



1ST SATURDAY DEVOTION NEWSLETTER

OCTOBER 2020

HOW LIVING THE PRESENT MOMENT KEEPS US CONNECTED WITH GOD

By *Christine Ponsard*
www.aleteia.org

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 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.

Fear and anxiety can keep us from being in the moment and be an obstacle to our spiritual life.

Our fears about the future often keep us from appreciating the joys the day offers, above all if some specific threat appears on the horizon. Whether it be a justified worry or irrational anguish, this fear of what is coming takes hold of our attention, veers it away from what is, and points it toward something that has yet to be. Instead of enjoying what today has brought for us, we are off to meet the difficulties of tomorrow. Of course, some people are more prone than others to this kind of projection into the future, but it is a temptation that we all fall into at one time or another.

The future belongs to Providence. God gives us this day. The present is the moment for our encounter with God. If we ask the Holy Virgin to "pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death," it is because these are the two moments when God comes to fill us with His joy. Not living "in the here and now" is missing your appointment with God. The Evil One, of course, tries to make us miss this meeting ... so he aims to distract us from this day of God, making us believe that it is more important to worry about what will happen tomorrow.

Nevertheless, it is necessary to plan ahead and organize: parents cannot live day-to-day without preparing for the future. They don't wait for school to start to register their children. Likewise, we use lists to prepare everything ahead of time to avoid being rushed. Any sales agent or business person knows that you can't manage a business without keeping the future in mind. Making plans, saving money, contracting insurance plans is legitimate, even imperative. We have to be aware of the future, but not worry about it: this is what the Lord asks of us. He never stops telling us: "Don't be afraid, do not fear for your future." Because the future belongs to Providence.

Instructions to fully receive this day of God. Therefore, we should not act as if we were masters of the future, as if we knew what we needed better than God Himself. God is a Father with His arms full of gifts. But, instead of seeing those gifts and taking advantage of what they have to offer, His children decide it is more urgent to imagine what would happen if those gifts stopped coming ... and they end up missing out on the joy that those presents bring.

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FEASTS FOR OCTOBER

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

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1 Thérèse of the Child Jesus, Memorial | 19 Isaac Jogues, John de Brébeuf and companions (USA), Memorial |
| 2 Guardian Angels, Memorial | 20 Paul of the Cross, Opt. Mem. |
| 4 Twenty-Seventh Sunday in Ordinary Time, Sunday | 22 John Paul II, Opt. Mem. |
| 5 Bl. Francis Xavier Seelos; Faustina Kowalska, virgin, Opt. Mem. | 23 John of Capistrano, Opt. Mem. |
| 6 Bruno; Bl. Marie Rose Durocher (USA), Opt. Mem. | 24 Anthony Claret, Opt. Mem. |
| 7 Our Lady of the Rosary, Memorial | 25 Thirtieth Sunday in Ordinary Time, Sunday |
| 11 Twenty-Eighth Sunday in Ordinary Time, Sunday | 28 Simon and Jude, Feast |
| 14 Callistus I, Opt. Mem. | |
| 15 Teresa of Jesus, Memorial | |
| 16 Hedwig; Margaret Mary Alacoque, Opt. Mem. | |
| 17 Ignatius of Antioch, Memorial | |
| 18 Twenty-Ninth Sunday in Ordinary Time, Sunday | |

The feasts of St. Francis of Assisi (October 4), St. John XXIII (October 11) and St. Luke (October 18) are superseded by the Sunday liturgy. □

THANK YOU

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

Psalm 106:2

From EP

I thank God for the miracle that He has given us. My brother and sister in law have fully recovered and my two sisters have found a good and safe place to live in. I also thank the prayer warriors for the intercessory prayers. Praise God!

From Sue Ann Tumakay

No words can express my gratitude for the Spiritual Army of God the Father who has kept me in their prayers for His loving and healing mercy. With a humble and grateful heart, I am now in remission. With your continued prayers and God's grace, I hope and pray to remain in remission for the next 5 years so that I can be considered cancer free.

Thank you for the love, support and prayers! God bless all of you!

OUR CENACLE CORNER

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

God Touched Me

GOD TOUCHED ME

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

LIFE'S CHALLENGES ARE BLESSINGS IN DISGUISE

*By Marilyn Batino, a devotee
September 21, 2020*

*"For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways,
and my thoughts than your thoughts".*

Isaiah 55:8-9

This was the year of the unexpected, the good and the bad but all at the same time a BLESSING. There are moments in our lives when challenges or obstacles come across, making us pause a moment and enveloping us with fear of the unknown, leaving us to wonder what is happening

It was in January 2020 when my sister turned the big 50. We surprised her with a celebration on February 1, 2020 – just having immediate family and close friends who all made the party a big success! The joy and stress of planning the surprise party for her was one of the many signals that my body needed to rest – that I must slow down.

The following Monday, I noticed I was struggling to breathe while walking from the parking structure to my office. Normally, I can carry my bag and laptop with no problem, but this time was different, so I just slowed down. That Friday after lunch, I started to feel drained, had body aches and feeling heavy so I decided to go home and rest. I slept for many hours because I did not want to get sick since COVID-19 started to be a big concern. The following morning, I woke up with chills, high temperature and body still feeling really heavy and weak. I knew I had to medicate myself but since my big concern was my kidney and my compromised immune system, I called UCLA and was told that Tylenol is the better option for chills, fever and body aches.

Sunday morning, I woke up feeling a bit better and without fever but was still struggling with my breathing and feeling light-headed. Later I lost my sense of taste and smell. My family, friends and most of all my devotion group were praying for my healing. Four days later, I went to UCLA to get checked and the doctor said my lungs look good.

I still was not 100% fully recovered the rest of the month. I normally go to work early, being one of the first people in and one of the last to leave late at night. This month I worked only my eighth-hour shift as I knew my body needed to rest and recover.

Now we are into March and our company brought in over 50 people from Australia and New Zealand to see the company's operations in the US. As much as I wanted to be there to interact with my team from Australia, I informed my employer that due to COVID 19 concerns and my low immunity, it would be best that I work from home. Then not realizing what was coming two days later, HR told me that it would be best for the company to move my position back to Australia since the whole team was out there and I was the only one in the US. I have worked hard and did my best for this company for many years and still have a lot to learn. I was sad but I had to keep in mind to trust God for He knows best. It was time for me to move on.

A week later, California was put on lockdown due to the spread of COVID-19. Who would have known that many companies would have to close, and many people would lose their jobs? Here I am again so grateful and thankful that God protected me and took care of me before something bigger was going to happen. It is times like this when we are in the dark about God's plan, so we question WHY these are happening to us because they are not what we wanted to happen. I had to find the strength to say, "I trust in you, God, and I have Faith in you that you know what is best for me and your timing is perfect in everything."

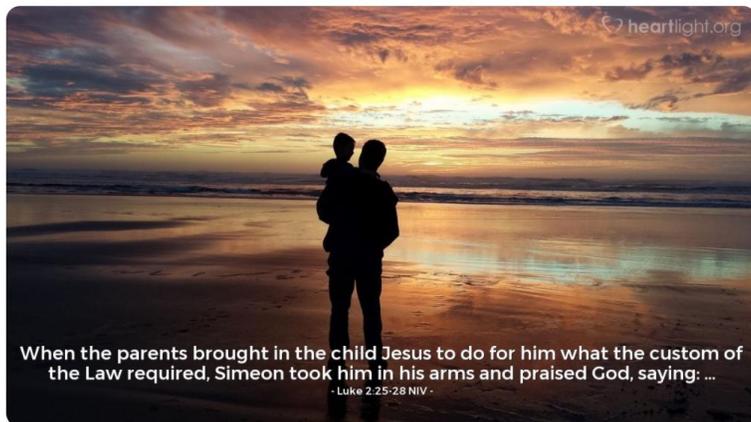
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SPIRITUAL ENRICHMENT RECOMMENDED



GOD'S HOLY FIRE: "THE SPIRIT'S MOMENT"

www.heartlight.org



When the parents brought in the child Jesus to do for him what the custom of the Law required, Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying: ...

- Luke 2:25-28 NIV -

KEY THOUGHT

My prayer is that, as I continue to age, God will make me like Simeon — righteous, devout, and tuned to the Spirit! The presence of the Spirit defined Simeon. The "Holy Spirit was on him." The Holy Spirit had "revealed to him" God's promise. He was "Moved by the Spirit." The powerful presence of the Spirit in Simeon's life defined who he was, guided what he did, and brought him to God's place at God's time with God's message (in the next few verses after today's Scripture). No wonder Simeon praised God!

PRAYER

O God, I pray that you will define my life through the work of your Holy Spirit — who gives new life, who brings transformation, who empowers, who indwells, who leads, and who inspires. Please, O Holy Spirit, define me, guide me, and bring me to the places I need to be and to the people with whom I am to share your blessing. In Jesus' name, I pray. Amen. ☐

“ . . . I am your Mother Mary. Pray intensely as your society is being attacked by the forces of evil. Remember, my children, deception is the work of the evil one to mislead you. Their lies will come from their mouths and will be shouted in the open and you will be able to discern and separate the goats from the lambs of my Son, Jesus.

Mary, Your Lady of the Rosary
09052020

Upcoming Events

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

1ST SATURDAY DEVOTION

OCTOBER 3, 2020

IN LOS ANGELES:

VIA ZOOM

IN LAS VEGAS:

VIRTUAL

1ST SUNDAY DEVOTION MOTHER MARY'S CROWNING

OCTOBER 4, 2020

STATIONS OF THE CROSS GARDENS

THE MONASTERY OF THE ANGELS

LOS ANGELES, CA

DEVOTIONAL PRAYERS BEGIN

AT 12:30 PM FOLLOWED BY

MASS AT 1:30 PM

PLEASE RSVP TO

ALICE.A@SPIRITUALARMYOFGOD.ORG

ST. SHARBEL CATHOLIC CHURCH

10325 RANCHO DESTINO RD

LAS VEGAS, NV 89183

MASS AT 9:30 AM FOLLOWED BY

DEVOTIONAL PRAYERS AT THE CHAPEL

2000 HAIL MARY DEVOTION

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 17, 2020

IN LOS ANGELES:

VIA ZOOM

IN LAS VEGAS:

VIRTUAL

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HOW LIVING THE PRESENT MOMENT KEEPS US CONNECTED WITH GOD

We become restless, distracted children every time we let ourselves be invaded by our fear of the future: we pass over the joys of the day, giving preference to the sufferings of tomorrow. So how do we fully receive this day from God? Indeed, we have to make the decision to let go and live in trust -- we are not masters of the anguish that squeezes our heart. It is impossible to pretend that a seriously ill spouse will not die, or that the layoffs at work were just a bad dream, or that money dropping out of the sky will keep us from losing the house or the business from closing, or that a child addicted to drugs can recover in a day. So many serious worries can be too much for us.

God knows this and doesn't ask us to pretend that all suffering doesn't exist. He simply asks us not to let that suffering blind us. When we are in the heart of darkness, He calls on us to believe, in other words to see the light of His Presence. He asks us not to leave the small joys behind under the pretext that there are more important things to worry about, because these joys, albeit small, are nevertheless, a sign of victory, a sign of the Resurrection. □

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LIFE'S CHALLENGES ARE BLESSINGS IN DISGUISE

Come end of May 2020 was my quarterly Lab test at UCLA to see how my 19-year old kidney is performing. I talked about my concerns of possibly having COVID 19 back in February with my nurse-friend who suggested an antibody test for COVID 19 to see if I was ever exposed. I did so on the day of my lab work. The lab results came back POSITIVE, meaning I was exposed to COVID 19 at one point. Once again, God took care of and protected me because a lot of COVID 19 patients either had it bad, were on ventilators or did not survive.

In August, another quarterly Kidney lab test was scheduled -- results of which showed my creatinine level had gone up. There have been a few times in the past where a biopsy was an option, but the doctor opted for adjustments of my medication which made the levels better after three months. Unfortunately, it was not the case this time around. It was highly recommended that I do another test in five days and if my creatinine level still does not go down, they will schedule a COVID 19 test, which is hospital protocol prior to a biopsy.

The biopsy result will show what is going on with my 19-year old kidney, such as signs of rejection and any damage to the kidney due to medication. This will allow

the doctors to determine the next steps to take and the possibility of my immediate admission at the hospital.

A biopsy was needed as the results of my creatinine level was still high. I was then subjected to a COVID 19 test, which result came back negative in spite of my exposure while volunteering at my parish to open the church after over two months of the lockdown, attending our Spiritual Army of God the Father 1st Sunday and 800 Our Father devotions, several visits to the hospital for my check up and random visits to do drop off or pick up something. As my spiritual advisor said, "God is protecting us, trust in Him and do not be afraid."

Leading up to the day of the biopsy, I was a little bit worried and anxious but I tried hard and kept on saying "God I trust in you and I know You have a reason and purpose for this." On the day of the Biopsy, I went alone and did my best to stay positive and have conversations with the administrator and the nurses. Here I am crossing paths with different people as I try to get myself settled in the room. They were surprised that I am on my 19th year since my transplant and amazed that it's my first time to have a biopsy, followed by the comment, "I see she is wearing a cross." My response to their comments was "PRAISE GOD!"

I got myself ready -- closed my eyes, prayed the Divine Mercy and asked God to guide the doctors and to watch over me. I just wanted to be at peace not worrying at all. Heading to the room to get my ultrasound, the nurse and the ultrasound technician were both shocked to find out it was my first biopsy for over 19 years.

Ultrasound started. My eyes were closed while trying to keep calm, looking the opposite way, listening to the nurse telling people that I had the transplant 19 years ago and never had a biopsy. Just listening and praying and hearing the same words uttered was God's assurance, bringing peace in my heart. The nurse asked me if I would like to see my mom's kidney. The first thing I said was thank you God for I now realize the reason why I had to have this biopsy. I can see my mom's kidney, the gift of a second life that she has blessed me with for 19 years! This was probably how any mother would feel while seeing her baby in her womb for the first time. For me, this was seeing my mom's kidney transplanted in me and I was filled with joy as the nurse showed me how beautiful and good the kidney was. It is really shaped like a kidney bean and then she showed how the blood flows in the kidney. I give praise and thanksgiving on behalf of my mom since she is doing good with only one kidney.

Then the biopsy. A doctor walks in and again she shares how amazing it is that I had my kidney transplant 19 years ago. The first doctor who came in was actually

going through training on how to do a kidney biopsy, so I kept saying, "God I trust you are guiding this doctor." The procedure took less than 10 minutes and I was wheeled into recovery where, yet another nurse surprised that I have never had a biopsy before informed me that it is normal to have one or several biopsies within span of time. The nurse could tell it was the first for me because I was very cautious and had a lot of questions. Here again, I have heard God's assurance through His doctors and nurses that He is with me and in complete control!

Weekend comes and we're on for another waiting game for the results. My parents, as expected of most, if not all parents, were more eager to find out the result as they called me three times that Monday. I assured them that if it was urgent, I would hear from the doctor immediately.

Next day came and UCLA called but I did not make it in time to pick it up before the call was sent to my voicemail. I listened to the message stating "Your kidney looks good and there are no signs of rejection." It further stated that I have a video call on Friday and the doctor will discuss what adjustments need to be done with my medication. My parents were very happy, and we were all filled with joy and gave praise and thanksgiving to God. I guess the reason why I had to miss the phone call is so I can save that message and listen to it again as God assures me my kidney is good. After changes were made on my medications, I went for another lab work two weeks later and results of my creatinine showed an improvement.

This is not the end of my 2020 journey because next is the challenge of finding a job and with my unemployment insurance ending, I had no funds moving forward. I have to pay for my own health insurance, and it costs more than a monthly car payment. I offered these to God telling myself maybe God does not want me to go back to work just yet. So far, I am fine and blessed that I have a loving sister who understands my situation, is very supportive, and will always be there for me. It is not the time to worry about things I cannot

control. I know I can survive two to three more months with no income and I place my trust in God for He will open the doors for me in the right places and at the right time. I just need to keep doing my part searching and taking steps to make the effort until God's perfect time.

My chances of getting unemployment pay was bleak and I am not qualified for the government's Care Act package initiated during this pandemic situation to receive the additional \$300 a week for reasons that I was laid off from work a week before the lockdown. Three days later, however, I receive a letter from EDD telling me that I have been approved for another 13 weeks of unemployment! God is with me and is in complete control!

I am thankful for 2020 because there have been more blessings this year regardless of all the challenges I had to face. I would not change anything because I know that any experience good or bad on my path is to help me become the person I am today and help me to nurture a closer relationship with my God. The goal is to worry not, trust and have faith that God will take care and protect us even if we do not always get the answers we hope for. Be a better person through all the challenges in our life and share that with others as we evangelize how God loves us all and that His mercy is incomprehensible.

I am very happy that I am part of the Spiritual Army of God the Father ministry because not only do I get to share this ministry with my parents but also it has helped me grow spiritually as I encounter so many amazing devotees.

I would like to share the four steps of what I believe and have shared in my initial God Touched Me article: ACCEPT, UNDERSTAND, LEARN the process and SHARE my story of what God has placed in front of me, hoping that it can help others who may or may not go through the same thing.

GOD IS GOOD ALL THE TIME, ALL THE TIME GOD IS GOOD! ☐