



1ST SATURDAY DEVOTION NEWSLETTER

July 2012

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THE SCARLET THREAD THROUGH THE BIBLE

Dr. Adrian Rogers

Behold, when we come into the land, thou shalt bind this line of scarlet thread in the window which thou didst let us down by. . . and whosoever shall be with thee in the house, his blood shall be on our head, if any hand be upon him. Joshua 2:18-19

Rahab, the woman spoken to in this passage, was a harlot in the city of Jericho. As the Israelites came to possess the land, her city was destined for destruction -- and she along with it. But she was delivered, and her life transformed, simply by tying a scarlet cord in her window.

This cord represented the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ, and it pointed toward the Lamb of God that takes away the sin of the world. In fact, all of the Bible is about Jesus Christ and His blood redemption, and you will find this scarlet thread throughout the Word of God.

The Prophecy of the Blood. From the very beginning of human history, it is revealed. When Adam and Eve sinned, God shed innocent blood in order to make them clothes from animal skins (Genesis 3:21). This is a picture of the covering of righteousness that we receive when the Lord Jesus Christ died for us.

In Genesis four we read that Adam and Eve had two sons, Cain and Abel. They instinctively wanted to worship God. Cain sacrificed the fruit of the ground. Abel had already learned that God demanded blood, so he brought a lamb. God accepted the blood of Abel's lamb, but He did not accept Cain's offering. Why? Because "without the shedding of blood, there is no remission of sin" (Hebrews 9:22).

And God told Abraham to sacrifice his long-awaited son Isaac (Genesis 22). Just before Abraham plunged the dagger into the quivering heart of his son, an angel stopped him. Abraham saw a ram caught in a thicket. Isaac was set free, but an innocent animal's blood was shed instead.

Then, God wanted to deliver His people from bondage in the land of Egypt. On the night of the Passover, God instructed each house to slay a lamb and put the blood on their door. God said in Exodus 12:13, "When I see the blood, I will pass over you."

And in the tabernacle and later in the temple, thousands upon thousands of sheep, oxen, and turtle doves were killed and their blood spilt as sacrifices for sin.



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OVERVIEW FOR THE MONTH

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The month of July is dedicated to The Precious Blood of Jesus. The entire month falls within the liturgical season of Ordinary Time, which is represented by the liturgical color green. This symbol of hope is the color of the sprouting seed and arouses in the faithful the hope of reaping the eternal harvest of heaven, especially the hope of a glorious resurrection.



The Blood that coursed through the veins of Christ was a part of that Sacred Humanity made possible by the maternity of Mary, whose parents, St. Joachim and St. Anne are honored this month. (July 26). Our Lord's blood poured out on the Cross purchased our salvation, washed clean the robes of the martyrs, and gave birth to the Church as it flowed from

his wounded side. The Precious Blood of Christ -- now pulsing through his Mystical Body -- continues its salvific work, preserving and purifying, repairing and providing nourishment for regeneration and renewal of its members.

July's longer and warmer days also provide us with the opportunity for renewal, both interior and exterior. Schedules relax and pressures ease, inviting travel. But, whether we travel or not, like the missionary, Bl. Junipero Serra (July 1), we preach to others -- by our conduct, our speech, even the clothes we wear. May we be modest in everything we do, imitating St. Maria Goretti, the young martyr for purity (July 6), and "preaching" Christ to everyone we meet.

The summer Readings of Ordinary Time remind us that our earthly pilgrimage is also a journey, a great adventure towards union with Christ, the Beginning and the End of our journey. Each Sunday with its Easter renewal becomes a mile marker along the way, linking where we have been with where we are going. May the Precious Blood of Jesus sustain us as we journey to our true home, with Mary and the angels as our companions on the way. □

FEASTS FOR JULY

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

- 3 Thomas the Apostle, Feast
- 4 Independence Day (USA), Opt. Mem.
- 5 Anthony Mary of Zaccaria; Elizabeth of Portugal, Opt. Mem.
- 6 Maria Goretti, Opt. Mem.
- 9 Augustine Zhao Rong and companions, Opt. Mem.
- 11 Benedict, Memorial
- 13 Henry, Opt. Mem.
- 14 Bl. Kateri Tekakwitha (USA), Memorial
- 16 Our Lady of Mount Carmel, Opt. Mem.
- 18 Camillus de Lellis (USA), Opt. Mem.
- 20 Apollinaris, Opt. Mem.
- 21 Lawrence of Brindisi, Opt. Mem.
- 23 Bridget, Opt. Mem.
- 24 Sharbel (Charbel) Makhloof, Opt. Mem.
- 25 James, Feast
- 26 Joachim and Anne, Memorial
- 30 Peter Chrysologus, Opt. Mem.
- 31 Ignatius of Loyola, Memorial

The feasts of Bl. Junipero Serra (July 1), St. Mary Magdalene (July 22) and St. Peter Chrysologus (July 30) are superseded by the Sunday liturgy. □

The Scarlet Thread through the Bible

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And finally, the Lord Jesus Christ died upon the cross. His death was the fulfillment of all the prophecy and promises. Revelation 13:8 proclaims that He was slain before the foundation of the world. He came to die; He planned to die; He lived to die; and He was born to die.

Blood is throughout Scripture, but what does Christ's blood mean to us?

The Power of the Blood. His blood redeems us. There was a price against us that we could not pay, but the blood of Jesus redeemed us. 1 Peter 1:18-19 says, "For as much as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot."

His blood brings us into fellowship with God. According to Ephesians 2:13, "But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ." Without the blood of Christ, man is a long way from God.

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HIGHLIGHTS OF THE MONTH

INDEPENDENCE DAY EVERY DAY: THE SPIRITUAL SIGNIFICANCE

*By Missey Butler
Guest Writer of CBN.com*

I can honestly say I never knew the real meaning of freedom. I thought I knew what it meant because I am "American made." I was born and raised in the United States of America . . . just like those 'amber waves of grain'. I would stand tall and proud while abiding under the mighty banner of the red, white, and blue! I loved apple pie and hot dogs. As a high school majorette, I faithfully twirled my baton in many Fourth of July parades. My family would beam with pride as they waved their sparklers under the evening sky. The illuminated showers of cascading fireworks awed us.

I would stand proud, shoulder to shoulder, with my fellow patriots at the baseball park, straining through the heartfelt stanzas of the "Star-Spangled Banner". I was always quick to place my hand over my heart while nudging my brother to remove his cap as the national anthem was beginning to play.

My heart still swells with pride and my eyes get a little glassy at the sight of our flag waving in the breeze. I am, for the most part, one of the ones who sings the loudest when reaching the part about 'the land of the free and the home of the brave'.

The bottom line was that I could no longer shake the feelings of contradiction nor the whispers of hypocrisy that seemed to mock me and my supposed claim to liberty. So I decided to embark on my own private search to find the missing key that would unlock the chains that held me captive.

One of the advantages of sitting under good biblical teaching was that early on, I learned about three major forces that make it their business to ensure that you and I never find out about our God-given spiritual heritage. These diabolical enemies are the world, the flesh, and the devil.

I want to share with you my own recent battle in winning this fight for my spiritual freedom. You see, I struggled with a desire to own many of the pretty things I saw. I believe the biblically correct term for this would be that I am sometimes strongly influenced by the lust of the eyes. I had a desire to covet things that did not belong to me.

I would often think, Maybe it's just a woman thing -- you know, part of that whole nesting instinct ladies seem to have. The only problem was I wanted my nest to look the best! Therein lies the problem.

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ST. MARIA GORETTI THE YOUNG MARTYR FOR PURITY

*Excerpted from a homily at the
canonization of Saint Maria Goretti by Pope Pius XII*

St. Maria Goretti was born of a poor family in Corinaldo, Italy, in 1890. Near Nettuno she spent a difficult childhood assisting her mother in domestic duties. She was of a pious nature and often at prayer. In 1902 she was stabbed to death, preferring to die rather than be raped. (Office of Readings)

"It is well known how this young girl had to face a bitter struggle with no way to defend herself. Without warning a vicious stranger (actually Alessandro Serenelli who lived with his father in the same house as the Goretti's.) burst upon her, bent on raping her and destroying her childlike purity. In that moment of crisis she could have spoken to her Redeemer in the words of that classic, *The Imitation of Christ*: "Though tested



and plagued by a host of misfortunes, I have no fear so long as your grace is with me. It is my strength, stronger than any adversary; it helps me and gives me guidance." With splendid courage she surrendered herself to God and his grace and so gave her life to protect her virginity.

"The life of this simple girl -- I shall concern myself only with highlights -- we can see as worthy of heaven. Even today people can look upon it with admiration and respect. Parents can learn from her story how to raise their God-given children in virtue, courage and holiness; they can learn to train them in the Catholic faith so that, when put to the test, God's grace will support them and they will come through undefeated, unscathed and untarnished.

"From Maria's story carefree children and young people with their zest for life can learn not to be led astray by attractive pleasures which are not only ephemeral and empty but also sinful. Instead they can fix their sights on achieving Christian moral perfection, however difficult and hazardous that course may prove. With determination and God's help all of us can attain that goal by persistent effort and prayer.

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FEAST OF OUR LADY OF MOUNT CARMEL

*A Homily by Father Dominic Borg, Discalced Carmelite
Saint Andrew's Church, London, Ontario, Canada
July 16, 1996*

If we were to take in our hands the Bible, especially the Old Testament, we encounter different mountains with different names. Each mountain has a message to proclaim to those who have ears to listen and to those who have an empty heart . . . a heart that is ready to be filled.

We encounter Mt. Moriah, a mountain which is strange; a mountain that stands for death, and at the same time, stands for resurrection. "Take your son Isaac whom you love, and offer him for me on the mountain that I am going to show you." and the Lord showed Abraham Mt. Moriah. At first it seemed to be the mountain of death that is going to steal from Abraham, his son. But Abraham had by now learned to be obedient to the word of God. He had experienced that God never approached him to take away anything from him, but any time that God approached him, it was always to give to him, and for sure this was no exception. So Abraham went up, and he discovered this mountain, and after his experience where the angel came and told him not to kill his son, Abraham named that place "Yahweh Jireh" "God sees". "On the mountain of the Lord, Yahweh provides". On the mountain, God is not indifferent to our problems. On the contrary, he provides for all our needs. So Mt. Moriah stands as a monument that God provides, that God is rich enough to meet all the needs of all humanity.

Then we meet another mountain, Mt. Sinai, the mountain where God revealed himself. It is the mountain of the covenant, the mountain which made a people of God out of a bunch of slaves -- Israel. It is a mountain where we are reminded that if the Lord called you to walk in Carmel, it is not because you were better than other people, but because out of His love for each one of us, He wants to use us as an instrument to communicate to the world the importance of Our Lady in the life of a Christian.

Then we discover other mountains, Mt. Tabor, also in the Old Testament we discover Mt. Horeb, the mountain on which the Prophet Elijah went up. Horeb stands for Herba, which means disaster. When the people don't listen to the word of God, they experience disaster in their life -- when they listen, they experience that God does marvels. That God performs miracles. That God can fill the jars that are empty, in such a way that he will make them overflow. Wine is the symbol of joy. And Mary, looking on the faces of the people, and in their hearts, turned to Jesus and said to him "These people don't have enough wine." They lack joy in their life. And Mary turns toward humanity, and she tells us "Do whatever he tells you."

Mary is the one, who brings us to Jesus Christ. The more we imitate her, the more intimate we become with

Jesus Christ. Among the devotions to Our Lady we have the one entitled Our Lady of Mt. Carmel. In the Old Testament we find a mountain with the title Mt. Carmel which brings the message that God, out of corrupt humanity, brought up a flower; the flower of Carmel -- Our Lady who is like the rain that comes down upon humanity. Humanity that is thirsty for the grace of God.

The first reading from the Book of Kings presents the prophet Elijah on Mt. Carmel praying for rain. Rain is the symbol of God's grace, of God's love. We read in the Prophet Zachariah that "For those who do not go up to Jerusalem to worship my name, there will be no rain for them that year. They will not experience God's blessing, God's grace.

Notice how the reading starts. "Elijah went up to the top of Mt. Carmel; there he bowed himself down upon the earth and put his face between his knees." Why is it so important for the author to tell us this. His servant was looking at him, and he said to his servant, "Go up on the mountain and tell me what you see." And so he went up, and on his return he said "There is nothing." And Elijah told him "Go again seven times." And he went up seven times, meaning an unlimited number. And he went up an unlimited number of times, only travelling under the word of obedience. Every time he went up there, he was even more disappointed. The first time he saw nothing. The second time, nothing; third time, nothing. Every time nothing. Imagine this servant saying to himself "This journey is useless, I am seeing nothing." But sometimes we have the same temptation as in Carmel. We think "It's useless in this community . . . I am experiencing nothing . . . The more I travel, it seems to be more disappointing."

But if we, like the servant Elijah, travel under the influence of obedience, obedience to the word of God, what happened? The servant saw a small thing. He saw a cloud so small and insignificant, that he was not sure it was a cloud, it was the size of the palm of your hand. Imagine, in the whole sky, to be able to see a cloud the size of the palm of your hand -- you would need a radio telescope, you need a telescope. But because this person was under the influence of prayer, and under the influence of the Word of God, he could see the details.



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Independence Day Everyday: The Spiritual Significance

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I spent much of my time and energy (not to mention my pocketbook) at modern-day temples known as malls. Many people worshipped there religiously, as shown by endless, frivolous spending (myself included).

I was returning home from one of those shopping sprees, when my attention was drawn to a one-line message displayed on a local church sign. I hesitated to read it because I knew from past experience that many times what was written on one of those marquees would zap me with conviction. My eyes insisted on looking, so my heart had no other choice but to reluctantly follow. The words were simple, but they really packed a punch. What it said was life changing:

"It costs too much to be out of the center of God's will."

Wham! God allowed the words to pierce right through my idol-ridden heart. I found myself pulling into the church parking lot, turning off the car, and lowering my head. I quietly pleaded with God to take from me this desire for material things, as it had consumed me to the point that I was losing my precious freedom. Immediately, I sensed my spirit lift. It happened the moment I agreed with God that the price was too high. I knew that anything replacing Him as the center of my life was an idol. It had to go!

Together, we did an inventory of my heart, and later that same evening, He took me to Galatians 5:1: "It was for freedom that Christ has made us free; stand firm, lest you fall again under a yoke of slavery".

I soon began to discover that in Christ, we have already been made free (John 8: 36). There is a fight of faith that must be won in order to maintain that freedom. After all, it cost the very life of Jesus Himself. Why wouldn't it cost me something?

I've learned a very valuable lesson. Freedom does NOT come free. For me, it's a matter of prayerfully placing a guard on my heart and standing firm with my shield of faith.

One of the keys to walking out this freedom is in knowing that the battle has been won. We simply believe that the jail door has already been swung wide open and that at any point we can walk out and stay out! Many times we are the ones who lock ourselves up because we lose sight of who we are and what we have in Christ.

My heartfelt prayer is that all of us who are called by His name would know and understand that it is His desire that we recognize our freedom, not just one day out of the year, but instead rejoice in claiming our own individual emancipation proclamation every day. Our day of reckoning will arrive when we truly let freedom ring by celebrating our spiritual, as well as physical, Independence Day -- today and every day! ☐

St. Maria Goretti

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"Not all of us are expected to die a martyr's death, but we are all called to the pursuit of Christian virtue. This demands strength of character though it may not match that of this innocent girl. Still, a constant, persistent and relentless effort is asked of us right up to the moment of our death. This may be conceived as a slow steady martyrdom which Christ urged upon us when he said: The kingdom of heaven is set upon and laid waste by violent forces.

"So let us all, with God's grace, strive to reach the goal that the example of the virgin martyr, Saint Maria Goretti, sets before us. Through her prayers to the Redeemer may all of us, each in his own way, joyfully try to follow the inspiring example of Maria Goretti who now enjoys eternal happiness in heaven."

Imprisoned for murder she appeared to him in his cell and forgave him and he was subsequently converted. Most importantly, he sat next to her mother at the beatification, who also forgave him. ☐

Feast Day of Our Lady of Carmel

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It is the same with you and me, my brothers and sisters, - when we are under the influence of Mary who brings us under the influence of God. And when we are under the influence of the Word of God, we too will see details in our lives. Perhaps, for the bare eye, or for the person who has no faith, they are details not worth seeing -- but for the person who has faith, every small detail is an important message. He takes care of the periods, and the commas in the literature because he knows that although they are small, they are needed to communicate the message. That period is telling you to make a pause there, otherwise your message will not make sense, you will not be able to communicate.

There is something better, something more to learn from the first reading -- the position of the prophet Elijah. "Bending down towards the earth" -- that is in a position of humility. You know how our Holy Mother Teresa tells us that humility is one of the conditions for prayer. Wilfred Harrington says that "Prayer is recognition of one's limitations, and of another who holds the whole world in his hands and who respects the free will of his creature, man."

To recognize one's limitations. The prophet Elijah is teaching us here this attitude of prayer . . . to be humble . . . not to think that we are better than others, but to have in us the mind of Christ. That's what St. Paul told us. Have this mind among yourselves, which was in Christ Jesus, He did not look to his own interest, but to the interest of others. St. Paul in his letter to the Romans told us "Count others better than yourselves." To do that

we need the virtue of humility. Elijah, in humility, bending down, gives us the message, "Those who do not bend, the probability is that they will break." Humility teaches us how to be flexible to God's direction, like Mary who was a very humble person who believed every word that came to her. She did not question the word of God. And here also we see another virtue of Mary, the virtue of faith, which shines on all humanity. Elizabeth, when she saw Mary, told her "And blessed is she who believed what the Lord has told her."

Mary is the one who brings us close to Jesus, and that Jesus Christ is present among us, and he gives meaning to everything, even the things that you think are a disaster -- even the things that you think are an obstacle in your life, those are the things that Jesus Christ teaches you how to use.

Do you see why it is very important for you and for me to be close to our Lady? She is the one who will bring us face to face with Jesus Christ. When we speak about devotion to our Lady of Mt. Carmel, we say that Our Lady is the one who helps us to go up on this mountain, whose summit is Jesus Christ. She is the one who teaches us that if we want to grow in our spiritual life, the only place is to be near the cross. Far away from the cross, spiritual life cannot grow. It is there, in pain and in sorrow, as once Oscar Wilde said "Pleasure for the beautiful body, pain and sorrow for the beautiful soul."

You remember what Simeon said to Mary "and a sword shall pierce your heart". Mary was to experience pain and sorrow because she was seeing that people were rejecting the Word, the Word of life. If you are wearing the scapular right now, it is a sign that we bear the name of Mary, that we are clothed by Mary.

You know what Vatican II said about Mary, . . . that her life was a Pilgrimage of Faith. We need faith. It is only through faith, my brothers and sisters, that we can see light when other people can see only darkness. It is only through faith that we can discover God who is strong enough that out of corrupt humanity, that out of the disaster that stands in front of us, He will bring something good.

The servant of Elijah saw this cloud, coming out of salty water, the Mediterranean. Salty water is the symbol of corrupt humanity immersed in sin. And God brought out this cloud, and this cloud grew so fast, like Carmel. In the Old Testament, God planted a garden in the East. Today, the Lord is planting a garden, Carmel, in the West -- the Discalced Carmelite Nuns who continue to bring the message of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel. It is our duty to heed this, to heed the advice from John. "Little children, let us not love in words, but let us love in deeds." When I discover my brothers and sisters in the community who always have a tendency to get on my nerves -- that is the moment when Mary will teach me. Mary tells me "I see my brother, I see my sister, that you lack wine, that you lack joy . . . I will give you the

solution, where you can experience an abundance of wine, an abundance of joy in your life. "Do whatever He tells you!"

On the Feast of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel, Mary is inviting us to travel high up on the mountain with Jesus. Jesus Christ has told us that those who want to follow Him will suffer persecution. Mary, stands there beside us to give us the energy and the encouragement we need, and hopefully we will learn from her to treasure the word of God and to ponder upon it constantly in our heart as St. Luke tells us "And Mary treasured the word, and she pondered upon it in her heart." If we want to continue to carry the name of Mary, as worthy children of Mary, it is a must that we become familiar with the word of God and listen to the words of St. Paul: "Let the word of God find a rich home within you." ☐

The Scarlet Thread through the Bible

Continued from Page 2

His blood makes peace with God. Man, by nature, is at war with God; and we can only come to God on His peace terms -- the blood atonement. The Bible says in Colossians 1:20, "And, having made peace through the blood of His cross, by Him to reconcile all things unto Himself. . . ."

His blood cleanses. Not only does it remove the punishment of sin, it removes the pollution. I don't care what sin you've committed; "the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin (1 John 1:7).

His blood gives power over the devil. It's the blood that Satan fears. Revelation 12:11 says, "And they overcame him [Satan] by the blood of the Lamb. . . ." The devil doesn't want you to learn about the blood. He hates it!

Before this planet was ever swung into space, God had determined in His heart that He would send His Son to die upon the cross. How wonderful it is to trace the scarlet thread of the blood of Christ woven throughout the Bible! How much more wonderful to experience its redemption personally. Praise God for the blood of His Lamb! ☐

Dr. Adrian Rogers, preacher/teacher of Love Worth Finding Ministries, had a zeal and love for Jesus that resonated in every message. His legacy continues to reach around this world, sharing the good news that Jesus Christ is the greatest Love worth finding. Although Dr. Adrian Rogers passed away on November 15, 2005, tributes continue to pour in testifying of his worldwide impact.

GOD TOUCHED ME

"ONE ALWAYS GAINS MUCH STRENGTH AND UNITY WITH GOD THROUGH PRAYER AND PERSEVERANCE"

-- St. Teresa de Avila

By Fed

Three decades ago, I recall being at a Hallmark store looking for a card for my sister who was having a birthday in a couple of weeks. I tried to write a letter to her but I froze. How could I possibly express my appreciation for all that she did for me when I was extremely busy working full time and writing my thesis for my masteral degree; when I was over my head with so many commitments that I considered the day a success whenever my sister came to my rescue. With my mind inundated with my thesis, it seemed impossible to find the right words to tell her what I wanted her to know for her birthday, other than "Happy Birthday to a great and wonderful sister -- thank you and I love you."

I went down to the store, and headed for the greeting card section. I felt immediate relief as I looked at all the options. There was such a variety of sentiments inscribed in the insides of these cards. I knew I would be able to find one that was fitting to express my gratitude and love for my sister.

I finally found one that fit the tone and ideas I wanted to get across, and when I brought it home, I underlined key phrases to indicate my personal signoff on the pre-printed message. I then added a brief, hand-written note at the bottom that echoed the sentiments written in the card, and signed my name. As I slid it into the envelope, I was so grateful that I had found a card that conveyed what I could not at that moment. I was sure my sister would have been blessed by a basic "Happy birthday! Love ya!" message in an "it's-the-thought-that-counts" way, but it was a blessing to her and to me to have the fullness of what I was bumbling around to express my heart which was articulated so clearly in that Hallmark card.

I keep thinking of this example whenever I sit down to pray, especially at the time ten years ago when my spiritual life was starting to grow.

My prayer life was not that great, and my Christian friends told me that I just needed to say to God what is in my heart and that I do not need to say the "structured prayers" which, according to them, do not help. How could I do this when I am not a verbose person, and most of all cannot be extemporaneous. They further told me that it is a gift from God. So I said to myself that if God does not give me the gift of articulation in extemporaneous prayer what would I do? I wanted so much to be close to God so I needed to do something.

One night as I was in prayer, I realized that part of the issue was that I was drawing a blank, every time I would sit down to share some dedicated moments with God. I found myself uncharacteristically tongue-tied, starting my prayers with statements like, "God, you are good. So, so good. Yup . . . pretty good -- err, umm, really good! I love you and ahhh thank you for all the umm blessings you have given me. Amen." After this, what next -- stare at the images, at the wall, at the ceiling, let my mind wander to everything else but God? As my friend would say jokingly, her prayer is "God, I pray to you the same as yesterday, today and tomorrow. Amen." How could I spend quality time with God?

Of course, there was the option of simply being still, and communing with God without words, but I was not yet at a level of spiritual maturity where I could hook that up on any kind of regular basis. It always degenerated into this ridiculous split personality thing, where I would have a thought, then one part of my brain says, Shhhh! It is silent meditation time!, then the other part responds, "Then why are you talking? YOU shhh! Yeah. It's absurd. Anyway, I know that all of my attempts at prayer are pleasing to God. And I realized that prayer is not all about me. But, per the advice of my Father confessor, I also needed to be realistic about where I was in my spiritual life, and admit that if this kept feeling so wrong, I probably would not continue setting aside time for prayer on a regular basis -- something that I did not want to happen.

And so, rather than banging my head against the wall trying to express everything that was in my heart, I turned to the prayers of the Catholic Church found in prayer books or given to me by my Catholic friends. I had forgotten how many options there are! I could get back into the Liturgy of the Hours, or simply pray a daily Rosary. There are all the great litanies, prayers and novenas, not to mention the basics like the Our Father, Hail Mary and the Glory Be.

The first thing I was drawn to was the Litany of Humility, and as I read it, my mouth formed the words I had wanted to say all along:

*From the desire of being preferred to others . . .
Deliver me, Jesus
From the desire of being consulted . . . Deliver
me, Jesus.
From the desire of being approved . . . Deliver
me, Jesus.
From the fear of being humiliated . . . Deliver
me, Jesus.
From the fear of being despised . . . Deliver me,
Jesus.
. . . and more . . .*

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KNOWING OUR SAINTS

THOMAS DIDYMUS, APOSTLE FEAST DAY, JULY 1

Thomas was probably born in Galilee to a humble family, but there is no indication that he was a fisherman. He was a Jew, but there is no account of how he became an apostle to Christ. His name is Syriac and means "the twin"; he was also called Didymus, which is the Greek equivalent. In France he is referred to as Jumeau, which also means "twin."

Thomas is remembered for his doubt that Christ had actually risen from the dead, and he said to the apostles, "Unless I see the mark of the nails in His hands and put my finger into the nail marks, and put my hand into His



side, I will not believe" (Luke 20:25).

Eight days later, Christ appeared to him and said, "Put your finger here, and see my hands; and bring your hand and put it into my side. And be not

faithless, but believing." Thomas fell at His feet, saying, "My Lord and my God!" and Jesus replied, "Because you have seen me, Thomas, you believed. Blessed are they that have not seen, and yet believe" (Luke 20:27-29). This incident gave rise to the expression "a doubting Thomas."

Lest we condemn poor Thomas for his lack of belief, consider that he was a man who relentlessly sought the Truth. Like an inquisitive child, he constantly asked questions. Earlier, when Jesus told his disciples, "I go to prepare a place for you. And I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may also be. And you know the way where I'm going."

At this Thomas, puzzled, but bold enough to ask his Lord to explain, said, "Lord, we do not know where you are going; how can we know the way?"

Jesus replied, "I am the way, the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father, except through me. If you had known me, you would have known my Father also. Henceforth, you know him and have seen him" (John 14:3-7).

When the worried disciples wanted to keep Jesus from going to raise Lazarus from the dead because "the Jews want to stone you and you leave yourself open to them!" Thomas responded, "Let us go also, that we may die with him!" (John 11:16).

Accounts of Thomas's missionary activities are unreliable, but the most widely accepted account holds that he

preached in India. The Acta Thomae say that when the apostles divided up the world for their missionary labors, India fell to Thomas. He said he was not healthy enough and that a Hebrew could not teach Indians; even a vision of Christ could not change his mind.

Christ then appeared to the merchant Abban and sold Thomas to him as a slave for his master, a king who ruled over part of India. When Thomas discovered this he said, "As you will, Lord, so be it."

At the court in India, Thomas, having admitted that he was a carpenter and builder, was ordered to build a palace. While the king was absent, however, Thomas did no building, and he used the 20 pieces of silver given to him by the king for charitable purposes.

When the king returned, he imprisoned him, intending to flay him alive. At that point, the king's brother died, and when the brother was shown the place in heaven that Thomas' good works had prepared for the king, he was allowed to return to earth and offer to buy the spot from the king for himself. The king refused, released Thomas, and was converted by him.

There exists a population of Christians along the Malabar Coast who were supposedly originally converted by Thomas, and their tradition holds that he built seven churches, was martyred by spearing on the "Big Hill" near Madras, and was buried in Mylapore. One account holds that Thomas was killed for successfully persuading a woman, Mygdonia, to cease marriage relations with her husband, Charisius.

It is certainly possible that Thomas reached India as a missionary. Indian Christians, especially in Kerala, often call themselves 'Christians of Saint Thomas,' and an ancient 6th-century cross that speaks of him in an inscription lies in the church of Mylapore. In 1522, the Portuguese found the alleged tomb, and some relics now lie in the Cathedral of Saint Thomas at Mylapore.

The larger part of his relics appear to have been in Edessa in the 4th century, and the Acta Thomae say that they were taken from India to Mesopotamia. They were translated to several places and were finally taken to Ortona in the Abruzzi, where they are still honored. According to Eusebius, Thomas evangelized Parthia.

Nevertheless, the doubting Thomas managed to quiet the doubts of many others during his missionary journeys. He answered the questions of others with the childlike, loving heart trained by Christ. The Indians celebrate Thomas' dies natale on July 1 (Attwater, Benedictines, Bentley, Brown, Delaney, Encyclopedia (December), White).

In art, Saint Thomas is generally a young or middle-aged man with a carpenter's rule. He may also be shown with a lance or, occasionally a sword or dagger; touching Christ's wounded side; catching the girdle dropped by the Virgin at her Assumption; or casting out the devil from an Indian king's daughter (Roeder). White says that Thomas is portrayed as an elderly man, holding a lance or pierced by

one; or kneeling before Jesus; or with a T- square (White).

Saint Thomas is venerated as the Apostle of India. He is the patron of architects, builders, carpenters, masons, geometricians, theologians (Roeder), other building craftsmen, blind people (due to his occasional spiritual blindness), India and Pakistan (White).

This article appears on the award winning website "Saints of the Day" sponsored by Saint Patrick's Catholic Church of Washington DC. <http://users.erols.com/saintpat/index.htm> E-mail: krabenst@juno.com

God Touched Me

Continued from Page 7

For the first year, I prayed this every day. Then, every month; and then quarterly or every time I come across situations when I need to be reminded of humility.

One day after receiving the Eucharist, I remembered that I had a prayer card with the words to the Anima Christi in my purse. I almost got teary-eyed as I moved my lips silently to say:

*Soul of Christ, sanctify me,
Body of Christ, save me,
Blood of Christ, inebriate me,
Water from the side of Christ, wash me,
Passion of Christ, strengthen me . . .*

Later, the prescribed meditations of the Scriptural Rosary forced me to stop thinking about myself and meditate on the Lord. I started a novena to the Holy Spirit, and it instilled me with a new awareness of our great Advocate; and the Our Father, of course, helped me say to God everything that needed to be said. And then, there are the prayers written by the saints where we learn more on how to pray and love God.

This prayer process reminded me of the card I had picked out for my sister or for everyone else. Just as I had underlined phrases and added hand-written notes in the cards I gave to them, with my prayers I close my eyes and pour passion into the words that most perfectly articulated what I have been trying to say, and then at the end I add my thoughts even though they were often about as articulate as "Yeah. That. Amen."

For times like now when I cannot quite seem to find the words to express what I need and want to say to God, I am so thankful that the Church offers me these "Hallmark cards" that I can use instead to help me in my prayer life. ☐

***If you have any personal articles
or God's miracle in your life
you want to share with the devotees,
we may be reached at
the following e-mail addresses
and phone numbers:***

"... I am your Mother Mary. As you pray my beads on this 1st Saturday, offer your prayers to those whose hearts are victims of their own unbelief. Questions they have in their minds and in their hearts are centered on God's existence but most so on His non-existence. They are the same people who work for removal of prayers and services in their families and other public gatherings. My children, the evil forces are not relenting to destroy the way you communicate with God and in the end snatch your souls in the service of the Most High.

I am here blessed by God and assigned to intercede for you. Always be close to my Immaculate Heart as close as possible, for your choice is the light of my Son Jesus and the darkness of the evil one's empty realm. Let the path of communication through prayers be your way to God's ears. For the choice is just one, open your heart before my Son's Sacred Heart; rejecting this will open your heart to the evil one."

*- Mary, Your Lady of Grace
06022012*



"... I am your Mother Mary. My children offer prayers for peace and well being of people. As the world is more concerned of material possessions, the same concern is putting each nation in the brink of poverty and distress. The effect of greed will soon be more hurting for all.

I ask you all to be with me in my Immaculate Heart, whose only desire is to fulfill God's plan for you. Consecrate yourself before my Immaculate Heart which God has envisioned to defeat the effects of Satan's hands of manipulation. The choice is more visible before your eyes my children, my Immaculate Heart or the deceiving acts of the evil one.

I thank you for listening to my call. I love you my children."

*- Mary, Your Lady of the Rosary
06162012*

MEDITATION AND COMMENTARY

THE STILLING OF THE STORM AT SEA: LORD OF THE WIND AND WAVES

A Scriptural Reflection by Jeanne Kun

The untroubled sleep of Jesus and his sovereign authority over wind and wave are a powerful invitation to recognize in him the one who can do all things.

- René Latourelle, SJ,
The Miracles of Jesus and
the Theology of Miracles

Both human and divine

At Jesus' initiative the apostles set out across the Sea of Galilee to the eastern shore, six or seven miles distant, as the sun was setting behind the Galilean hills (Mark 4:35). Tired after a long day of preaching and teaching, Jesus slept soundly in the stern of the boat, oblivious to the rising squall. This is the sole instance recorded in the gospels of Jesus sleeping, an image that vividly illustrates his humanness, as well as the hiddenness of his divine nature, which is a dominant theme in Mark's gospel.

Experienced fishermen that they were, Jesus' disciples were badly frightened by the violence of the storm. Following their master had gotten them into this life-threatening situation, and a reproachful tone is heard in their anxious cry as they woke him: "Teacher, do you not care that we are perishing?" (Mark 4:38). *Melo*, the Greek verb used in this complaint, can also be translated "Does it not matter to you?" The same verb is found in Martha's question, "Lord, do you not care that my sister has left me to do all the work by myself?" (Luke 10:40). In both instances, Jesus' response was the same: to calm the turbulence of troubled hearts and the storms that raged around him.

The waves are his creatures

With a mere word of command -- "Be still!" (Mark 4:39) -- Jesus subdued the wind and the sea, showing his power over natural elements. Just as God brought the waters into being (Genesis 1:6-10), tamed roaring waves (Psalm 65:7), and parted the Red Sea before Moses and the Israelites (Exodus 14:21-22; Psalm 77:16, 19-20), Jesus exercised authority and showed mastery over the storm-tossed waters of the Sea of Galilee. "The waves are his creatures and behave as such by offering him the fealty of obedience," notes Scripture commentator Erasmio Leiva-Merikakis (*Fire of Mercy, Heart of the Word*).

In ancient times, the wind and sea were often seen as symbols of chaos. The way Jesus rebuked the elements may also imply that there was an evil force behind the storm, for he calmed the waves with the same command that he used to silence unclean spirits (Mark 1:25; Luke 4:35). It is noteworthy that this miraculous event occurred while Jesus was crossing the lake to pagan territory -- the country of the Gerasenes -- where he was

extending his ministry to gentiles and was soon to confront the unclean spirit "Legion" and heal the man possessed by a demon (Mark 5:1-13). In each of the synoptic gospels, the report of the stilling the storm leads into a sequence recounting Jesus' authority and power in exorcising evil spirits, curing the ill, and raising the dead (Matthew 8:28-9:31; Mark 5:1-42; Luke 8:26-56). René Latourelle notes that "Jesus is victorious over death, sickness, sin, and the forces of nature, simply because in his very being he is God-among-us. It is not more difficult for him to control the wind and the sea than to prevail over sin and death" (The Miracles of Jesus and the Theology of Miracles).

Who Jesus really is

When the terrified disciples woke Jesus, was it only to reproach him with a cry of desperation because they thought they were doomed? Even if their cry expressed an expectant faith that he could do something to save them, their understanding and faith were still deficient: For they did not yet realize that their teacher was the Son of God and that therefore they were safe all along. Finally, the disciples' fear of the storm turned into awe at Jesus' tremendous deed, and they wondered, "Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?" (Mark 4:41). Jesus' display of power awakened them to the mystery of his transcendence and identity.

The question of who Jesus really is is a recurring theme in the gospels (Luke 5:21; 7:49; 8:25). It is also a question each of us must answer in the depths of our own heart, especially when we are faced with the need of a savior in the storms of life.

Jeanne Kun is a noted author and a senior women's' leader in the Word of Life Community, Ann Arbor, Michigan, USA.
Excerpt from *Mighty in Power: The Miracles of Jesus, The Word Among Us* Press, Copyright © 2006. All rights reserved. Used with permission.

REMINDERS | SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES

- You are enjoined to practice Eucharistic Adoration at least an hour a week. Let us render God adoration, thanksgiving, reparation and petition. Kindly check with your respective parishes for schedules. Some churches are open 24-hours for Eucharistic Adoration.
- Pray at least one rosary of the Blessed Virgin Mary daily.
- Pray the Chaplet of the Divine Mercy at 3:00 PM and at 9:00 PM daily.
- Pray the Angelus at 6:00 PM daily.
- Pray the Pro-Life Scriptural Rosary [www.rosaryoftheunborn.com] to make reparation for the crime of abortion.
- Think of ways to make reparation to Mary for the sins committed against Jesus and Mary. A very good one is to join the **First Saturday devotion**; another is the **2000 Hail Mary devotion**.
- July 26, the Feast Day of Saints Joachim and Ann, has traditionally been a day to honor one's grandparents.
- If you have any personal articles or God's miracle in your life you want to share with the devotees, we will gladly add it on those months when the article is relevant. Please submit your article by the second week of the present month so that it can be included in the next month's release. Write what's in your mind and heart and not worry about grammar, syntax, spelling or style. Our guardian angels in heaven and on earth will help us edit the article. ☐

THANK YOU

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

Psalm 106:2

FOR PRAYERS HEARD AND PETITIONS GRANTED

Thank you, Eternal Father, for Your Will that transformed our sorrow into joy, our tears of anguish into tears of thanksgiving. Our physical and spiritual recreation, through Your Healing Hands, kept us enclosed and revived in our hope for renewed lives as we look up to the heavens praising You, in Jesus' most Holy Name, through the intercession of Mary, our Blessed Mother, and of the angels and saints.

We, Robert and Evelyn Pua, thank God for His Mercy and all of you for your prayers for Robert's hip replacement surgery. We also thank those who have been with us physically and spiritually during these times. Robert is on the road to recovery and will be fully recovered, with God's grace, by the middle of July.

We would like you to know that when the anesthesia wore off, Robert did not feel any pain – just some heaviness on the surgical wound. He stayed at the hospital for only two days. According to surveys, most patients are confined for normally three days. Again, we thank God for his speedy recovery

Felix is now gainfully employed FULL TIME!

Let us continue to thank God for their healing and for giving them the strength of faith to go through this spiritual process; and may their hearts be ever closer to Jesus' Sacred Heart through the intercession of the Blessed Mother in the Glory of Eternal Father. Amen.

2000 HAIL MARY DEVOTION

The Spiritual Army of God the Father and the 2000 Hail Mary Group of Northern California acknowledge with thanks our generous July 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 our Blessed Mother. The devotion continues to be a constant success.

Las Vegas, Nevada

Ines Carrington | Guada Eugenio

Los Angeles, California

Tessie Almero | Judy Amenia
Andresa Johnson | Helen Lapitan
Carmen Mora | Lilia Tuazon

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
11:20 A.M. - Rosary to the Father | 11:50 A.M. - Holy Mass
1:00 P.M. - Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament
Confession ongoing from 11:20 A.M. to 11:45 P.M.

2000 Hail Mary Devotion – July 21, 2012

at the Convent of the Sister Disciples of the Divine Master | starting at 8:30 a.m.
*Please call Mrs. Nory Jose at (310) 367-6557 if you wish to become a Sponsor
of the 2000 Hail Mary Devotion.*

In Las Vegas:

1st Saturday Devotion

at The Cenacle House in The Enclave, 8455 West Sahara Avenue #172, Las Vegas, NV 89117 at 1:00 PM.
Cenacle follows. 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 at 2:00-3:30 P.M.

at The Cenacle House in The Enclave, 8455 West Sahara Avenue #172, Las Vegas, NV 89117

2000 Hail Mary Devotion – July 21, 2012

*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.*

In Laughlin, Nevada:

1st Saturday Devotion

St. John the Baptist Catholic Church | 3055 El Mirage Way
Holy Mass starts at 8:00 A.M. Devotional prayers follow.

In Northern California:

1st Saturday Devotion

2000 Hail Mary Devotion

*Please call (650) 766-2071 for dates and venues for information.
For Sacramento, please call Precy Rieta (916) 564-3733; Caring Sturgill (916) 897-3194;
Maria Rosario (916) 230-7756.*

In San Diego

Rosary to the Father

Monday – Saturday after the 8:00 A.M. Mass [Look for Iris Haj]
St. Mary's Church | 1160 S. Broadway | Escondido, CA 92025

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 text Mobile @ **(011 +63 +2)** 916- 384-9300 and/or | Landline 939-4677 to find the venue closest to you.



Feast Day of God the Father

August 5, 2012

The Monastery of the Angels

*1977 Carmen Avenue on Gower | Los Angeles, CA
starting at 11:15 A.M.*

St. Bridget Catholic Church

220 N. 14th Street, Las Vegas, NV

*The celebration starts at 11:00 A.M. followed
by the Liturgy of the Mass at 11:30 A.M.*

*Please call (702) 274-4315 for the schedule of
Eight Days of Holy Octave Consecration to the Eternal Father
which will also be at St. Bridget's Catholic Church.*

***The Holy Octave of Consecration
to God Our Father starts on Sunday, July 29.***