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The Holiest of Holy Days Easter Triduum

“He has risen, as He said.” (Mt 28:60)

Why we go to church three days in a row

“TRIDUUM” BASICALLY MEANS THREE DAYS OF PRAYER BEFORE A BIG FEAST

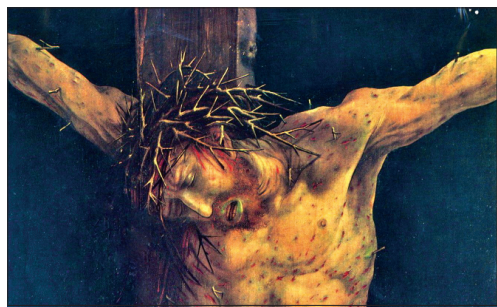


HOLY THURSDAY

WHAT IT IS Commemoration of the Institution of the Holy Eucharist and the Priesthood

EVENTS Mass of the Lord's Supper. After Mass, there is a procession with the Blessed Sacrament, where our Lord Jesus Christ is exposed for the adoration of the faithful. Do spend some time with Him.

WHAT TO DO Make a good confession, especially if you are aware of a grave sin, or have not gone for many months. By being forgiven, we rise again.



GOOD FRIDAY

WHAT IT IS Commemoration of Jesus' Passion and Death. It is the only day during the year that there is no Mass!

EVENTS Good Friday Services (Liturgy of the Word, Adoration of the Cross, and Communion). Many people do the Way of the Cross on this day.

WHAT TO DO Abstain from meat (14 years old and above); Fast (18 – 59 years old) – one meal and two half meals during the day.



HOLY SATURDAY

WHAT IT IS Commemoration of the Lord's Burial and Mary's hope-filled wait for the Resurrection. Only she believes that Jesus will actually rise again.

EVENTS Nothing until the evening, with the Easter Vigil.

WHAT TO DO Spend some time for personal prayer and reflection, keeping Mary company.



EASTER SUNDAY

WHAT IT IS Celebrating the Lord's Resurrection

EVENTS Easter Vigil is celebrated on Saturday night to await the Lord's Resurrection. This is called the “Mother of all Vigils.” The Church welcomes new members through the sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation and the Eucharist.

WHAT TO DO Attend the Easter Vigil, or any Easter Sunday Mass. Renew the promises you made at Baptism, and celebrate with the newly-baptised brothers and sisters in the faith.

The week that changed the world

MANUEL DOS SANTOS

TWO THOUSAND years ago, a Man arrived in Jerusalem. He did not come alone. A huge crowd followed Him, hailing Him as king. They received Him waving tree branches and palms.

The Humble King rode on a borrowed white donkey, and people laid clothes on the floor for Him to pass as they chanted “Hosanna the son of David! Blessed is the One who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest heaven!” King He was, but not the way they thought.

Inside the great city, He went to the Temple and showed His human side. Furious with the band of hawkers and vendors who had invaded the court of the temple and were trading money and animals to be offered as sacrifices, the King in his sacred rage threw the bench-

es and tables and all merchandise on the floor shouting, “The Scripture says – My house will be called a house of prayer... but you are turning it into a gathering place of thieves!”

To the dismay of the religious leaders, the Humble King gathered people around Him, and taught them. He denounced the wrong doings of the Pharisees and Scribes. Feeling threatened, the Pharisees plotted to get rid of Him. They warned the Roman authorities as well as the Jews that the Man who claimed Himself King of the Jews could cause a public disturbance.

Four days passed. On Thursday, the King convoked His core followers, His twelve disciples. It would be their Last Supper together. The Humble King knew that His end was near, and He would suffer what no other living man, past, present or future had ever suffered.

After the meal, He took bread, bless-

ed it, broke it and said, “Take this, and eat because this is My body.” Then He took the cup of wine, blessed it and said, “Take and drink, all of you, for this is My blood, the blood of the New Covenant, which will be shed for you and for many, for the forgiveness of sins.”

Then they left the house and went to a nearby orchard. There he invited three of his chosen ones to pray with Him. But while the King prayed, the disciples slept. Three times He asked His father to give Him another way to rescue man from his sins besides the cross...but always ended His prayer with “not My will, but Yours be done.” His disciples slept on while He prayed. Then He woke them up and said, “The one who will betray Me is near.”

A traitor from the King's inner circle had been bribed by the religious authorities. Judas was his name. He arrived, planted a kiss on the King's cheek.

That was the signal for the accompanying crowds and Roman soldiers to arrest Him.

As He had previously foretold, all His followers fled, even denying that they know him, fearing persecution.

The Humble King was tried by the authorities, Jews and Romans alike. He was condemned to Death on the Cross, the death meted out to thieves and insurgents.

The King died. The religious leaders and the Romans, even if still fearing consequences, thought it was all over.

But that was not the end. In fact, it was the beginning of Christianity...and the Humble King became the King of the World.

The Sunday after His death, He came back to life, and commissioned His Mother and disciples to give proof of all that happened that week ... and the world never was the same again! ■

Message from Bishop José Lai

MY DEAR brothers and sisters, grace and peace to you!

It has been my long-standing wish to have a weekly paper for our English-speaking faithful. Thanks be to God, your numbers have been growing! The Diocese of Macau welcomes you, and thanks you for your contribution to the life of our community. I thought it appropriate that the Diocese acknowledge your presence and provide a means of information and formation for you. It is my sincere hope that this English Supplement of *O Clarim* can help fill in that need.

As we commemorate our Lord's Passion and Death and prepare for his Resurrection, I recall the words that our beloved Pope Francis pronounced last year,



during his Easter *Urbi et Orbi* message.

"What a joy it is for me to announce this message: Christ is risen! I would like it to go out to

every house and every family, especially where the suffering is greatest, in hospitals, in prisons ...

"What does it mean that Jesus is risen? It means that the love of God is stronger than evil and death itself; it means that the love of God can transform our lives and let those desert places in our hearts bloom. The love of God can do this!"

"So this is the invitation which I address to everyone: Let us accept the grace of Christ's Resurrection! Let us be renewed by God's mercy, let us be loved by Jesus, let us enable the power of his love to transform our lives too; and let us become agents of this mercy..."

Yes, the love of God can transform our lives! We know that this transformation is carried out through the grace that we receive in the Sacraments, especially the

Sacrament of Reconciliation and that of the Holy Eucharist. I encourage you, my brothers and sisters, to take advantage of the light and strength that the sacrament of pardon gives us. Seek God's mercy in confession! Like a good Father he waits for us so he can embrace us once more! And then we, too, can rise again; we will come back to life!

May the Lord bless you and your families. May our most Blessed Mother watch over you. ■

Yours in the Risen Lord,

+ José Lai

17 April 2014

The precious burden that priests carry

EXCERPTS FROM HOMILY OF POPE FRANCIS IN HIS FIRST CHRISM MASS AS BISHOP OF ROME

DEAR Brothers and Sisters,

This morning I have the joy of celebrating my first Chrism Mass as the Bishop of Rome. I greet all of you with affection, especially you, dear priests, who, like myself, today recall the day of your ordination.

WHAT THE ROBES MEAN

The sacred robes of the High Priest are rich in symbolism. One such symbol is that the names of the children of Israel were engraved on the onyx stones mounted on the shoulder-pieces of the ephod, the ancestor of our present-day chasuble: six on the stone of the right shoulder-piece and six on that of the left (cf. Ex 28:6-14). The names of the twelve tribes of Israel were also engraved on the breastplate (cf. Es 28:21). This means that *the priest celebrates by carrying on his shoulders the people entrusted to his care and bearing their names written in his heart*. When we put on our simple chasuble, it might well make us feel, upon our shoulders and in our hearts, the burdens and the faces of our faithful people, our saints and martyrs who are numerous in these times.

SPREADING THE OIL OF GLADNESS

The precious oil which anoints the head of Aaron does more than simply lend fragrance to his person; it overflows down to "the edges". The Lord will say this clearly: his anointing is meant for the poor, prisoners and the sick, for those who are sorrowing and alone. My dear brothers, *the ointment is not intended just to make us fragrant, much less to be kept in a jar, for then it would become rancid ... and the heart bitter.*



A good priest can be recognized by the way his people are anointed: this is a clear proof. When our people are anointed with the oil of gladness, it is obvious: for example, when they leave Mass looking as if they have heard good news. Our people like to hear the Gospel preached with "unction", they like it when the Gospel we preach touches their daily lives, when it runs down like the oil of Aaron to the edges of reality, when it brings light to moments of extreme darkness, to the "outskirts" where people of faith are most exposed to the onslaught of those who want to tear down their faith.

People thank us because they feel that we have prayed over the realities of their everyday lives, their troubles, their joys, their burdens and their hopes. And when they feel that the fragrance of the Anointed One, of Christ, has come to them through us, they feel encouraged to entrust to us everything they want to bring before the Lord: "Pray for me, Father, because I have this problem", "Bless me Father", "Pray for me" – these words are the sign that the anointing has flowed down to the edges of the robe, for it has turned into a prayer of supplication, the supplication of the People of God.

When we have this relationship with God and with his people, and grace passes through us, then we are priests, mediators between God and men. What I want to emphasize is that we need constantly to stir up God's grace and perceive in every request, even those requests that are inconvenient and at times purely material or downright banal – but only apparently so – the desire of our people to be anointed with fragrant oil, since they know that we have it.

GOING OUT AND GIVING SELF

We need to "go out", then, in order to experience our own anointing, its power and its redemptive efficacy: to the "outskirts" where there is suffering, bloodshed, blindness that longs for sight, and prisoners in thrall to many evil masters. It is not in soul-searching or constant introspection that we encounter the Lord: self-help courses can be useful in life, but to live our priestly life going from one course to another, from one method to another, leads us to become pelagians and to minimize the power of grace,

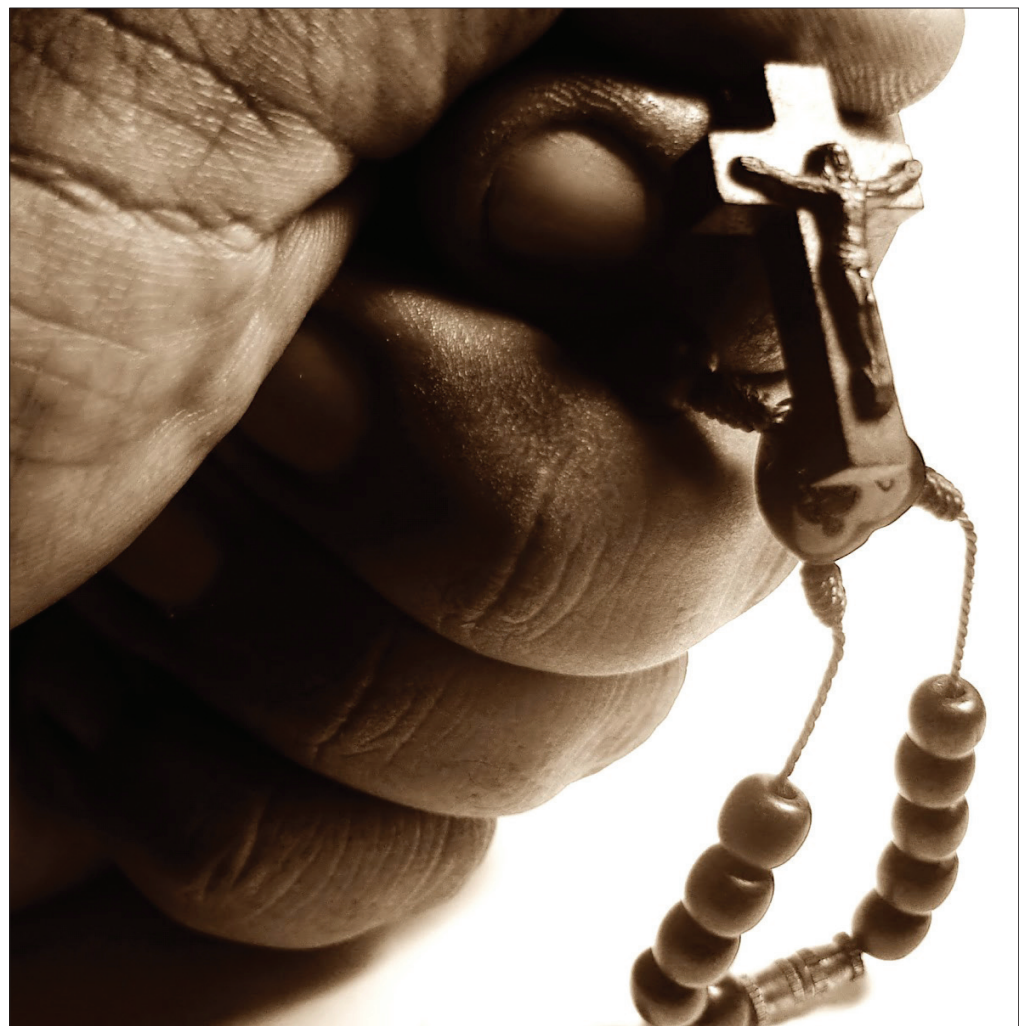
which comes alive and flourishes to the extent that we, in faith, go out and give ourselves and the Gospel to others, giving what little ointment we have to those who have nothing, nothing at all.

Those who do not go out of themselves, instead of being mediators, gradually become intermediaries, managers. We know the difference: the intermediary, the manager, "has already received his reward", and since he doesn't put his own skin and his own heart on the line, he never hears a warm, heartfelt word of thanks. This is precisely the reason for the dissatisfaction of some, who end up sad – sad priests – in some sense becoming collectors of antiques or novelties, instead of being shepherds living with "the odor of the sheep". This I ask you: be shepherds, with the "odor of the sheep", make it real, as shepherds among your flock, fishers of men.

THE POPE'S WISH

Dear lay faithful, be close to your priests with affection and with your prayers, that they may always be shepherds according to God's heart.

Dear priests, may God the Father renew in us the Spirit of holiness with whom we have been anointed. May he renew his Spirit in our hearts, that this anointing may spread to everyone, even to those "outskirts" where our faithful people most look for it and most appreciate it. May our people sense that we are the Lord's disciples; may they feel that their names are written upon our priestly vestments and that we seek no other identity; and may they receive through our words and deeds the oil of gladness which Jesus, the Anointed One, came to bring us. Amen. ■



Do not despair, get a crucifix

ELIZABETH SCALIA

If you are anxious and despairing and worried, here is my advice: get a crucifix.

Not a cross, a crucifix. Get a small one you can keep in your pocket; and another you can keep discreetly at your desk; get one for your home.

Keep the crucifix before your eyes, and it will teach you everything. It will train you to the longview.

The earthly goings-on that make us anxious and full of despair are a manifestation of the wholly spiritual war that proceeds apace — continually, though unseen — all around us. When we buy into it and lose hope we are opening ourselves up to a spiritual oppression meant to cast us into the darkness and away from the light. Because the main battle is supernatural, we recognize it in our spirit; we feel it in our spirit, and then, when the pain is too great, we either try to numb ourselves to it, or allow the spirit to collapse, completely.

Better to arm the spirit. Feed it through Eucharistic Adoration and Holy Communion; strengthen it with the sacramental grace of confession, so that regardless of what happens, despair never enters into the equation, never enters

into you — because you understand that God's hand is still a part of things; we are not abandoned; so much of what is spinning past is illusion and if the rest is real, it is nothing to be afraid of.

If you do not have a crucifix, get one; get a couple of them, and have them blessed.

Study them. While you're meditating on the crucifix, ask God to show you what you need to know — ask for what Solomon asked for: an understanding heart. Ask Mary to teach you what she learned while she stood beneath the reality of it. Ask her to explain about the longview — about how sometimes what is horrifying and unjust must happen, if something else is to be able to happen.

When bad thoughts enter in — sinful thoughts, dark thoughts, anxious thoughts — follow St. Benedict's instruction in his *Holy Rule*: "When evil thoughts come into one's heart, dash them at once against Christ, the Rock" — imagine yourself crashing them against the crucifix, and they shatter.

You'll be amazed at how calmly you'll be able to observe all these goings on, if you keep the sacraments in your life, and your eyes on the crucifix. ■

(Reprinted with permission from
'The Anchoress' – www.patheos.com.)

What fasting really means

ST JOHN CHRYSOSTOM (347-407)

THE value of fasting consists not only in avoiding certain foods, but in giving up of sinful practices. The person who limits his fast only to abstaining from meat is the one who especially lowers the value of it.

Do you fast? Prove it by doing good works.

If you see someone in need, take pity on him!

If you see an enemy, be reconciled to him!

If you see a friend being honored, don't get jealous of him!

If you see a beautiful woman, pass her by!

For a true fast, you cannot fast only with your mouth. You must fast with your eye, your ear, your feet, your hands, and all parts of your body.

Let the hands fast by keeping them pure from doing greedy things.

Let the feet fast by not going to see forbidden shows or plays.

Let the eyes fast by not letting them look at pretty faces, or to busy themselves with impure pictures. For it would be absurd to abstain from lawful food because of the fast, but to gaze at what is forbidden. You do not eat meat? Do not feed on lasciviousness by means of the eyes.

You don't eat meat, you say. But you allow yourself to listen to lewd things. You must fast with your ears, too. Another way of fasting with your ears is not to listen to those who speak evil or untrue things about others. "Thou shalt not receive an idle report." This is especially true of rumors, gossip, lies which are spoken to harm another.

Besides fasting with your mouth by not eating certain foods, your mouth should also fast from foul language or telling lies about others. For what good is it if you don't eat meat or poultry, and yet you bite and devour your fellow man? ■



When God seems silent

POPE FRANCIS

ONE word should suffice this evening, that is the Cross itself. The Cross is the word through which God has responded to evil in the world. Sometimes it may seem as though God does not react to evil, as if he is silent. And yet, God has spoken, he has replied, and his answer is the Cross of Christ: a word which is love, mercy, forgiveness.

It is also reveals a judgment, namely that God, in judging us, loves us. Let us remember this: God judges us by loving us. If I embrace

his love then I am saved, if I refuse it, then I am condemned, not by him, but by my own self, because God never condemns, he only loves and saves.

Dear brothers and sisters, the word of the Cross is also the answer which Christians offer in the face of evil, the evil that continues to work in us and around us. Christians must respond to evil with good, taking the Cross upon themselves as Jesus did. ...

We now continue this *Via Crucis* in our daily lives. Let us walk together along the Way of the Cross and let us do so carrying in our hearts



this word of love and forgiveness. Let us go forward waiting for the Resurrection of Jesus, who loves us so much. He is all love! ■

29 March 2013,

Way of the Cross at the Colosseum

Did Jesus rise from the dead?

PAUL KELLY

Did Jesus rise from the dead? Let's suppose the claim is not true and the apostles knew it. But why should the apostles lie? What did they have to gain? They only gained trouble. They were arrested, beaten, persecuted, killed. No sane person suffers in such a manner for a lie.

Were the apostles lunatics? Let's suppose the apostles were lunatics. In that case, why were they persecuted and killed? You don't execute a lunatic, you simply imprison him for public safety. But he is not really guilty of his crime because he doesn't know what he's doing. Therefore, if the apostles were mad it makes no sense that they were killed and persecuted. Therefore, the apostles were not lunatics.

Let's suppose the apostles were mistaken. That is, they lied but they didn't know it was a lie. How can so many people make a mistake about seeing Jesus risen? A few women claimed they saw Him. The eleven apostles claimed to have seen Him, and many more followers of Jesus saw Him later in Galilee.

It doesn't make sense to believe that the apostles, who aban-



doned Jesus when He was alive, should suddenly risk their lives to steal His body after Jesus died. The Sanhedrin didn't steal the body or they would have advertised the fact. Therefore, Jesus' body was not stolen.

It doesn't make sense to believe that the apostles who saw the risen Jesus all had hallucinations. A hallucination is a daylight dream caused by the

mind and will working overtime against reality because you want to see a dead loved one so much. This was not the case with the apostles, they were down in the dumps. For example, the two disciples on the road to Emmaus, even before Easter Sunday, were already going home. They believed, at that moment, that Jesus did not resurrect. The disciples had scattered. They did

not expect or even anticipate seeing Jesus. There is no evidence that, prior to knowledge of the Resurrection, the apostles were strong in faith. Therefore, the apostles did not hallucinate when they saw the risen Jesus because all the necessary factors that contribute to hallucinations are absent in this situation.

In the earliest years of Christianity it was the Jews (Saul etc) and not the Romans who persecuted Christians. Roman persecutions of Christians did not begin until Nero (64-68 AD). Domitian (95-96 AD) was the first emperor to *officially* call himself "God". So, the Roman Empire just after the death of Christ was liberal as regards the worship of deities. All the apostles did was preach that the religion of Judaism had reached its fulfillment in Jesus. They dwelt in the religious domain; they still gave to Caesar what was his. Therefore, the Romans would not have condemned anyone to death for a religious belief unless the Jewish Sanhedrin was behind it and invented lies as they did: "we have no king but Caesar" is what they shouted when Jesus was on trial.

It makes much more sense to believe that the Jews lied about the body of Jesus being stolen by friends of Jesus. The Sanhedrin was against even the idea that Jesus' body had risen. From the start, the ones who brought Jesus to Pontius Pilate were the Jews, not the Romans.

Of course, there is the testimony of Scripture, which testifies that Jesus did rise. God is the principal author of the Resurrection account and He does not lie. There is also Jesus' own prediction of His death (Matt 20: 17-19; Mk 10: 32-34; Lk 18: 31-33.)

Therefore, the claim that Jesus is risen, from the purely logical point of view, makes complete sense. But no-one, to this day, has ever set up a logical argument to prove that Jesus did not rise from the dead. Doubters of the Resurrection may suggest many weird and wonderful theories, but none can provide any real evidence to add substance to their claims. So, our Christian faith is not in vain because Jesus did rise from the dead in order to open up Heaven as a possibility for us all. ■

(Reprinted from <http://whynotcatholicism.net> with permission from the author.)

The other woman in my life

SAM GUZMAN

MEN, I have a confession to make: There's another woman in my life. She's beautiful, faithful, holy and strong, and I love her more all the time. Don't worry, you don't have to tell my wife— she already knows. I'm talking about the Blessed Virgin Mary.

Brothers, despite what you may think, you need to be devoted to Our Lady. If you want to progress in holiness, if you want to imitate Jesus Christ, if you want to overcome temptation, if you want to be strong in sufferings, if you want to make it safely to heaven, there is no better way than being a faithful son of Mary.

Devotion to Mary is hands down one of the most masculine devotions, and of the great saints who have been most devoted to Mary, the majority are men. Men like St. Bernard of Clairvaux, St. Francis of Assisi, St. Alphonsus Liguori, St. Cyril of Alexandria, St. John Eudes, St. John Damascene, St. Peter Canisius, St. Louis de Montfort, St. Maximilian Kolbe— and the list goes on.

You may still be skeptical, but that's al-

right. I'm going to give you 5 reasons to love Mary, but know that there are countless others.

1. She is the refuge and hope of sinners - The saints constantly tell us that no one, no matter how great a sinner, will be condemned if they are truly devoted to Mary. Let's face it, falling into sin can be discouraging. When we fall, we fear God's punishment, displeasure, and discipline. We wonder if we will ever be saved, or if there is any hope for us. The answer is yes, especially if we fly to Mary.

One of Mary's most beautiful titles is *Refugium Peccatorum*, "the refuge of sinners." In the Old Testament, God instituted cities of refuge, and these cities were safe havens for criminals. If you committed a terrible crime, a crime worthy of death, the only way you could avoid punishment was to run as fast as you could to a city of refuge. Only there would you be safe.

In the New Covenant, Mary is the city of refuge, the safe haven for sinners. When you fall into sin, run as fast as you can to Mary and she will obtain mercy and pardon for you from her Divine Son.

2. She helps us be pure - In the Middle

Ages, women were vulnerable. Any brigand could disrespect or even assault a woman and probably get away with it. But that's not the end of the story. A movement of men began to rise up and commit themselves to chivalry, protecting and honoring the dignity of women. This movement was known as chivalry, and chivalry was direct byproduct of devotion to Mary.

Living in the modern world is like living through one long temptation to impurity. It is relentless. More than this, women are constantly disrespected and objectified. It's time for a new movement of chivalry. The more we love Mary, the more she will help us be pure in an evil world. And our devotion to her will instill in us a deep respect for femininity that will cause us to protect women in a world that wants to abuse them and use them.

3. She strengthens us in sufferings - When Jesus was in agony on the cross, the one small consolation he was allowed was the presence of his mother. Think about it, when you were a little boy and you hurt yourself, who did you run to? Your mom. I see my little boy do it all the time with my wife. A mother's presence is

enough to comfort us, even if it doesn't take away the pain.

Mary is the ultimate comforter, and she helps us carry our crosses as we follow Jesus. When we are hurt physically or emotionally, her presence helps us bear the pain.

4. She crushes demons - Demons are real, and the want to make sure you *never* make it to heaven. They will send temptation after temptation your way to ensure you fall into sin— temptations to pride, greed, lust, gluttony, sloth, anger, hatred, and unforgiveness.

How can you possibly survive such powerful spiritual enemies? You guessed it, through Mary. After the fall of man, God promised Satan that one day, his head would be crushed by a woman— and that woman is Mary. Satan hates Mary with every fiber of his being, because he knows that she will be the instrument God uses to defeat him.

There's a deep theological reason for this, and maybe I'll write on it another

VATICAN

Pope Francis goes to confession in St Peter's Basilica

POPE Francis sprang a surprise when he stepped up to a confession booth and did his confession before hearing confessions himself at St Peter's Basilica on 28 March.

Earlier, he had spoken before a packed crowd to kick off the worldwide "24 Hours for the Lord" initiative. "During Lent, the Church renews the appeal to conversion in God's name. It is a call to change our life. Conversion is not a matter of a moment or a period of the year. It is an effort that lasts one's whole lifetime," the Pontiff said.

"Who among us can say that he is not a sinner? No one," he added. Quoting St John's first epistle, he said, "If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just, and will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness." (1 John 1:8-9)



After his homily, the Pope walked from the altar to the confession booths on the left side of the Basilica. His master of ceremonies Monsignor Guido Marini motioned to the confessional where Pope Francis was going to hear confessions. But the Holy Father excused himself and went to another confessional to make his own confession first. The entire process took less than ten minutes.

When he was over with his own, he took a seat inside the confession booth assigned to him and heard faithful.

Pope Francis has mentioned on previous occasions that he goes to confession every two weeks. Blessed Pope John Paul II used to go weekly and Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI has said that he does the same. But they usually did it in private. ■

COMING HOME

Swedish Megachurch founder converts to Roman Catholicism

JENNIFER LECLAIRE

Ulf Ekman and his wife's decision has been compared to that of Cardinal Newman's conversion to Roman Catholicism.

DURING his Sunday morning service, **Ulf Ekman** announced that he and his wife, Birgitta, are converting to Roman Catholicism.

Ekman is the founder of Word of Life, a megachurch in Uppsala, Sweden. News reports and blogs coming out of the nation reveal the congregation was "partially stunned" after hearing what was packaged as a "special announcement." The theme was "Follow the Lamb Wherever He Goes."

"For Birgitta and me, this has been a slow process where we have gone from discovering new things, to appreciating what we have discovered, to ap-

proach and even learn from our fellow Christians," Ekman says on his ministry website.

"We have seen [in the Catholic Church] a great love for Jesus and a sound theology, founded on the Bible and classic dogma. We have experienced the richness of sacramental life. We have seen the logic in having a solid structure for priesthood, that keeps the faith of the church and passes it on from one generation to the next. We have met an ethical and moral strength and consistency that dare to face up to the general opinion, and a kindness towards the poor and the weak. And, last but not least, we have come in contact with representatives for millions of charismatic Catholics and we have seen their living faith."

According to the *Aletheia* blog and think tank, Ekman's conversion is a news story that affects a relatively large part of Swedish Christianity. Word of Life has about 3,000 members and a staff of 12 pastors. The church's school has about 1,000 students. Ekman also

launched Scandinavia's largest Bible school, constructed Scandinavia's largest free church building, rolled out a media program with TV on all continents, recorded teaching that has been spread around the world, published books in 60 languages, and promoted a strong engagement for Israel.

"We have, as many know, followed Ekman's steps towards Roman Catholicism since 2007, at times under a lot of ridicule from both members and leadership of the congregation, but also from others within the Christian Community in Sweden," writes Andreas Glandberger, who operates the think tank. "Based on Ulf Ekman's various articles, sermons, statements and even type of organizations he decided to support financially, a painstaking puzzle has been laid in which the last piece of the puzzle now is in place."

Glandberger went on to say that "shock, anger, sadness, despair and confusion" were among the reactions to the news. Others, he writes, were relieved

that Ekman's long love affair with the Catholic Church finally was consummated openly, which is also a help in theological discussions.

"All this has been both attractive and challenging," Ekman says. "It really challenged our Protestant prejudices, and we realized that we, in many cases, did not have any basis for our criticism of them. We needed to know the Catholic faith better. This led us to realize that it was actually Jesus Christ who led us to unite with the Catholic Church."

Ekman calls his conversion a "personal journey" and says it was not his agenda to lead Word of Life toward Roman Catholicism or to collectively unite the church with the Catholic Church. "That would be unreasonable," he says.

Ekman retired as the church's senior pastor in March 2013. He founded and served at Word of Life for 30 years with a mandate from the Holy Spirit to "equip My people with the word of faith." ■

(Reprinted from www.charismamag.com.)

VATICAN

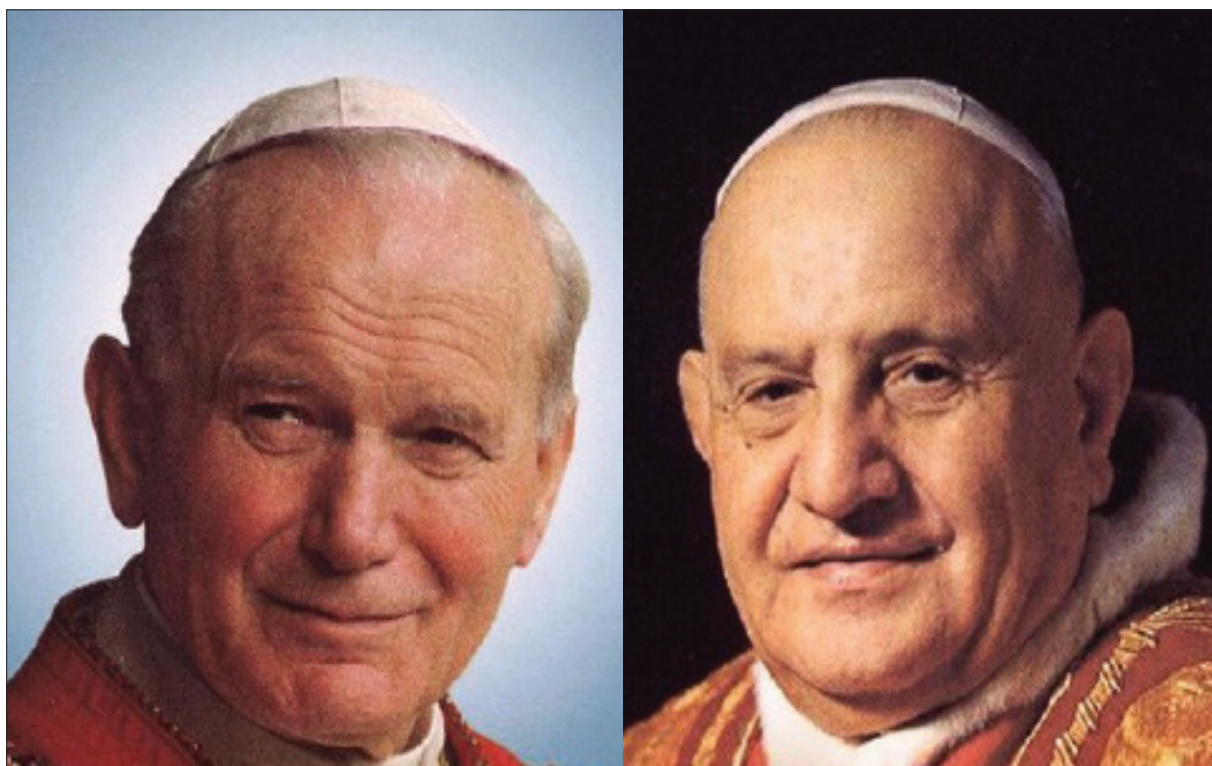
The canonization of John Paul II and John XXIII in 3D

(ROME REPORTS) – MILLIONS will follow the canonization of John Paul II and John XXIII, and the Vatican Television Center will use up to 33 TV cameras and nine satellites to make it happen.

The Vatican's service will work along with others TV companies like Sky, Sony, Eutelsat, Globecast, DBW Communication and Nexo Digital.

And though there's still a month to go, the event is already breaking records...not even the 2014 Sochi Olympics had so many satellites.

The Director of the Vatican Television Center, Monsignor Darío Viganò, explained, "We decided to use technology so that all countries can experience the ceremony, even if it's from afar. We also want historians to have a high quality record of the canonization."



The main goal is for all people to experience the canonization in St. Peter's Square, even if they're at home.

To make that happen thirteen cameras will air the ceremony in 3D, fifteen in High Definition, and five in 4K resolution.

The event will also make its way to the big screen. Roughly 500 movie theaters will air the ceremony live, in 20 countries, including Colombia, Brazil, the US, Spain, Austria and the UK.

"It is a must to stay up to date with technology, because it's simply part of the future," Vatican Spokesman Father Federico Lombardi remarked.

So, as the Vatican gets ready for the canonization of two Popes who made history, its television service also looks forward to setting its own record with technology. ■

NO GREATER LOVE

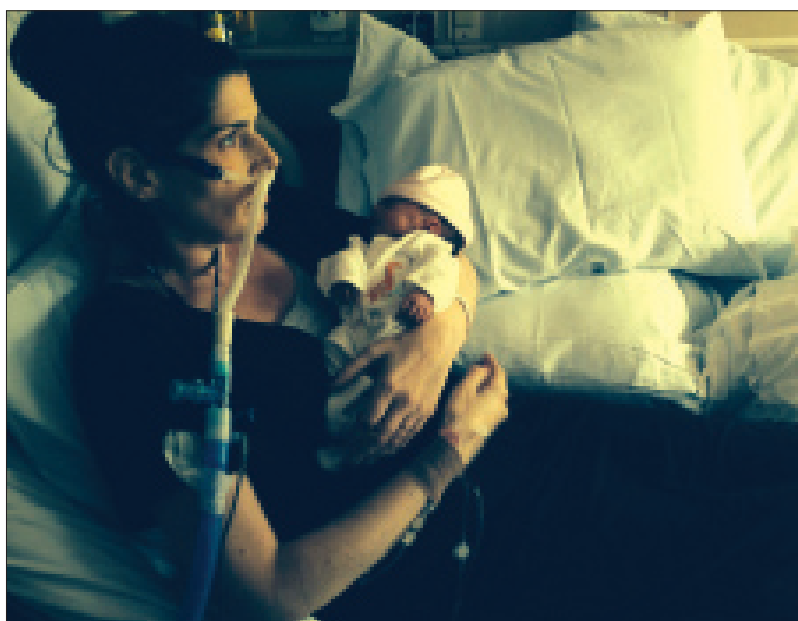
Mom with cancer sacrifices her life for her baby, refuses abortion

STEVEN ERTELT

A MOM in New York City was willing to make the ultimate sacrifice – she was willing to sacrifice her own life for someone else.

When Elizabeth Joice found out she was pregnant, she was overcome with joy because doctors told her she would never be able to have children. But doctors then told her that she would be forced to make a decision to take the life of her unborn baby to begin cancer treatment or put her own life in danger by forgoing it.

Joice pondered whether she should join a club of other courageous women who decided to protect their unborn babies.



As Joice's husband tells the New York Post, it was an easy decision:

"Having a kid was one of the most important things in the world to her," Max told The

Post. "She said, 'If we terminate the pregnancy and it turns out I can't have a baby [later], I'll be devastated. She knew this might be her only chance.'"

Doctors removed the mass, but because she was pregnant, Elizabeth couldn't undergo full-body MRI scans and her oncologist couldn't see whether the cancer was growing.

The baby was due March 4, but the doctors could no longer wait. In January, a surgeon performed a C-section and beautiful baby Lily was born.

Elizabeth's health quickly declined as her cancer spread. Tumors invaded her right lung, heart and abdomen "We said our goodbyes," Max said. "It was like something out of a movie. We sat there and cried.

We tried to tell stories, talk about all the great things."

"Liz came home five days after Lily was born," Max said. "That one night at home was all we had."

Elizabeth died on March 9 in her hospital bed with Max by her side.

"Liz had this way about her," Max said. "She had this positive energy that made you want to be the best version of yourself. She was intolerant of self-pity."

In similar cases, doctors suggest an abortion, but, as studies show, there is not always a need for women to destroy the life of their unborn child to save their own. ■

(Reprinted from Lifeneews.com.)



SE CATHEDRAL OF MACAU

From 150 to 900

DANILO PEREZ NGO

LIKE the English edition of *O Clarim*, everything has a beginning.

Such is the case of the English Sunday Masses at the Se Cathedral of Macau. It was on a Sunday, February 4, 2007, when the 6:00 pm English Mass was first celebrated at the Cathedral. That first Mass saw only 150 attendants. The Mass now attracts up to 900 faithful each Sunday.

Located at the heart of Macau, the Se Cathedral accommodates not only local Catholics; it also welcomes the general public as well. Tourists looking for a Catholic Church will only have to walk a couple of minutes from the fountain in front of the old Leal

Senado Square to go there and pray.

The Mass became possible with the support and encouragement of the Dean of the Cathedral and the Parish Priest Rev. Fr. João Lao.

The priest who celebrated the first Mass, Rev. Fr. Dennis Rochford from Australia, once said that it was really a spirit-filled experience where people from all walks of life and profession came. He was very fond of Gregorian chant.

The Couples for Christ (CFC) provided the choir. For us, it was the first time to serve in the form of singing. This, together with the contributions and encouragement of different people and communities made the English Sunday Mass possible. Cooperation among all members of the community truly re-

flected the unity of the body of Christ.

After Fr. Dennis came Fr. James Liebner, an American. Fr. James altered his accent to make sure that the local Chinese and other nationalities attending Mass could understand his homily and conversations in English. It was a learning experience for everyone to see their priest think of the faithful's welfare.

It was also inspiring to see John, a local Chinese acolyte and helper who has been serving for a long time in Se Cathedral. Though he does not speak English, he made himself understood through hand gestures. John's daily routine inside the church made me change my way of living my faith as a Catholic. From opening the church doors to scraping candles, serving in

the Mass will never be the same for me because of John.

After Fr. James had to go back to the United States, the Sunday Masses continue thanks to the presence of Fr. Francis Gassner who celebrates the Holy Sacrifice each Sunday.

With this first English edition of *O Clarim*, the English-speaking faithful will have an opportunity to become one with their Portuguese and Chinese-speaking brothers and sisters in the faith. It will also provide a way of nourishing their belief. To *O Clarim*, we would like to say, "Welcome!" ■

The author is a practicing Civil Engineer. He is also Mission Head of CFC Global Macau SAR, aside from serving as CFC Choir Master.

The other woman...

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time, but for now, know that the devil is powerless against Mary. When you feel yourself overwhelmed by temptation, call on Mary and the demons will flee.

5. Jesus loved her - As Catholic men, our mission to imitate Jesus Christ in every respect. And what did Jesus do? He gave himself totally to Mary. He shared her flesh and blood and she formed him in her womb. He trusted her, he obeyed her

even though he was her Lord. As a child, he ran to her when he was hurt or frightened, as is depicted in the beautiful icon of Our Lady of Perpetual Help. On the cross, her presence comforted him in his agony. In short, Jesus loved Mary intensely and depended on her completely, even though he had no need of doing so.

If we want to be true men in imitation of our Divine Captain, we must likewise submit ourselves humbly and lovingly to Mary. Just as she formed Jesus in her womb,

she can form us in a similar manner through grace. Jesus came to us through Mary, and all the graces of God come to us through her. We should go to God the same way he came to us—through Mary. The closer we are to her, the more we will be like Jesus, and if we are like Jesus, we will be the best and truest of men.

CONCLUSION

When I was converting to Catholicism, Marian devotion was one of the hardest things

for me to understand. But the more I learned about Mary, the more I grew to love her. She is truly the most beautiful of women, and I can't imagine my spiritual life without her.

Men, I challenge you to learn to love this Lady. Start by study the great saints who have loved Mary the most. Learn about their heroic lives and read their writings. Then, immerse yourself in the Marian teachings of the church. They aren't random, there is a very good reason for each of them. In short, find

Mary and you will find Jesus.

PRAYER

Holy Spirit, give me great devotion to Mary, Your faithful spouse; give me great confidence in her maternal heart and an abiding refuge in her mercy, so that by her, You may truly form in me Jesus Christ, great and mighty, unto the fullness of His perfect age. Amen. ■

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