



1ST SATURDAY DEVOTION NEWSLETTER

August 2017

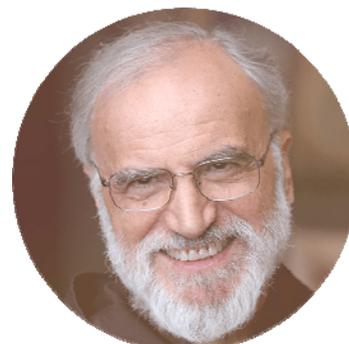
A FEAST FOR GOD THE FATHER

*By P. Raniero Cantalamessa, Ofm. Cap
Taken from Life in the Lordship of Christ*

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It's sad that in the whole liturgical year there isn't a feast dedicated to the Father, that in the whole Missal there isn't even a votive Mass in His honor. Come to think of it, it's very strange; there are many feasts dedicated to Jesus the Son; there is a feast of the Holy Spirit; there are many feasts dedicated to Mary... There isn't a single feast dedicated to the Father, "*source and origin of all divinity.*" We could almost say that the Father, and no longer the Holy Spirit, is "*the unknown divinity.*"



It's true, there is the feast of the Holy Trinity, which, however, is the feast of a mystery, or a dogma and not of a person and, nevertheless, not of a single divine person. Besides, the fact that there is a feast of the Holy Family doesn't mean the Church may not feel the need to celebrate, even individually, the three persons of the Holy Family. There are even two feasts dedicated to Jesus' putative father, but there isn't a single feast dedicated to His real Father. Couldn't this be the moment to fill this gap?

Many feasts originated in order to answer the particular needs of an era: the feast of Corpus Domini, for example, was born as a response of faith to the denial of the real presence, made by Berengario of Tours; to the threat of Jansenism, the Church responded with the feast and devotion to the Sacred Heart and no one will ever know how many spiritual graces this devotion produced. Today, the threat strikes the very heart of the Christian faith which is the revelation of God as Father – the "Father of our Lord Jesus Christ," as St. Paul calls Him – and, therefore, the Trinity itself. It's not a coincidence that Providence is bringing back to mind, in our days, the mystery of God's suffering, but because the Holy Spirit knows that this is the remedy needed to heal the contaminated mind of modern man, who has found, in suffering, the stumbling stone which leads him far away from God.

In the teachings of the Church, feasts have always been a privileged means of allowing a particular mystery or event of the history of salvation to penetrate in the lives of the faithful. The knowledge and familiarity of the Holy Spirit certainly wouldn't be so strong without the feast of Pentecost. Feasts are a living catechesis and today there is an urgent need for a

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.

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OVERVIEW FOR THE MONTH

www.catholicculture.org

The month of August is dedicated to The Immaculate Heart of Mary. 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. It is used in the offices and Masses of Ordinary Time. The last portion of the liturgical year represents the time of our pilgrimage to heaven during which we hope for reward.

August is often considered the transitional month in our seasonal calendar. It is the time of the year we begin to

wind-down from our summer travels and vacations and prepare for Autumn — back to school, fall festivals, harvest time, etc. The Church in her holy wisdom has provided a cycle of events in its liturgical year which allow the faithful to celebrate the major feasts in the life of Christ and Mary. Most notably, during August, we celebrate the feast of the Transfiguration (August 6) and the feast of the Assumption (August 15). □

FEASTS FOR AUGUST

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

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1 Alphonsus Liguori, Memorial | 21 Pius X |
| 2 Eusebius of Vercelli; Peter Julian Eymard, Opt. Mem. | 22 Queenship of Mary, Mem. |
| 4 John Vianney, Mem. | 23 Rose of Lima, Opt. Mem. |
| 5 Dedication of St. Mary Major, Opt. Mem. | 24 Bartholomew, Feast |
| 6 Transfiguration, Feast, Sunday | 25 Louis of France; Joseph Calasanz, Opt. Mem. |
| 7 Sixtus II and Companions; Cajetan, Opt. Mem. | 28 Augustine, Memorial |
| 8 Dominic, Memorial | 29 Passion of Saint John the Baptist, Mem. |
| 9 Teresa Benedicta of the Cross, Opt. Mem. | |
| 10 Lawrence, Feast | |
| 11 Clare, Mem. | |
| 14 Maximilian Kolbe, Memorial | |
| 15 Assumption, Solemnity | |
| 16 Stephen of Hungary, Opt. Mem. | |
| 19 John Eudes; St. Bernard Tolomei, Opt. Mem. | |

The feasts of Saints Pontian and Hippolytus (August 13), St. Bernard (August 20) and St. Monica (August 27) fall on a Sunday so they are superseded by the Sunday Liturgy. □

OUR CENACLE CORNER

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

**Our God sent the Israelites
to Egypt for 400 years?
WHY?**

**God tests us?
WHY?**

HIGHLIGHT OF THE MONTH

LIFE FOR THE GLORY OF GOD THE FATHER

www.missionofgodthefather.org

The Message of God the Father to All Humanity

In brief, God the Father wishes to be known, honoured and loved by all humanity and for people to have a confident, loving relationship as children with their Father. The Father desires that all people know deeply the depth of his love for each of them.

He has particularly requested "that one day may be consecrated to honouring Me in a particular way under the title of FATHER of all mankind. If you prefer to offer Me this special worship one Sunday, I choose the first Sunday in August. If you prefer a weekday, I prefer that it always be the 7th August" (Life for the Glory of the Father, p. 97).

The Feast

Up until this time, the Catholic Church has not officially proclaimed a feast for God the Father. So until it does, we like to refer to the 1st Sunday of August as a celebration of honouring God the Father.

God the Father has requested a feast dedicated honouring Him in a particular way, under the title of FATHER of all mankind. He has chosen the first Sunday in August or if a weekday is preferred, 7th of August.

Around the world, there is growing swell of priests and lay people who are growing in support of God the Father's requests and are organising their own celebrations.

Theologians Call for a Feast for God the Father

Feasts are a form of catechesis. In the liturgical cycle they deepen the knowledge of the faithful and give impetus to their faith.

Saint Joseph has two feasts in the Church's liturgical cycle - on March 19th, "Patron of the Universal Church" and on May 1st he is honoured as "St. Joseph the Worker". "There is a feast, two in fact, for Jesus' foster father but there's not even one for the real Father. Might not this be time to fill the gap?" (1)

A feast for God the Father will be the fulfillment of Jesus' words to the Samaritan woman: "the hour is coming, and

is now, when true worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father is seeking such people to worship him." (Jn 4:21-23)

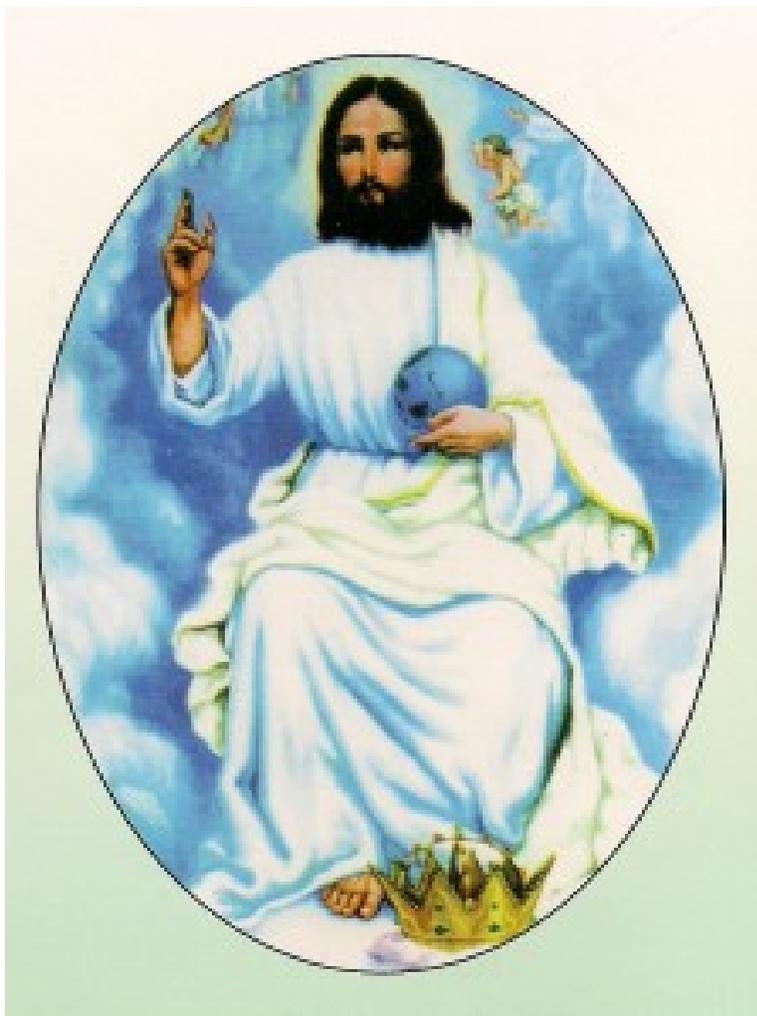
Efforts to inaugurate a feast honouring God the Father were made as long ago as 1657 and 1684 but theological objections were raised and no further attempt occurred. Interestingly at that time the philosophical lie of Deism spread. This philosophy reduced God the Father to a "cold, distant Creator". If, at that time, a feast for God the Father had been introduced it would have served as a bulwark against Deism.

Over the last century some theologians have again put forward the idea of a liturgical feast in honour of God the Father.

"The true object of the special feast [for God the Father] becomes plain: to honour the Father and to

thank and praise Him for giving us His Son. . . At a time when the world is troubled by the doctrines of laicism, atheism and modern philosophies and no longer knows God, the true God, would not this feast help many come to know the living Father, the Father of Mercy and Goodness as revealed to us by Jesus?" (2)

"The Church likewise must deepen her awareness of having come forth from the Father and of advancing toward him. The liturgical feast of God the Father would express this awareness with greater clarity. . . Such a



feast could not be considered an ornamental devotion. It is not a superfluous manifestation of piety, but intrinsic to the liturgical cycle of which this feast is the pinnacle. . . . The purpose of a liturgical feast is to draw attention to a particular person or mystery. The person of God the Father and the mystery of the divine fatherhood deserve more than an implicit veneration or a mere mention in other feasts. We can adequately celebrate and thank God our Father only with a special feast in his honour." (3)

"Many feasts were created to answer particular needs of an epoch . . . today the threat is against the very core of the Christian faith and that is the revelation of God as Father . . . now it is the Father and no longer the Holy Spirit who is 'the divine unknown' Feasts are a living catechesis and today there is an urgent need for a living catechesis on the Father." (4)

"For the first time in history churches have been built in His honour and a special feast is envisaged to God the Father. Will this serve to diminish attention to God the Son incarnate? On the contrary it will enable us to come closer to the mystery of His sonship . . . a spirituality orientated to the Father enhances, amplifies, deepens intimacy with Jesus." (5)

And at the Fourth General Congregation of the Synod of Bishops to 'foster ecclesial communion' Patriarch Joseph Arnaouti stated "I will read the signs of the times. . . . I suggest the following proposition: The institution of a liturgical feast of the Father. The 'Our Father' is the ecumenical prayer par excellence." (6)

Never before in history has society experienced such a "crisis of human fatherhood". A feast honouring God as our Father would be an occasion to develop the theological dimension of the natural fatherhood of husbands and the spiritual fatherhood of priests and thus "turn the hearts of the fathers to their children." (Malachi 3:24)

A feast for God the Father would help souls in today's culture experiencing confusion and disorientation in direction. "The Father is at the origin and at the conclusion of the mystery [of salvation]. The entire work of sanctification results from his paternal love and tends to produce, as its ultimate fruit, the return of humankind to him. His paternal role which is absolutely primordial and decisive deserves to be recognized and venerated by a special feast." (7)

A Feast for God the Father would see the Body of Christ imitate Jesus in His relationship with His Father. The whole mission of Jesus on earth was to make the Father known. "Christ's example invites us to utter the name of "Father" more often. . . . If we compare many of our

prayers with the prayer of the Gospel, we are struck by the absence of the name "Father", the name that gives such warmth to Jesus' prayer and reveals his deepest emotion as well. Many prayers have remained at the stage of the Old Testament in their way of addressing God." (8)

The Feast of Divine Mercy has now become an official feast within the liturgy of the Church. God the Father is the Source of that Mercy and allows His Mercy to flow to us through the Heart of His Son, Jesus. A feast would honour Him for this Gift.

The ultimate destiny of humanity is a return to the Father: "Then the end will come, when He'll deliver the kingdom to His God and Father." (1 Cor 15:24)

In the parable of the Prodigal Son "the young man being embraced by the Father is no longer just one repentant sinner, but the whole of humanity returning to God. The broken body of the prodigal becomes the broken body of humanity." (9) A feast for God the Father would serve as an analogy of the feast in the parable of the Prodigal Son.

"The Divine Master invites us to recognise, first and foremost, the primacy of God the Father. Where He is not present, nothing good can exist. He is a decisive priority in all things." (10)

A feast for God the Father would be a fitting recognition of His primacy. □

Compiled by Maree Triffett

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1. 'Life in the Lordship of Christ' - Father Raniero Cantalamessa, O.F.M CAP, p. 115
2. 'Life for the Glory of the Father - The Message of God our Father given to Mother Eugenia Elisabetta Ravasio', p. 73 - Bishop Alexander Caillot's testimony of support.
3. 'Abba Father we long to see Your Face' - Jean Galot, SJ, p. 226
4. 'Life in the Lordship of Christ' - Father Raniero Cantalamessa O.F.M CAP, p. 115, 116
5. Foreword of "God our Father, Consecration and Feast Day for the Father of All Mankind" - Fr. Michael O'Carroll C.S.SP, p. V
6. L'Osservatore Romano 3rd November, 2010
7. 'Abba Father we long to see Your Face' - Jean Galot, SJ, p. 225
8. Ibid p. 222, 223
9. 'The Return of the Prodigal Son' - Henri Nouwen, p. 58
10. Pope Benedict XVI Vatican Angelus 17th July, 2011

POPE FRANCIS ON GOD THE FATHER



"God is like a gentle father who holds us by the hand and we need to become like a small child to have a dialogue with Him . . . First, love is more about giving than receiving. Second, love is more about actions than words. When we say it's more about giving than receiving, that's because love communicates, it always communicates. And it's received by the one who is loved. And when we say that it's more about actions than words, that's because love always generates life and makes us grow.

"To understand God's love, we need to become small like a child and what God seeks from us is a relationship like that between a father and child. God gives us a caress and tells us: I'm by your side . . . This is the tenderness of our Lord and of His love; this is what He tells us and this gives us the strength to be tender. But if we feel we're strong, we'll never experience those caresses from the Lord, those caresses from Him that are so wonderful. 'Don't be afraid, for I am with you and I'll hold your hand' . . . These are all words spoken by the Lord that help us to understand that mysterious love He has for us. And when Jesus speaks about Himself, he says: 'I am meek and humble of heart.' Even He, the Son of God, lowers Himself to receive His Father's love.

"When we arrive, He's there. When we look for Him, He has already been looking for us. He is always in front of us, waiting to receive us in His heart, in His love. And these two things can help us to understand the mystery of God's love for us. In order to communicate this, He needs us to be like small children, to lower ourselves. And at the same time, He needs our astonishment when we look for Him and find Him there, waiting for us." (At Santa Marta, June 27, 2014).



"The Everlasting Father: No one or anything can separate us from His love. Go out and proclaim, go out and show that God is in your midst as a merciful Father who Himself goes out, morning and evening, to see if His son has returned home and, as soon as He sees him coming, runs out to embrace him. An embrace which wants to take up, purify and elevate the dignity of His children. A Father who, in His embrace, is 'glad tidings to the poor, healing

to the afflicted, liberty to captives, comfort to those who mourn' (Is 61:1-2)." (At Madison Square Garden Mass, September 25, 2015).



God Has A Weakness: He Cannot Not Love Us

"The Lord God waits, He does not condemn us and cries. Because He loves us! He behaves 'like a mother hen with little chickens;' this is our victory." (Pope Francis Homily at Casa Santa Marta, October 29, 2015).



The Heart And Joy Of The Father

"Our condition, as children of God, is the fruit of the love of the heart of the Father. It does not depend on our merits or our actions, thus no one can take it away from us. No one can take this dignity away from us, not even the Devil! . . . In whatever situation in life, I must not forget that I will never stop being a child of God – of a Father Who loves me and awaits my return. Even in the worst situation in life, God waits for me and wants to embrace me . . . We all need to enter the house of the Father and participate in His joy, in the feast of mercy and of fraternity." (Pope Francis, General Audience, May 11, 2016).



Dare to Call God: Father

In today's general audience, Pope Francis said, "Calling God by the name 'Father' is not something that can be taken for granted. We are tempted to use the highest titles, which are respectful of his transcendence. But calling him 'Father' puts us in His confidence, like a child talking to his dad, knowing that he is loved and cared for by him." The Pope added, "God is a Father in His own way: good, helpless before man's free will, only able to conjugate the verb 'to love' . . . God is a father who does not apply human justice and is ready to forgive and embrace his long lost son . . . We are never alone. We can be distant, hostile, we can even declare ourselves 'without God.' But the Gospel of Jesus Christ reveals that God cannot be without us: He will never be a God 'without man'." (Pope Francis Weekly Audience at St. Peter's Square, at the Vatican, June 7, 2017.)

THE 800 OUR FATHER DEVOTION

By The Spiritual Army of God the Father

July 2015 was the official launching date of the first devotional prayer that gives praise and petition solely to ETERNAL FATHER, the 800 Our Father devotion. The devotion focuses on the Lord's Prayer, 800 of them and some God the Father prayers and acclamations we have during our 1st Sunday devotional prayers. The Ministry selected number "8" as it symbolizes the infinitesimal character of our God Almighty. Some of those prayers are taken from the devotional collection of Elizabetta Ravasio, a Servant of Eternal Father revealing Himself in the

1930's. The Ministry invites all to participate in these devotional prayers. The next schedule will be on August 19, 2017. In Los Angeles, it will be at the Convent of the Sister Disciples of Divine Master; and in Las Vegas, it will be at The Cenacle house. For further details, please see the Devotion Schedule on the last page of this newsletter.

GOD TOUCHED ME

IS GOD THE FATHER LIKE MY FATHER?

By Jonathan C. Edwards

www.thegospelcoalition.org

I was 25 years old before I could say the word “father” while praying. The word was foreign to me. It didn’t roll off my tongue the way it did for many of my Christian friends. It felt like a word from a foreign language. In one regard, it meant nothing. It was jibberish. But in another, it meant a world of things. Amid the cultural barriers, it still struck a nerve, because while it meant nothing, it meant everything.

It meant broken things.

Scary things.

Hurtful things.

How was I supposed to use a word that, for me, brought to mind everything a parent shouldn’t be when I was in conversation with a God whom I’d been told was everything my dad wasn’t? How was I supposed to call God by a name I hadn’t used for most of my life; a name that didn’t mean to me what I knew Scripture insisted God is?

For me to call God a father was like calling an apple an orange. They didn’t mix.

Sure, I knew God was a Father, but how was I sure he wasn’t like my father?

Fearing the Shadow

In the Bible, the family unit gives us a picture of how God relates to us, his children. We understand that God, like the father in the parable of the prodigal son, welcomes us home to be with him through the sacrifice of Christ. He desires a relationship with his children. He cares for us. We know we’re able to understand the nature and character of love because God loved us first. In Christ’s prayer in John 17, we learn that God desires us to be with him, together as a family. In this regard, our earthly fathers give us a picture, a shadow, of what God the Father is truly like.

Dads want to be with their children. They want to spend time with them, to care for them, to love them. They want their children to know how much they would risk to protect them. Dads want children to know what they’d do if they lost them. This is what dads do.

So for a child of God, it should be pretty great that God is like a dad, right?

For the fatherless, this isn’t good news. We’re fearful of the shadow God has set in place. The result? We’re frightened by God the Father, because we’re terrified of our earthly fathers. How can we come to God without fear when we’re scared to go home when Dad is there? How can we understand God’s love and faithfulness when Dad

left town because he loved someone or something more than us? How can God be a mighty fortress of protection when Dad hit instead of hugged? How can God be a firm foundation of trust and assurance when Dad built in us a mountain of disappointment and insecurity?

It’s devastating that the very thing God has given to reflect his love and mercy and faithfulness is the very thing keeping many from crawling into their heavenly Father’s lap. I’m almost 31, and this is still a daily fight. It’s a fight to trust God thinks of me differently than my dad did. It’s a fight to not assume God enjoys disciplining me more than blessing me. It’s a fight not to think God is mad at me more often than he delights in me.

Some days it feels hopelessly exhausting.

Hopeful Way Forward

What changed it all for me was a recalibration. It took a reorientation for me to move forward in trusting the Lord and calling him Father. What do I mean? Instead of looking at my dad and then back at God, I learned to look at God first. I realized if God wasn’t my first source of fatherhood, I was always going to be off-balance. If I didn’t start with God, then he would always be the replica rather than the original.

Instead of looking at my dad and then back at God, I learned to look at God first. . . . If I didn’t start with God, then he would always be the replica rather than the original.

This recalibration took turning to Scripture to fill my mind with the true nature of God instead of turning to the empty shadow first. Through his gracious Word, he showed me he delights to lavish mercy. He doesn’t stay angry. He takes my wrongs and faults and covers them in his Son. Since his grace and mercy are new each day, I don’t have to wake up tiptoeing around in his presence. I can run to him, freely and confidently. Moreover, he doesn’t hang my shortcomings over my head; he treats me with constant grace. Through Christ, he has made a way for me to know and enjoy him. He can be found. He isn’t hiding. He didn’t leave. In fact, he came looking for me to rescue me from brokenness. He hasn’t given up on me.

In the Son, I see the Father isn’t hiding. On a cross, he proved he came for me. On a cross, he proved that - unlike any shadow we’ve seen - he alone always keeps his promises and always makes good on his commitments.

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SPIRITUAL ARMY NEWS DISPATCH

THE FEAST OF THE FATHER OF ALL MANKIND

The feast of Eternal Father will be celebrated on August 13, 2017 at 11:30 A.M. in Los Angeles at the Monastery of the Angels. Thus, the Consecration Octave commences on August 6, 2017. These changes are due to a perpetual vow event taking place at the Monastery of the Angels on August 6. In Las Vegas, the Eternal Father Feast Day celebration will be on August 6, 2017 at 11:30 A.M. at St. Bridget's Catholic Church and the Consecration Octave commences on July 30, 2017 culminating on God The Father's feast day on August 6.

The Holy Octave of Consecration to God the Father is available for download on <https://www.spiritualarmyofgod.org/prayers/devotionals>.

All are welcome to give honor, praise, continuing recognition and love to our Creator and Divine Father in heaven. He awaits all of His children with infinite love and mercy!

JESS CARLOS: IN MEMORIAM



Jess Carlos, a Las Vegas devotee, writer and linguist passed away on June 2, 2017 at the age of 86 years old. He is survived by his wife, Vi, sons Francisco and Rene, daughter-in-law, Lisa Marie and grandson, Kody. His remains were cremated and then in-urned on July 15, 2017 at the St. Therese Mission Church Columbarium in Tecopa, CA. The funeral mass was concelebrated by Fr. Joel Aquino, parish priest of St. Therese Mission Church, and Fr. Jess Escalona-Briones, SVD, a relative of Vi. After the liturgical celebration, he was honored by his son, Francisco, and wife, Vi in a short eulogy. Then, everyone followed the priests in a procession to the columbarium building. Inside the columbarium, the priests led the prayers and blessed the niche with Holy Water; then, the family offered flowers. A lunch reception followed.

The Las Vegas and Los Angeles devotees extend their heartfelt sympathies and condolences to Vi Carlos and family. Jess, you will always be in our thoughts and prayers.

WE MEET, WE LOVE, WE PART.

Such is life. May seem easy but not always. It is in times like this that I awaken to the love that the family of the Spiritual Army of God the Father has helped us thru. My family, sons Francisco, Rene, daughter Lisa Marie and grandson Kody are humbled by the deep expression of sympathy, prayers, mass offerings and financial expression of caring that makes it so real to say we are one with you. Please accept our heartfelt gratitude. It goes without saying you helped lighten the load and pain of losing a love one, my pride, my joy. May our love for The Father, Jesus and Blessed Mother help us in all our missions in serving our God.

Thank you -- Vi Carlos.

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

GOD THE FATHER FEAST DAY

SUNDAY, AUGUST 13, 2017

IN LOS ANGELES:

THE MONASTERY OF THE ANGELS
ON CARMEN AND GOWER
DETAILS TO FOLLOW

SUNDAY, AUGUST 6, 2017

IN LAS VEGAS:

ST. BRIDGET CATHOLIC CHURCH
220 N 14TH STREET, LAS VEGAS, NV
CELEBRATION BEGINS AT 11:30 AM

THE 800 OUR FATHER DEVOTION

SATURDAY, AUGUST 19, 2017

IN LOS ANGELES:

THE CONVENT OF THE SISTER DISCIPLES
OF THE DIVINE MASTER
BEGINNING WITH A MASS AT 8:30 AM

IN LAS VEGAS:

THE CENACLE HOUSE ON
SAHARA/DURANGO
BEGINNING WITH A MASS AT 8:00 AM

PILGRIMAGE TO OUR LADY OF GUADALUPE, MEXICO

DECEMBER 9-13, 2017

DAILY ACTIVITIES AND OTHER
INFORMATION ARE AVAILABLE AT
WWW.SPIRITUALARMYOFGOD.ORG

INFANT JESUS CELEBRATION

JANUARY 19-21, 2018

SAINT FRANCIS DESALES
LAS VEGAS, NV

SPIRITUAL ENRICHMENT RECOMMENDED

THE POWER OF SILENT PRAYER

By Jurell Sison

For years I've been trying to master the art of silent prayer. Sometimes my attempts find me staring at my shoes, thinking about the work I need to be doing. Other times, when I approach prayer with an open heart, I can feel my life, attitude, and perspective changing with every second I keep my eyes closed.

Silence is difficult. It's confusing. What, exactly, is supposed to happen while sitting for long, potentially awkward periods of time? I'm still not confident about my answer, but I can share some of my experiences.

Enough is enough. First, every time I enter into silent prayer it takes quite a while to get situated. I'm thinking about the endless number of tasks that need to be done at my job and my apartment. Moreover, I have special projects, blog posts, videos, and, most importantly, people I need to connect with throughout the day. My mind never shuts off, unless I put my foot down and say, enough is enough. Entering into silent prayer takes work. It takes discipline and courage to cut through all the little things that distract our minds and hearts to arrive at a sacred and productive silence.

I have some good days and I have some terrible days when I attempt to enter into silent prayer. However, the more I try, the better I get.

I am not in charge. When I'm at my best in silent prayer, I get an overwhelming feeling that I am not in charge. While that sounds cliché, it seems to me that this simple mindset is the remedy to my stress, heartache, and anxiety. Day to day I get tricked into believing that my daily tasks, obstacles, and struggles are bigger than they are. Some days I even feel cheated that people don't recognize them or validate them, but my prayer puts things into the proper perspective. I get a profound sense that God is in charge and that life is mysterious. And no matter what struggles come my way, God has a way to redeem them. I like to think that I trust God, but silence helps me to live that trust.

Deeper prayer. God isn't some "thing" we can quantify; God is mystery. Silence is one of the most profound ways to dive deeper into the mystery that is God. I've grown to appreciate this idea through St. Ignatius' spiritual exercises. For 30 weeks I was asked to sit in silence for one hour a day while using my imagination to contemplate the scriptures. I was hesitant at first, but it made sense that if God worked through all things (a very basic and popular Ignatian concept), God certainly worked through my imagination.

It was then that I realized the true beauty of silent prayer. Every week I was given a set of bible verses to contemplate. More than that, I was asked to imagine myself within the bible stories. It was there that I "met" God for the first time. He revealed himself to me in a number of creative ways that made me seek God more, ways that fueled my desire to know God more deeply.

Ironically, my silent prayer was incredibly loud, interactive, and engaging. It was also emotional and intimate. The silence allowed God to speak to my heart in mysterious ways. Through those 30 weeks of the spiritual exercises, I interacted with God in ways that I never thought possible. We shared intimate moments and furthered our relationship. In my scripture contemplations, Jesus treated me as one of his disciples and entrusted me with tasks to further his mission. He trusted me. He embraced me. He stuck up for me. He loved me. The silence was a sacred space for me to be with Jesus.

For me, this is the power of silent prayer: it creates a deeper relationship with an infinite and mysterious God. It takes us down a path that ultimately leads to a deep friendship. □

Jurell Sison is the director of Youth and Young Adult Ministries at St. Ambrose Catholic Church in Brunswick, Ohio. He graduated in 2013 from John Carroll university with a Master of Arts in Theology.

A FEAST FOR THE FATHER

catechesis on the Father. Besides its catechetical value, a feast dedicated to the Father would also have, like any other feast, the value of homologesis, that is of a public and joyful confession of faith. In fact, feasts are the highest and most solemn form of proclaiming one's faith, because all people participate in it unanimously. Christians would certainly give great joy to the risen Lord if they were able to accomplish this project "ecumenically," that is, reaching an agreement with all the Churches who accept it in order to celebrate, with one accord, the feast of the Father on the same day.

While we look forward to this day, we can already celebrate the feast of the Father "in spirit and in truth", in the intimacy of our hearts, by perhaps promoting little spiritual initiatives which purpose is to make the Father known more, to honour Him and express all our filial love for Him, in union with Jesus, who always celebrates His Father In fact, this is already taking place and many people are experiencing the new and extraordinary fervour it gives to faith and to our whole spiritual life. ☐

Raniero Cantalamessa, O.F.M. Cap. is an Italian Catholic priest in the Order of Friars Minor Capuchin and theologian. He has served as the Preacher to the Papal Household since 1980, under Pope John Paul II, Pope Benedict XVI and Pope Francis.

IS GOD THE FATHER LIKE MY FATHER?

Harbor Awaits You

So push into Scripture. Don't run away. I've found my heavenly Father is truly unlike any dad I've ever known. He isn't mad. He isn't coming home waiting to punish me. He's waiting to shower me with mercy and grace.

This doesn't mean it's easy. It's been a scary journey. But God's glorious fatherhood should be, and can be, the great lighthouse that draws us in from dark storms and raging seas. It brings us in from rushing waters.

So step to the helm. Make the move. Turn the ship and go full-throttle toward the shore. Let the fatherhood of God be the beacon that draws you safely into the harbor, not the waves that keep you lost at sea.

Go home. Trust me. It's safe. ☐

*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:
evelyn.pua@spiritualarmyofgod.org
alice.a@spiritualarmyofgod.org
(702) 274-4315 and/or (213) 385-7798*

Jonathan C. Edwards (M.Div., Th.M.) is the director of curriculum for Docent Research Group, where he also serves as a lead writer. He's the author of *Left: The Struggle to Make Sense of Life When a Parent Leaves* (Rainer Publishing, 2016). He and his wife, Katherine, live in Durham, North Carolina, where he is pursuing his PhD at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary.

*. . . The whole humanity must now prepare
to be in harmony with each other.
Prayers you say must be coming from your hearts
before our Father in heaven.*

Jesus of Nazareth, Your Loving God

07152017

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 July sponsors of the 800 Our Father 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. This month is the commencement of the 800 Our Father devotion and we pray it will be a success.

Las Vegas, Nevada

Lucien & Mila Lumba

Los Angeles, California

Carmelita Caro | Marlen & Erla Cardona

Pop Melo | Alice Ng

Carolina Pineda | Marivic Punzalan

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 re-creation, 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.

Thank you, my Lord and my God for your words in Saturday's (July 15) Gospel Reading, particularly Matthew 10:28, " . . . do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul, rather be afraid of the one who can destroy both soul and body in Gehenna." By these words, I have learned to trust you more and more.

- A Las Vegas Devotee

Dear God – I want to take a minute not to ask for anything but to sincerely thank you for all I have! And for all those times when I was falling apart, thank you for keeping me together!!!

- Alice A.

Thank you Father for the belly laughter and the watery-eyed joy with loved ones and good friends over the weekend!

- Victor

Thank you for our marriage Lord -- for the grace to be generous with kind words and compliments. Continue to humble us so that we may choose never to ignore, never to hurt, and never to take each other for granted!

- A grateful couple

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 – August 19, 2017

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 Heart 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 – August 19, 2017

*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 Wednesday of the month after the 7:30 AM Mass (*except during the Holy Week*)
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.