



1ST SATURDAY DEVOTION NEWSLETTER

SEPTEMBER 2021

OUR LADY OF SORROWS, CAUSE OF OUR JOY

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Roman Catholic Spiritual Direction
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The middle of September, we celebrate two important feasts: the Exaltation of the Holy Cross, on September 14, and the following day, September 15, we remember Our Lady of Sorrows. Two days linked forever in meaning, inseparable, poignant.

September 15 also happens to be my birthday. And for a long time, as long as I was old enough to realize who I shared the day with, I felt a little – cheated. I mean, it's a bit of a downer to liturgically commemorate all the bitterness in Mary's life on a day for celebrating your own. Not that I ever thought it should be all about me, but as a child, it just didn't seem quite fair. To enter the world as Mary grieved at the Cross.



Eventually, I made peace with it. And then later still I considered it an honor to be born on a Marian day, whichever one it may be. Forever I'll be tucked into that title, a little footnote on her calendar. And as I got older, the meaning of suffering, hers and my own, took on its own strange beauty and could be appreciated. At least, I reasoned, I have a patroness in all the little crosses I drag reluctantly as I shuffle along, hopefully heavenward.

But recently I came to love it.

Suddenly, in my Suburban, a flash of clarity at a stoplight, came, like most good things, while meditating on the rosary. It was this: Our Lady of Sorrows is the Cause of Our Joy.

These are both ancient titles of Mary, but I had never held them together in my heart before, each one like a mirror reflecting the other, returning its own light. Each one meaningless, really, without the other. There is no value in suffering without its little Sunday at the end, and there is no joyful redemption without the cross. There just isn't. It's one of those paradoxes our faith is famous for.

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FEASTS FOR SEPTEMBER

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

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| 3 St. Gregory the Great, Memorial | 21 Feast of Matthew, Apostle, Feast |
| 5 Twenty-Third Sunday in Ordinary Time, Sunday | 23 Pius of Pietrelcina, Memorial |
| 8 Feast of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Feast | 26 Twenty-Six Sunday in Ordinary Time, Sunday |
| 9 Peter Claver (USA), Memorial | 27 Vincent de Paul, Memorial |
| 12 Twenty-Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time, Sunday | 28 Wenceslaus; Lawrence Ruiz and Companions; St. Simón de Rojas O.SS. (Spain), Opt. Mem. |
| 13 John Chrysostom, Memorial | 29 Feast of Michael, Gabriel and Raphael, Archangels, Feast |
| 14 Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross, Feast | 30 Jerome, Memorial |
| 15 Our Lady of Sorrows, Memorial | |
| 16 Cornelius and Cyprian, Memorial | |
| 17 Robert Bellarmine, Hildegard of Bingen, Opt. Mem. | The feasts of the Holy Name of Mary (September 12), St. Januarius (September 19), and Saints Cosmas and Damian (September 26), are superseded by the Sunday liturgy. ☐ |
| 19 Twenty-Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time, Sunday | |
| 20 Andrew Kim Taegon, Paul Chong Hasang and Companions, Memorial | |

THANK YOU

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

Psalm 106:2

The Ministry is grateful to those devotees who have helped fund our mission's project of granting scholarships to three seminarians, one university student, and one second grader at a Roman Catholic school and for helping our God to accomplish His plan for His children. Furthermore, we thank those who have assisted the ministry with the stipend for our priests. We know God will shower you with graces and blessings. To those who pray for the ministry's work through these trying times, we thank you, as well.

OUR CENACLE CORNER

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

Prayers Are Sometimes Unanswered

GOD TOUCHED ME

*Publish his glorious deeds among the nations.
Tell everyone about the amazing things he does. — 1 Chronicles 16:24*

CAST YOUR CARE UPON THE LORD

*Then Jesus spoke to them, saying, "I am the Light of the world,
the one who follows Me will not walk in the darkness, but will have the light of life."*

John 8:12

By Ross, a brother in Christ

I am writing my conversion story upon the request of my Ninang who is a devotee of The Spiritual Army of God the Father.

I am a cradle Catholic because of my mother. My father was not Catholic, but he allowed my mother to have me baptized in the Roman Catholic religion to preserve the peace in the family. Because of my mother, my father also has his own conversion story.

Growing up, we always attended mass on Sundays and holy days of obligation. I was enrolled in a Catholic school from grade school to high school. Towards the end of my high school years, I rebelled, stopped going to school for some reasons which I now find ridiculous and very immature. My mother transferred me to a public school where I finally graduated. Then, I went to college as a working student until I was able to graduate after several years. During those years, I rebelled and gave my parents a lot of grief. Yet, they patiently waited and prayed for me to change.

After college graduation, I was promoted at my work and my fiancée had a baby. We are now married and are raising our wonderful and lovely daughter. All through these years, I experienced a lot of anxiety for every little change in my life, in my work, and in everything I did. Have you ever felt weighed down by worries and concerns that fear and worry grips your whole being? The doctors call this anxiety disorder.

One day, I attended mass at our parish and the priest who celebrated the liturgy said that it was his ordination anniversary. He told us about his experience as a priest, as a person; and the one thing that stuck in my mind was when he said that he has anxiety disorder and the only thing that calmed him down was when he is in adoration in front of the Blessed Sacrament. I thought about it long and hard and I said to myself, let me try it.

So, I went to Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament and it was an eye opener for me. I felt peace and serenity

overcome my whole being. The Holy Spirit covered me that whole time. From then on, I constantly went to the church for adoration. My wife asked me why I always went to church for adoration, and I explained to her the kind of comfort that overcomes me every time I am there.

I invited her to come with me so she can also experience the power of the Holy Spirit.

Through my phone, I get a daily reading of a bible verse, and this helps me get through the day. My Blessed Sacrament adoration as well as the daily bible verse I receive, have given me a closer relationship with the Lord. I have become prayerful and I meditate frequently during the day especially in moments when the anxiety starts to creep in. I have discovered, by the grace of God, the healing power of God's presence through the Holy Spirit. I quickly find comfort and peace each time I turn to God. I have proven that the scriptures I read daily and memorize are the secret to a peaceful life. When the word of God comes alive in my heart, it becomes a powerful life-changing reality that creates peace, comfort and joy where once was only worry, discouragement and fear.

I feel that I am a changed person (my mom says so, too), and I acknowledge that everything comes from the Lord. I realize that I had been away from God and that the anxiety is the thorn on my side that Jesus wants me to keep. Just like Peter, when he asked Jesus three times to take away the thorn on his side, Jesus answered "No, my grace is sufficient for you. My power is made perfect in weakness" (2Corinthians 12:9). This scriptural verse has brought tears to my eyes.

Let us always keep in mind that the light of God's words will displace the darkness that the enemy desires to bring.

I ask you all to please pray for me that I will continue my journey with the Lord, our God. ☐

SPIRITUAL ENRICHMENT RECOMMENDED

PRAYERS ARE SOMETIMES UNANSWERED

BY VICTOR ARANETA

In the Book of Kings, the most revered prophet, Elijah, in his confrontation with Jezebel, got struck by Jezebel's statement, and I quote, "Tomorrow, at this time, you will be dead." After Elijah slaughtered all her sorcerers, he prayed to God for help, but no response.

Can you imagine a man of God praying and receiving no response from Yahweh! At an instance, the poor man slipped away to hide from a death stalking Jezebel. Elijah moved to a place not even mentioned in the Bible. The biblical account opined that he found himself by the river in total shock. The poor man is suffering in modern parlance generalized anxiety and depression! He was so frustrated and found himself so alone.

Why did God leave him unattended despite all the clamor for help? It was very compelling when Yahweh helped him during the showdown with the sorcerers of Jezebel and manifested His presence during that face-to-face challenge with faith and belief. Theologians believe that he was communicating with God for days



with no immediate answer on sight from heaven. He felt so frustrated and fearful for his life. Then, the next scene is biblical history.

Why did God leave him unattended despite all the clamor for help? Yahweh helped him during the showdown with the sorcerers of Jezebel and manifested His presence during that face-to-face challenge.

Theologians believe that he was communicating with God for days with no answer from heaven. He felt so frustrated and fearful for his life. Then, the next scene is history.

Firstly, he doubted God's protection. This time the devil worked his way. Satan's number one spokesman, Jezebel, has an upper hand. For days, she totally struck down Elijah's relationship with Yahweh!

Secondly, his trust in God's strength over His creatures was put on the back burner and Elijah chose flight rather than fight.

Lastly, as he was nurturing his depression and anxiety, his unceasing faith broke into pieces. Elijah became weak physically and spiritually. Those are the main ingredients of Satan's final blow.

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Upcoming Events

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

1ST FRIDAY DEVOTION

SEPTEMBER 3, 2021 @ 9:30 PM
IN LOS ANGELES: VIA ZOOM

IN LAS VEGAS:
AT THE CENACLE HOUSE

1ST SATURDAY DEVOTION

AUGUST 4, 2021
MASS AT 10:45 AM
IN LOS ANGELES: VIA ZOOM

IN LAS VEGAS:
AT THE CENACLE HOUSE

1ST SUNDAY DEVOTION

SEPTEMBER 5, 2021
IN LOS ANGELES:
THE MONASTERY OF THE ANGELS

IN LAS VEGAS –
ST. SHARBEL CATHOLIC CHURCH
LAS VEGAS, NV 89183
MASS AT 9:30 AM
FOLLOWED BY DEVOTIONAL PRAYERS
AT THE CHAPEL

2000 HAIL MARY DEVOTION

IN LAS VEGAS:
SEPTEMBER 11, 2021
AT THE CENACLE HOUSE

IN LOS ANGELES:
SEPTEMBER 18, 2021, VIA ZOOM

OUR LADY OF SORROWS, CAUSE OF OUR JOY

First, Our Lady of Sorrows, the woman who tasted bitterness at the prophecy of Simeon, when she hears that a sword would pierce her heart, already fear stabbing her. But then, as always, a yes. Each sorrow a yes. Specifically, we remember seven: The Prophecy of Simeon, the Flight into Egypt, the Loss of the Child Jesus in the Temple, their Meeting on the Way to Calvary, Jesus' Death on the Cross, Mary's Reception of His Body, And the Placing of His Body in the Tomb. Those are the big ones. And all the little piercings, too, each step he took away from her, into the crowds that would kill him, each soul that rejected him, each sin she saw, each one was an ache. But every time there is the yes, the giving away of herself into the will of God. Every sorrow was sealed with a "fiat" that gave it eternal power. Until finally it would culminate at the foot of the Cross, with her leaning into that will with a silent agony we can only imagine.

And then. In that darkest hour, in the horrible silence as heaven held its breath, He spoke. "Woman, behold your son...behold your mother." In that extreme grief, there was yet another yes. And we all flooded into her heart, hollowed out by humility and suffering. The day he wrenched eternal life back for us, he gave us the source of his own human life – he handed us his Mother.

And we won twice – CAUSE OF OUR JOY.

So that's one reason she's the Cause of Our Joy. Because in another act of generosity only possible for God Himself, she is ours. Our Lady. In the most anguished hour of all her sorrows, we received a gift that the angels would envy if they could envy. We share her with them as a Queen, but only to us can she be a Mother. In all things she shares our life and loves us with unspeakable tenderness. Once we have become her children, we feel the warm gentle weight of her gaze that makes life bearable even in its most difficult days. "Our faith tells us that here below, in our present life, we are pilgrims, wayfarers," says St. Josemaría Escrivá. "Our lot is one of sacrifices, suffering, and privations. Nonetheless, joy must mark the rhythm of our steps. 'Serve the Lord with joy' – there is no other way to serve Him." Every shimmering joy, each a foretaste of the eternal that awaits us, is from her spoon.

She is also the Cause of Our Joy because, by the design of God, it is only through her that He came. Christ, our salvation, came through this little vessel and we are so forever grateful. From the first, the big "Fiat" spoken to Gabriel, divinity took flesh within her and finally, our salvation was underway. She is the first chapter in the book of eternal life. Joy itself comes to the world, and only through Mary. St. John the Baptist was the first to feel it, leaping with joy as an unborn baby as he felt

their presence, even as she herself exclaims, "My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior!" (Luke 1:47)

Appropriately, then, we rejoice too because she is honored in heaven and earth. She is given a seat next to her son, she is crowned Queen of Heaven, the final victory is given to her. "A great marvel appeared in the heaven: a woman, dressed with the sun, with the moon at her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars." (Revelation 12:1) If our Mother is Queen, then we take heart. St. Josemaría Escrivá reminds us that we are prompted to "acknowledge the basis for this joyful hope. Yes, we are still pilgrims, but our mother has gone ahead, where she points to the reward of our efforts. She tells us we can make it. And, if we are faithful, we will reach home." So she is the Cause of Our Joy because she is a sign of our salvation. What we hope for she holds high as a promise fulfilled.

Finally, and this is the difficult part, but what brings it all full circle – Our Lady of Sorrows is the Cause of Our Joy because, Fr. John Hardon said, "She enjoyed the happiness of suffering with Christ, suffering for Christ, suffering like Christ. How the meaning of happiness is taught us by the mother of God...happiness on earth is a measure of our living lives of sacrifice as Our Lady did. When we address Our Lady as the Cause of Our Joy, we mean it... She is the Cause of Our Joy because our joy will depend on how faithfully we allow Mary to teach us what it means to be happy."

What he's saying is this: if joy is union with God, then there's a cross in it for us. No cross, no joy. We can run away from it, and maybe there'll be a little relief in the distractions of the world, but no real joy. Only by leaning in, as she did, can true joy be found, and once we do, we find that being so close to a God who suffered too takes on a certain sweetness. No Sunday sunrise without Friday's slow fade. No Queen of Heaven without the Sorrowful Mother.

I guess then, it is a "happy" birthday after all. In the most joyful sense of the word.

Mater Dolorosa, Causa nostra laetitiae, ora pro nobis.

This article also appears in Endow Voices.

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PRAYERS ARE SOMETIMES UNANSWERED

But God has a plan. He sent His Angel, believed to be Baraquiel, and forced Elijah to eat and enjoy the beauty of the riverbanks and its murmuring waters. This was nature's way of healing Elijah. Perhaps this lasted for weeks, until God spoke to Elijah and told him to get up and anoint Jehu to be King of Israel and fulfill God's plan of Jezebel's destruction which Elijah ironically prophesied!

Do we suffer sometimes because God is not listening to our prayers and like Elijah we want to slip into the river of frustration? Our Lord wants us to be steadfast in our belief that our prayers will be answered and not even an iota of doubt must linger in our hearts. Trust in God's way and Faith in His Divine providence. These are the ingredients that will break God's silence on His throne and fulfill His promise that He will be with us until the end of time.

Prayer: My Lord God, you see through my heart and even for a moment do not allow me to be overcome by frustration and fear but rather by hope and by cheer that I will be able to feel your presence not by the roaring river but in the silence of the wind of promise of hope, trust and divine providence that will touch my heart, in Jesus' name I pray. Amen. ☐



“I am your Mother Mary.

Continue praying unceasingly.

The next dosage that will be given is for man's submission to evil intent. Fake medical experts will provide a lot of reasons for you to take it.

Still your choice my children.

It's just like the Jewish people who gave their freedom to be slaves using provisions for their everyday existence, not knowing that this is for controlling their lives for 400 years.

Pray my children and open yourselves and your hearts before God Almighty.

Pray in front of the Blessed Sacrament where my Son Jesus stays.

Do your adoration, more importantly the rosary.

Mary, Your Lady of LaSalette”

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