaches us, is the greatest and most effective treasure of our salvation, an infinite treasure which must be safeguarded with profound respect and deepest devotion.

Continued on Page 9



ABBA FATHER! EXPERIENCING GOD'S LOVE

*By Bob Sheire
Printed with Permission
www.wau.org*

In the past, there were two persons of the Trinity whom I loved and experienced and prayed to— the Son and the Holy Spirit. The Father, however, was always somewhere in the distance, a person I could not reach. I didn't feel I was worthy to reach him, nor did I believe that he had time for me.

Within this last year, however, I have found that the Father is not only approachable, but that he longs for a relationship with his sons and daughters. We must learn to accept that and to return his love. We have to understand how real he is, how passionately in love he is with his creation, how deeply he wants to have a personal relationship with us. The Father doesn't need this relationship, but we need it, and he wants it.

The reasons for my emotional distance from my God the Father are deep-seated. You see, I never knew my biological father as I was growing up. He was a bank robber in Indiana, and he was arrested and put in prison when I was only one week old. My mother remarried and I was given my stepfather's name: Sheire. My stepfather was a hardworking man, but unfortunately he was an alcoholic and abusive. Childhood for me was filled with many painful experiences of my stepfather; I never knew a father's love.

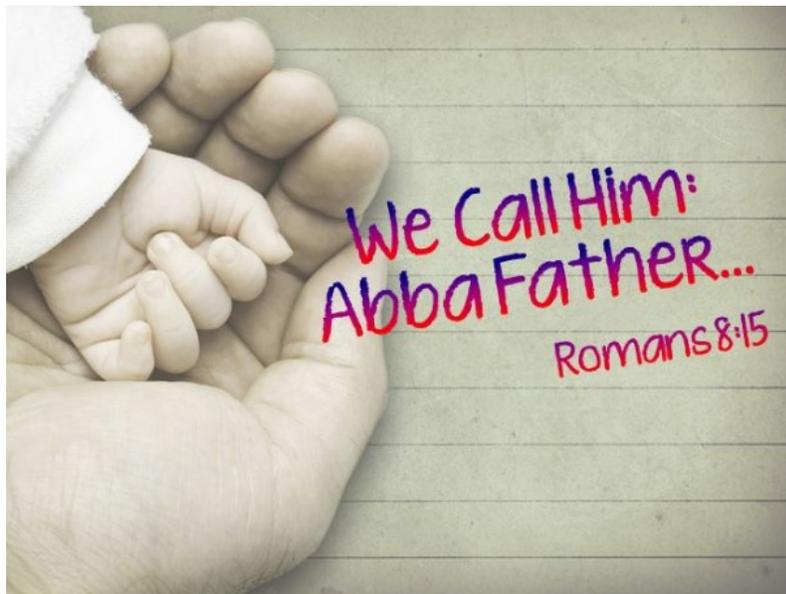
When I was about twenty years old, shortly after I got married, I saw my real father on television: He had become a Baptist missionary in South America. When I saw this preacher, I was amazed that he had the same name that I thought was my real name, Harold Robert Holflinger. Back in those days, television was live, so I called the station and asked to speak to the minister. He was still there, and I asked him: "Do you have two sons by the name of Louis and Bob?" There was a long silence. Then he asked me who I was. I said, "I'm Bob." He answered, "Well, I'm your father."

Searching for Fatherly Love

I met with my real father a couple of times, but didn't actively pursue a relationship with him because my stepfather was still alive. As bad as that relationship was, I felt a loyalty to him because he had put a roof over my head and food on the table. But after my stepfather died, I began to see my biological father on a regular basis. We were able to establish a good relationship, but the anger and pain about his having abandoned me still remained. Fatherly love still seemed to be eluding me.

As my wife and I grew in our relationship, I became a father myself— in fact, the father of eight children over the next twelve years. I always tried to be a good father and I grew closer to the church—but there was a void in my life. Because I had never known a father's love, it was difficult for me to love my children. Looking back now, I can see the many times when I failed my children. Even so, the Lord was watching over them because they have all grown up to be fine adults.

As the children got older, my wife and I had more time to seek the wonderful things that the church had to offer. About a year ago, a number of my friends attended a conference that focused on the Father's love. I was not able to go, but I asked them to bring back tapes of the talks so I could listen and pray about what I heard. As I spent time with those tapes, praying and studying scripture, I asked the Father to reveal to me how much he loved me, because I desperately needed to know the love of a father. During one particular time of prayer, God did reveal his deep love for me; it was probably the most wonderful experience of my sixty-three years of life. I came to understand how wonderfully the Father loved me, how much he cared for me—even that he was my Daddy. I felt that I was being cradled in his arms, sitting on his lap like a beloved child. I felt as if all of the fatherly love that had been denied me over the years was poured into me in a few hours' time.



Continued on Page 10

GOD TOUCHED ME

HEAL ME LORD, AND I WILL BE HEALED

The prayer you offered in faith will make a person heal.

- James 5:15

By Mila Lumba, a devotee

God gave me a new kidney, a gift of a new life! On August 19, 2006, I had a successful kidney transplant. Recovering at the hospital right after surgery, I have experienced, by the grace of God, very little pain, one that could be relieved by Tylenol and Mother Mary's mantle.

We seldom hear about one's life after transplant, and it seems like it is "living happily ever after." Mind you, this is just the beginning of a great struggle, one that will make you learn to cling to God in all aspects and mainly to TRUST IN GOD!

After my kidney transplant, I was prescribed a steroid called the anti-rejection pill which I had to take daily. Soon after, complications set in: diabetes, high blood pressure, high triglycerides, shortness of breath, vision impairment, sleep apnea, weight gain, to name the major issues. Then came a series of visits to different doctors: primary care physician, endocrinologist, nephrologist, and cardiologist; followed by lab work and doctors' visits every three months. Every chore I did, was a struggle. In the beginning, there were times that depression and fear set in, only to be pulled back into God's arms through prayers, several pray-over and learning more about God and my faith through The Spiritual Army of God the Father ("Spiritual Army") cenacles. Joining Spiritual Army ministry has greatly helped me survive all of the difficult times I have been through. Over time and with God's grace, all the above illnesses and doctor's visits became routine to me.

Just when I was getting comfortable with all these, I was hospitalized in October, 2013 due to an infected boil, another complication of my diabetes. After days of staying at the hospital undergoing different procedures, the doctors finally decided to do a surgical procedure. It took them a while to come to that decision because of my kidney transplant and the diseases brought about by the anti-rejection pills which made my medical history quite complicated. After a few days, I was transferred to a rehabilitation facility. Not long after, I was brought back to the hospital, stayed there for a week, and then sent to another rehab facility. I was finally released on December 23, 2013 with nurse's home visits scheduled weekly.

For the duration of this two-month hospitalization, my family and friends just saw the physical suffering I was going through. People do not realize what is going on inside a sick person's mind which is practically nothing and just crying out for help. I was not coherent for

several days and could not even remember who visited me or called me. Fortunately, God has blessed me with wonderful friends who supported me and my family. My nurse friend, Daisy, who was like a daughter to me, was always by my side, taking care of me in every opportunity she had and even stayed overnight in my hospital room. She would always pray the rosary with me. I would pray and then fall out of it and wake up with her still praying the rosary. Unfortunately, Daisy was murdered by her husband days after I got out of the hospital. Vi brought the Holy Eucharist to me every day without fail. Guada occasionally came to the hospital and helped Daisy take care of me. Other friends visited or called me and always gave me spiritual strength to help me get through this hard time. Everyone was praying for me. Lying in my hospital bed, I then realized how much sick people need prayers because it is very difficult for patients to pray on their own since they are either incoherent due to all kinds of medications or always getting that much needed rest.

It was December 23, 2013 when I was released by the doctors. I thank God once again for allowing me to celebrate a quiet yet joyful Christmas with my family. Being back home and feeling much better, I had more time with the Lord. I attended mass every day, visited the Blessed Sacrament and prayed unceasingly. Every minute of my waking and sleeping hours I offered to God and slowly learned to offer my life to Him. In little ways, I have learned that when trials come my way, I do not dwell on what will happen, no more fear of getting sick, no more fear of the inevitable. Through cenacles and conversations with friends who share their spirituality, I learned to trust GOD and say from my heart, without hesitation, "YOUR WILL BE DONE, O LORD." All this learning is a slow process. We must allow God's Holy Spirit to help us.

I know, my life is still not a "living happily ever after" because as long as we are alive, struggles, trials and tribulations will always come our way. We must remember, to hold on to our faith, to our hope and to our love for God. Keep your positive attitude. Going through the process of any trial is challenging physically, emotionally and mentally. But giving up is never an option. Life is beautiful and getting a second chance to explore it and create your own adventures is the most amazing gift God could ever give us. WE can do it. TRUST IN GOD and God will always be there for you. •□

SPIRITUAL ENRICHMENT RECOMMENDED

WHY DID GOD STRIKE UZZAH DEAD FOR TOUCHING THE ARK OF THE COVENANT? [A LESSON ON OBEDIENCE AND REVERENCE TO GOD]

S. Michael Houdmann of Got Questions Ministries

The story of Uzzah and the Ark of the Covenant is found in 2 Samuel 6:1-7 and 1 Chronicles 13:9-12. As the ark was being transported, the oxen pulling the cart stumbled, and a Levite named Uzzah took hold of the ark. God's anger burned against Uzzah and He struck him down and he died. Uzzah's punishment does appear to be extreme for what we might consider to be a good deed. However, there are the reasons why God took such severe action.

First, God had given Moses and Aaron specific instructions about the Tent of Meeting and the movement of the Ark of the Covenant. "After Aaron and his sons have finished covering the holy furnishings and all the holy articles, and when the camp is ready to move, the Kohathites are to come to do the carrying. But they must not touch the holy things or they will die. The Kohathites are to carry those things that are in the Tent of Meeting" (Numbers 4:15). No matter how innocently it was done, touching the ark was in direct violation of God's law and was to result in death. This was a means of preserving the sense of God's holiness and the fear of drawing near to Him without appropriate preparation.

Notice how David took men with him to collect the ark, rather than allowing Abinadab and his sons to bring it to him. That was a great mistake, since it ought never to have been put upon a cart, old or new. It was to be borne upon men's shoulders, and carried by Levites only, and those of the family of Kohath (Exodus 25:12-14; Numbers 7:9), using the poles prescribed. Failing to follow God's precise instructions would be seen as (a) not revering God's words when He spoke them through those such as Moses, whom He had appointed; (b) having an independent attitude that might border on rebellion, i.e., seeing and acting on things from a worldly, rather than a spiritual, perspective; or (c) disobedience.

Second, the ark had stayed for a period of time at Abinadab's house (2 Samuel 6:3), where his sons, Uzzah and Ahio, may well have become accustomed to its presence. There's an old saying, "familiarity breeds contempt," that could apply in this case. Uzzah, having been around the ark in his own home, could very likely forget the holiness that it represented. There are times when we, too, fail to recognize the holiness of God, becoming too familiar with Him with an irreverent attitude.

Third, the account tells us the oxen stumbled. The cart didn't fall and neither did the Ark, just as the boat carrying Jesus and the disciples rocked fiercely in the storm, though it wasn't necessarily in danger of sinking (Matthew 8:24-27). And yet, just as with the disciples who failed to put their faith in their Master, Uzzah, for a moment, felt it was his responsibility to save the integrity of God, and that our almighty God somehow needed Uzzah's assistance. He presumed that, without his intervention, God's presence would be dealt a blow. As Job asks, "Can you fathom the mysteries of God?" (Job 11:7). "His greatness no-one can fathom" (Psalm 145:3). "His understanding no-one can fathom" (Isaiah 40:28). Moses lost his right to enter the promised land because he felt his intervention was needed when he struck the rock, instead of speaking to it as God had commanded (Numbers 20:7-12). We need to listen carefully to what God has to say to us, and in obedience strive to do all He commands. Yes, God is loving and merciful, but He is also holy and He defends His holiness with His power, and affronts to His holiness sometimes bring about His holy wrath. "It is a dreadful thing to fall into the hands of the living God" (Hebrews 10:31).

Something of God's presence in the Ark of the Covenant seems to be lost in the church today. In the time of Moses, the people knew the awesomeness of God's absolute holiness. They had witnessed great miracles when the ark was with them. They respected that God's ways and thoughts are much higher than ours (Isaiah 55:8-9). In truth, the more we try to bring God down to our worldly way of thinking or reasoning, the further away He will seem to us. Those who would draw near to God and have Him draw near to them are those who approach Him in reverence and holy fear. Uzzah forgot that lesson, and the consequences were tragic. □

SPIRITUAL ARMY NEWS DISPATCH

MOTHER MARY'S CROWNING

Of all the 1st Saturdays, the one in May is the most special for the members of The Spiritual Army of God the Father ("the Spiritual Army"). It is in May that we honor Mary, the Queen of heaven and earth, with a crown of flowers, thanking her for her cooperation in the plan that changed the destiny of the world!

The celebration was made more special because the children were all dressed for Mother Mary.

In LA, the celebration started with a procession of the Spiritual Army's Our Lady of Fatima statue in her special carriage bedecked with blooming white roses. Devotees each took turns offering their flowers and petitions to the Blessed Mother, as they sang "Bring Flowers of the Rarest" and other Marian songs. The flower offering was followed by a Holy Mass celebrated by Fr. Vincent Hughes. The climax of the celebration was the moment when Sister Joanna and Marlou Mara-Galindo, placed a crown of flowers and a crown on Mother Mary's head, as devotees sang the familiar song, "O Mary we crown thee with blossoms today". After the crowning, all mothers, grandmothers and all the women present received a special blessing from Fr. Vincent.

Las Vegas devotees also celebrated Mother Mary's Crowning by following the Rites of Crowning and floral offering. Mother Mary was crowned by Maria Sheets and Evelyn Pua. The liturgy of the mass and crowning ceremony were officiated by Fr. Ding Salditos. Maria Theresa Muego provided the worship songs and

music. After the crowning, all mothers, grandmothers and all the women present received a special blessing from Fr. Ding. The First Saturday Devotional prayers followed. It was indeed a beautiful ceremony with everyone pouring out their love for Mother Mary with offerings, songs and

prayers. A simple yet special poem, was also offered to Mother Mary which made the devotees teary eyed. •

In the Philippines, Mother Mary's crowning took place on Saturday, May 14 at Mother Of Perpetual Help Parish in Babag, Lapu-Lapu City, starting with a procession at 7:30 AM, led by Crista Marie



UPCOMING EVENTS

TOY DRIVE FOR THE LOS ANGELES CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL

PLEASE DROP OFF YOUR NEW UNWRAPPED TOYS EVERY 1ST AND 3RD SATURDAYS AT THE CONVENT OF THE SISTER DISCIPLES OF THE DIVINE MASTER

1ST SATURDAY DEVOTION FOR THE MONTH OF JULY

JULY 16, 2016
CONVENT OF THE SISTER DISCIPLES OF THE DIVINE MASTER | LOS ANGELES

FEAST OF GOD THE FATHER

SUNDAY, AUGUST 7, 2016
THE MONASTERY OF THE ANGELS ON CARMEN & GOWER IN LOS ANGELES

IN LAS VEGAS
DETAILS TO FOLLOW.

PILGRIMAGE TO HOLY LAND & JORDAN

DECEMBER 5-15, 2016
DAILY ACTIVITIES AND OTHER INFORMATION ARE AVAILABLE AT WWW.SPIRITUALARMYOFGOD.ORG

Continued on Page 9

SAINTLY MARRIAGES

Their perfect lives had some imperfect moments. When Joseph learned that Mary was pregnant, he thought of divorcing her quietly. But when God sent an angel to Joseph in a dream, encouraging him to take Mary as his wife, Joseph did the right thing (see Matthew 1:18–20). Joseph couldn't find a room in an inn for his wife to give birth. But he stayed with her and helped her make do with the little they had (see Luke 2:7). Joseph and Mary even lost their son for three days in the big city of Jerusalem, far away from their home village. But they searched for him and found him together (see Luke 2:43–46).

Like Mary and Joseph, we can live the ordinary moments of our lives knowing we are achieving something extraordinary. Every little act of service is a step closer to sainthood. Every obstacle conquered together reinforces a lifetime bond of love.

First married couple ever canonized together.

Despite the existence of more than 100 married saints and blessed, the Church has never formally canonized a married couple until the historic event in October 2015, when Pope Francis will canonize Blessed Louis and Zélie Martin, parents of the beloved St. Thérèse of Lisieux.

The Martins lived a comfortable middle-class life in 19th century France. Louis was a watchmaker, and Zélie was a skilled crafter of gorgeous point d'Alençon lace. They met while walking in the countryside—a chance meeting as they crossed a bridge. Catching sight of Louis' face, Zélie suddenly heard a voice in her heart saying, "This is he whom I have prepared for you." They married three months later, when she was 27 and he was 35.

The Martins enjoyed fishing, billiards, traveling, and parties. But they also attended daily Mass, prayed the Angelus every day at noon, and kept Sundays as a day of rest. They had nine children, four of whom died in infancy. Five daughters survived—Marie, Pauline, Leonie, Celine, and Thérèse. Thérèse, the youngest, was a special favorite of her father, who called her his "little queen."

The Martins' 19-year marriage ended when Zélie died of cancer in 1877 at the age of 45. Thérèse was only four years old when her mother died. Louis raised his five girls by himself with some help from nearby relatives. The sisters tenderly took care of one another. Louis supported the decision of every one of his daughters to enter religious life, many in cloisters cut off from the outside world, even though this meant he would be left virtually alone in his old age.

The Martins were not great philosophers, brave martyrs, or founders of religious orders. The most important thing they did during their lives was to create a family environment that nurtured the blossoming sainthood of

their smallest child, Thérèse. This is what all mothers and fathers are called to do—to raise their children to be saints. The example of the Martins gives us hope that we can follow in their footsteps.

Never give up. St. Monica is well-known both for suffering through a terrible marriage and for converting her husband and wayward son through many years of prayer. She lived in fourth century North Africa. Although she was Christian, her parents arranged for her to marry a Roman pagan named Patricius. He was bad-tempered and according to some accounts both physically abusive and unfaithful.

Monica responded to her difficult situation with sweetness, patience, and constant prayer for her husband's conversion. Although Monica's habits of almsgiving and prayer annoyed Patricius, he grudgingly respected them. After decades of marriage, Patricius finally converted to Christianity, won over by his wife's unwavering kindness.

A year later Patricius died. Their oldest son, Augustine, was 17 years old at the time. A brilliant student, Augustine went away to school and began to run wild. Monica at first refused to let him return home, but after experiencing a vision in which a mysterious figure said, "Your son is with you," Monica relented.

When Monica described her vision to Augustine, he suggested that his mother turn away from Christianity, since her faith was the biggest obstacle in their relationship. Monica quipped that the mysterious figure told her Augustine was with her, not she with Augustine. She clung to her faith and prayed daily for his conversion. Seeking advice from a holy bishop, Monica received the advice that still consoles many anguished mothers today—"It is not possible that the son of so many tears should perish."

Shortly before Monica's death, Augustine converted and later became a bishop, an influential theologian, and a canonized saint. On Monica's deathbed, she told her son that her life's work was fulfilled because all she had desired was to see him become a Christian before she died. St. Monica is a special model for those whose husbands and children have gone astray and an inspiring example of the power of persevering prayer.

It's never too late. St. Helen, the mother of Emperor Constantine, lived in the Roman Empire during the third and fourth centuries. After almost 20 years of marriage, Helen's husband, Constantius, a Roman general, divorced her in order to marry a younger, more politically connected woman.

Helen remained in obscurity for two decades, never remarrying, until she returned to public life when her husband died and her son Constantine became emperor. Constantine became the first Roman emperor to convert to Christianity, and Helen converted as well. She donated generously to the poor and founded many churches.

When she was almost 80 years old, she went on a pilgrimage to the Holy Land. Previous Roman emperors had erected temples to the Roman gods and goddesses on the sites of many places holy to Christianity. A shrine to Adonis perched atop the place in Bethlehem where Jesus was born. A temple to Venus, the Roman goddess of love, stood atop Mount Golgotha, or Cavalry, where Jesus was crucified.

Influenced by his mother, Emperor Constantine ordered the destruction of the pagan buildings and the construction of churches to replace them. These churches are still open to pilgrims today, including the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem and the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem. During the construction of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, Helen discovered the remnants of the true cross on which Jesus was crucified. Although her husband abandoned her, Helen and her son changed the course of Christian history for the better.

All saints can inspire us. But for spouses, the married saints provide a specific roadmap for the vocation to matrimony, a suggested route from earth to heaven. Married saints reveal the eternal value of the everyday work of spouses and parents. They remind us to nurture our children's souls as well as their minds and bodies. They provide us with hope for a happy ending, even when it's not what we expected. They remind us that the hard times will pass away and the best is yet to come.

Karee Santos is a happily married mom of six and a popular writer and speaker on Catholic marriage. She and her husband, Manuel P. Santos, M.D., are co-authors of a Catholic marriage advice book published by Ave Maria Press in 2016. Karee's writing can also be found at CatholicMatchInstitute.com and her personal blog, CanWeCana.blogspot.com.

Continued from Page 4

CLOSE TO THE HEART OF THE SON

Close to the Heart of the Son is the Heart of the Mother whom the Church celebrates the day after the solemnity of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. Let it again be the Holy Father who illuminates us with regard to this mystery: "The heart that resembles that of Christ more than any other is without a doubt the Heart of Mary, his Immaculate Mother, and for this very reason the liturgy holds them up together for our veneration. Responding to the Virgin's invitation at Fatima, let us entrust the whole world to her Immaculate Heart, so that it may experience the merciful love of God and know true peace" (Benedict XVI, Angelus 5 June 2005). ☐

Continued from Page 4

ARMY DISPATCH

Baguio and Patricia Herrera who crowned Mother, followed by twelve ladies carrying red roses, then by parishioners and guests carrying lighted candles. The procession revolved around the vicinity of the Church

ending at its multi-purpose building where devotees sang Marian songs in the Visayan dialect. Mother Mary's crowning took place during the Mass celebrated by Fr. Arnulfo Jumao. The 2000 Hail Mary Devotion concluded the Coronation. The celebration was a great success that all who attended are looking forward to next year's May Crowning!



Our congratulations and appreciation to our faithful devotee, Dorie Cortes, who has chosen to retire in the Philippines to propagate The Spiritual Army of God the Father's devotions and other devotions and projects! ☐



... My Mercy to protect and save you before My Father becoming intense as you recite the Rosary of Mercy before the dying person. My Sacred Heart becomes the beacon of light guiding the person (dying) through the true light of My Father's bottomless sea of mercy of forgiveness.

Do not let this Hour of Mercy escape your whole being then it comes. Remember my children, the evil one knows My Mercy, too, and he works to make My Mercy guide you in his light of deception. Pray for discernment of My Mercy from the rays of God's Divine Mercy.

Jesus of Nazareth, Your loving and merciful God

ABBA FATHER!

Running into Our Father's Arms

When we are small children, we run eagerly to our daddies. What joy we feel as we are received by them! They raise you up, lift you high, and bounce you on their knees. That is what I experienced with my heavenly Father. It was simply acceptance—what I had always wanted from a father and very seldom received. Many of us have experienced times when we needed our fathers but they were not there for us, perhaps through no fault of their own. I've never experienced that loss with my heavenly Father; his love is constant. Over this past year, whenever I have felt unhappy, I turn to him and he pours out his mercies and blessings.

In my case—and I'm sure I'm not alone in this—my relationships with my father and my stepfather were so flawed that I looked at God the Father in fear. I was unsure that he was capable of giving me any more love than they had. Praise God, the Father has no flaws in his love. There are no strings attached. His love is unconditional. He says: "I love you; I created you; my Son Jesus died for you; our relationship is secure." And that is the difference.

I can now see that my fatherly love for my children was often conditional. I loved them more when they were good than I did when they were not good, more when they obeyed than when they disobeyed. My children are now in their 30's and 40's, but it's not too late. I am

trying to reflect the compassionate love of the Father to my children, to have more compassion for them. I hope that, in time, this will enable them to experience the Father's love as I have experienced it.

I have forgiven my biological father and I have also forgiven my stepfather. But this could not happen until I had come to know my heavenly Father's love. I hold no anger toward either man. I can't hold anger against anybody, because the Father holds no anger against me. During my initial experience of coming to know the Father's love, I felt him reassuring me that I would never be angry with anyone again. Even though I can be very hotheaded at times, since that time a year ago, I have not been angry with anyone. God healed me tremendously in that regard.

I've always known that Jesus loved me because he died on the cross for me; he poured out his precious blood for me. I've understood that, and I've experienced the presence of Jesus in my life. Yet when I asked the Father to come into my life, it was an even greater experience. Jesus is the Father's Son, and I am the Father's son. I am a brother to Jesus, and that same love and compassion that the Father has for his Son Jesus, he has for me. It's hard to comprehend that with all the billions of people in the world, the Father is so intimately in love with each and every one of us. But we have to understand that this is the nature of our Father's heart. ☐

Bob Sheire and his wife Rita are retired and live in Clearwater, Florida. They have eight children and seventeen grandchildren.

"CHANGING REGIONS"

© 1998-2016, Heartlight Inc.

Then Jesus went in a boat with his followers to the area of Dalmanutha. — [Mark 8:10 \(ERV\)](#)

KEY THOUGHT:

Sometimes God's truths need to be heard with finality and without a lot of discussion. The power of the simple truth takes time to be absorbed. The starkness or challenge of the truth sometimes needs to be left in the hands of the hearers and the messenger needs to move on to the next group of people who need God's truth, grace, and hope. May God give us the wisdom to know when to stay and when to go. May God's grace give us the love to stay in tough circumstances when it is His will and the courage to leave when we need to move on to other places. May the Father give us the courage to leave and allow time for the Word to convict and germinate in the hearts of men and women who are not ready to respond immediately.

TODAY'S PRAYER:

Father in heaven, I cannot read the hearts of people very well. I know that you know them. I know that you know what is best for them at any given moment. Please, dear Father, help me to know when to move on to other people and other fields of service that are ready for truth, love, and grace. However, dear Father, help me know when to stay and keep loving and serving people as well. Please give me this wisdom in Jesus' name. Amen.

THANK YOU

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

Psalm 106:2

THE 800 OUR FATHER DEVOTION

The Spiritual Army of God the Father acknowledges with thanks our generous May sponsors of the 2000 Hail Mary Devotion. We are grateful that we have merited their partnership and support in providing a venue of spirituality and fellowship for the devotees of God the Father.

Las Vegas, Nevada

Gary & Maria Sheets

Los Angeles, California

Nona Alapag | April Araneta
Marlou Mara-Galindo | Alice Ng
JJ Ramos | Aida Terashima

FOR PRAYERS HEARD AND PETITIONS GRANTED

HOW DO WE RESPOND WHEN OUR CRY FOR MERCY RECEIVES ITS LOVING ANSWER FROM OUR MASTER?

WE NEED TO PRAISE AND THANK JESUS FOR HIS HEALING POWER, MERCY, AND GRACE.

WHEN WAS THE LAST TIME YOU FELL FACE DOWN AND PRAISED JESUS?

WHEN WAS THE LAST TIME YOU PRAISED AND THANKED THE LORD

FOR ALL THAT HE HAS DONE FOR YOU

WITH A GENUINE HEART AND A PROSTRATE POSTURE?

Thank you God the Father for not only healing my cancer but also for your financial provisions for my hospital bills. Thank you Mama Mary for your loving intercessions and for staying beside me during all my surgeries, treatments and follow-up appointments.

Thank you to all my sisters and brothers of The Spiritual Army of God the Father for all your prayers and your generous financial assistance. My family and I will forever be grateful and thankful for leading us to this Army of wonderful and kindhearted devotees. God bless us all!

- Marivic

We give ceaseless thanks to God for all who have already enlisted to The Spiritual Army of God the Father's 2016 Pilgrimage to Holy Land & Jordan. Praying that He will touch and open our hearts to prepare us to accept and fulfill all that He has planned for us on this Pilgrimage. Trusting and thanking Him for providing for each and every Pilgrims' need – spiritual, physical, financial – always!

- Vic & Alice Araneta

My brother's second stay at the hospital had been brief for which we are very thankful to the Lord. The infection cleared and he has been up and about enjoying the nice weather with his family. Again, thank you prayer warriors for your prayers.

- Beth L.

I thank God for helping my son, Robert, find an extra part time job.

- Rosario

I thank God the Father Almighty for His goodness and love, for protecting me during my recent car accident and for protecting the other party from harm.

- Nicet

I thank God for my friends and prayer partners who gave me a surprise party. I felt the overflowing love from them and from God. I feel blessed!

- Evelyn P.

I thank and praise God every minute for giving me good life, good family and good friends who share my strong faith. God helps and guides me navigate my life's journey and He gives me deep peace and joy in my heart in everything that comes my way. I thank God that He is my Eternal Father who protects, blesses and takes care of me and my family every day. I feel safe and secure with Him.

We have a very loving Father-Daughter relationship -- we communicate several times a day. I don't have to make an appointment to talk to Him -- and for all of these, my family and I thank, praise and love God FOREVER!!!

- Mila Parker

Gary and I thank God the Father, in Jesus' most Holy Name, for His everlasting love, grace, mercy, and protection each moment of our lives, especially the strength, courage and hope He provides through the Holy Spirit in handling Gary's affliction. We remain faithful and obedient to God Almighty's will in the face of challenges and temptations. IN GOD WE TRUST.

- Gary and Maria Sheets

DEVOTION SCHEDULE



THE SPIRITUAL ARMY OF GOD THE FATHER

cordially invites you to the following devotions:

IN LOS ANGELES:

1st Saturday Devotion

The Convent of the Sister Disciples of the Divine Master | 501 N. Beaudry Avenue | (213) 250-7962
Holy Mass starts at 8:30 A.M. | 1st Saturday Devotional Prayers follow.

Devotion to God the Father

Every 1st Sunday of the Month | The Monastery of the Angels | 1977 Carmen Avenue on Gower | (323) 466-2186
12:30 P.M. - Rosary to the Father | 1:15 P.M. - Holy Mass
2:00 P.M. - Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament

800 Our Father Devotion – June 18, 2016

at the Convent of the Sister Disciples of the Divine Master | starting at 8:30 a.m.
Please call Victor at (213) 385-7798 if you wish to become a Sponsor of the 2000 Hail Mary Devotion.

IN CHINO HILLS:

Sacred Heard Devotional Group for Departed Souls

Every 1st Friday of the Month | 16657 Tourmaline Street | Chino Hills, CA 91709
Devotional Prayers start at 8:30 P.M.

IN LAS VEGAS:

Sacred Heart and Precious Blood of Jesus Devotion for Departed Souls

Every 1st Friday of the Month
at The Cenacle House in The Enclave 8455 W. Sahara Avenue #172 | Las Vegas, NV 89117
Devotional Prayers start at 2:30 P.M.

1st Saturday Devotion

at Saint Frances de Sales Parish | 1111 Michael Way | Las Vegas, NV 89108 at 8:00 AM
Devotional Prayers follow.

and

at The Cenacle House in The Enclave | 8455 West Sahara Avenue #172, | Las Vegas, NV 89117 at 1:00 PM
Cenacle will be at 10:00 AM before the devotional prayers.

Please call Evelyn at (702)274-4315 for entry to The Enclave or for more information.

Devotion to God the Father

Every 1st Sunday of the month from 2:00 to 3:30 P.M.
at The Cenacle House in The Enclave | 8455 West Sahara Avenue #172, | Las Vegas, NV 89117

800 Our Father Devotion – June 18, 2016

*Please call (702) 255-9616 or (702) 274-4315 for
dates and venues for the coming months or for more information or if you wish to Sponsor the Devotion.*

Mother of Perpetual Help Novena & Rosary Prayers

Every 1st Wednesday of the month after the 7:30 AM Mass
St. Francis de Sales Parish | 1111 Michael Way | Las Vegas, NV 89108

IN THE PHILIPPINES

2000 Hail Mary Devotion - Metro Manila Area

Letty Rollan has organized the 2000 Hail Mary Devotion in various areas of Metro Manila through the members of the "Mother Butler." Please call her U.S. Vonage phone (510) 779-6652, text her at Manila #916-384-9300, and/or call her Manila landline 939-4677. Mention Mila Lumba's name to be recognized.