

# KINGDOM REVELATOR

|||| CATHOLIC MAGAZINE FOR YOUNG PEOPLE ■ ISSUE 78

DEPENDENCE  
ON GOD

FROM WRETCHEDNESS TO  
REDEMPTION

*New Creation*  
**IN CHRIST**

THE JOY OF FAITH





Mother Mary,  
Pray for our Readers

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## E-mail us at :

editor.kingdomrevelator@gmail.com

## FOR ALL INQUIRIES:

inquiry@kingdomrevelatorusa.org

## BILLING:

billing@kingdomrevelatorusa.org

## OUR MAILING ADDRESS:

**KINGDOM REVELATOR USA**

P.O Box 22,

TECHNY, IL 60082-0022

## PLEASE VISIT US AT:

www.kingdomrevelatorusa.org

## DESIGN & LAYOUT :

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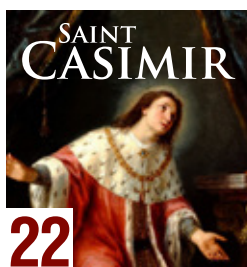
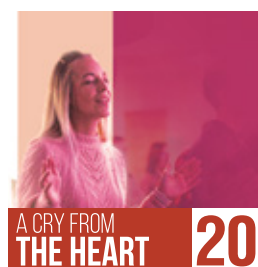
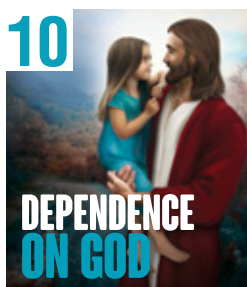
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“CALL TO ME AND I WILL ANSWER YOU”

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# How are we saved?



## Editorial

As we prepare for the feast of the Pentecost, it's more essential than ever to dwell on the power and role of the Holy Spirit in our lives. The third person of the Holy Trinity was promised by Jesus to His disciples before His passion and death on the cross. As promised by the Saviour, the Holy Spirit, often referred to as the Helper, guided and helped build the early church. This gentle Spirit continues to play a key and active role in the Church today. The Holy Spirit unites the believer with Christ, enabling him to live victoriously over sin.

Filled with the Holy Spirit, the disciples were transformed from scared and timid followers of Christ to bold and courageous followers who fearlessly proclaimed the Gospel, even in the face of death. "You will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth" (Acts 1:8). They travelled far and near preaching and sharing the Gospel; they became the pall-bearers of Christianity. Once the Holy Spirit descended upon them, the petty fights as to who is the greatest among them or who will sit at the right hand of Jesus, became a thing of the past.

It doesn't matter who is first or the last, what matters is that we should be humble enough to be guided by the Holy Spirit. Yielding to the Holy Spirit bestows upon us various spiritual gifts and helps us to grow closer to God. "And because you are children, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, 'Abba! Father!'" So as children of the Living God, let us lead a life worthy of Christ.



**337. No man can save himself. Christians believe that they are saved by God, who for this purpose sent His Son Jesus Christ into the world. For us salvation means that we are freed by the Holy Spirit from the power of sin and have been brought back from the realm of death to a life without end, a life in God's presence. [CCC 1987-1995, 2017-2020]**

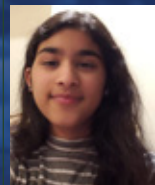
Paul observes: "All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23). Sin cannot exist in the presence of God, who is justice and goodness through and through. If sin is worth nothing, what about the sinner, then? In His love, God found a way by which He destroys sin but saves the sinner. He makes him "right" again, that is to say, righteous or just. That is why from ancient times salvation has also been called justification. We are not made just by our own power. A man can neither forgive his own sins nor rescue himself from death. For that, God has to act on our behalf—out of mercy, not because we could deserve or merit it. In Baptism, God grants us "the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ" (Romans 3:22). Through the Holy Spirit, who is poured out into our hearts, we take part in the death and Resurrection of Christ—we die to sin and are born to new life in God. The divine gifts of faith, hope, and charity come over us and make us able to live in the light and to obey God's will.

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# New Creation IN CHRIST



*Diya Kavalam, from Canada, shares how a trip with her Mom transformed her life and how she ended up sealing a deal with God.*

Looking back on my life, I can see that the Lord's hand was guiding me, slowly molding and shaping me into someone completely new.

Before I came to know the Lord, I was someone living in loneliness and despair and although I had many friends and a loving family, I always



felt alone. I thought that no one understood me, that no one loved me, that I was all alone in this world, and these feelings led me to try and fill myself with the things of this world and all I ever did was try to please others. The opinions of others were the reason behind every decision I made. Pleasing my friends, teachers, other people in school and my parents were basically all I cared about. Because of this I was constantly attached to material things: clothing, food, social media, and my friends. But I still felt very empty inside as though something was missing, and nothing seemed to satisfy the thirst inside me that was longing for something more.

One day my mom told me that we were going to a retreat four hours away in Mississauga, Canada that was being conducted by Anointing Fire Catholic Ministries.

However, since my heart was closed to God, I was annoyed and frustrated at this. I started spitting complaints to my mom and making all sorts of excuses as to why I shouldn't attend. But like all good Catholic moms, she ignored all my silly excuses and firmly told me that we were going to the retreat. Later my mom compromised and said that we would only stay for two out of the three days, because I had a soccer game on the last day. When I arrived at the retreat, I immediately felt completely out of place and very uncomfortable. For one thing, I didn't know anyone at the retreat, apart from a few kids from my city, and they were completely on fire for God, hence my uncomfortableness.

But secondly, within 20 minutes of arriving, I came to the conclusion that some of the ministers at this retreat were completely insane. They were all jumping up and down while singing and dancing for God and were always praising God, I felt so out of place. After a whole day of this, I thought that I would never become like one of those ministers, and I dreaded the thought of going the next day to the retreat.

**"If anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see everything has become new."**  
(2 Corinthians 5:17)

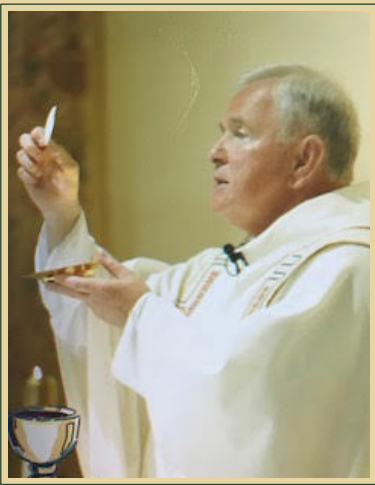
On the second day, I still felt uncomfortable, but they announced that Fr Xavier Khan Vattayil, (Director of Anointing Fire Catholic Ministries), was coming to speak to the youth. At this gathering, the Priests prayed and laid hands on everyone there. As they started praying for some of the kids, I started getting a weird feeling. At the time I didn't know what it was but

now I know it was the Holy Spirit. I started getting a strong feeling of guilt, and my mind raced over all of the sins I had committed throughout my life. At this point in my life, I wasn't even sure that God even existed. Whenever someone asked me if I was Christian, I would just say I was Christian only because my parents are. I felt a pit in my stomach and I started to realise how much I hurt God through my sin, which is something that had never crossed my mind before. As Fr Xavier Khan Vattayil and the other priest laid their hands on my head and prayed, I just felt some kind of force move inside me, which I now know was the Holy Spirit that touched me through the holy priests. Suddenly I burst out crying and was bawling my eyes out.

After that one day, I started wondering what in the world had happened, because at the time I didn't understand that God had touched me. Later that day my mom asked me if I was okay if we stayed for the last day of the retreat. I wasn't too happy about that because I would miss my soccer game, but because I was so shocked at what had happened to me, and was curious to see what else would happen to me if I attended the last day, I said yes. And the moment I said yes, I told God in my heart that since I would miss my game for Him, He had better reveal Himself to me in some way or another!

*Continued on Page 18*

# YOU ARE A PRIEST FOREVER



*An interview with Fr Marcel Pasciak, Parish priest of St Patricia Catholic Church, Illinois, USA.*

## **When did you first realize you had a vocation to the priesthood?**

Fr. Marc: "When I was in the fifth or sixth grade at St Joseph's school, I knew I wanted to be a priest. I thought that was the greatest way to spend your life, helping people find God. I came from a very religious home. My mother encouraged me to be a priest, as well as the Felician nuns at school.

It was an internal call that God wanted me to do this."

## **In a few months, you will be retiring. How long have you been a priest?**

Fr. Marc: "For 47 years. I've been a pastor for thirty of those years. I have had many assignments. As a parish priest, I worked with youth ministries and teen clubs. I was able to use my talents in sports; coached Track and Field, Soccer and Wrestling. I have led many retreats. I like to write, and I wrote an article for the New World Catholic Newspaper every week for eleven years. God tapped into my skills and I was willing to share those skills with the Archdiocese."

## **What has been the most meaningful part of being a priest?**

Fr. Marc: "Celebrating Mass. I've had the honor and the privilege to stand at the altar and share the Eucharist with God's people. Behind the Host, I could see the face of Christ in each person. When you're

ordained, you're ordained to share the Eucharist. You share the Mass with people for funerals and many different circumstances, and you see the importance of the Eucharist in their lives. It keeps my priesthood alive. "You are a priest forever, according to the order of Melchizedek" (Hebrews 7:17)."

## **What has been the most difficult part?**

Fr. Marc: "The most difficult part is in saying goodbye to people. Looking back at the different assignments I've had, it's always difficult to leave one place and go to another, but God calls you, like the apostles, to move on to preach the gospel."

## **How long did it take you to become a priest?**

Fr. Marc: "It was twelve years. Four years at Quigley South, four years at Niles college, and four years at Saint Mary's Seminary. During my time at the seminary, I didn't only study theology, I had internships in hospitals as a chaplain, and even worked in jails."



### **What are your responsibilities as a priest?**

Fr Marc: “All kinds of things. You are a jack-of-all trades. Keep the parish operating, hire people, oversee the liturgy. Make sure the bills are paid, keep the buildings maintained. But the most important job is directing people towards God. The Cardinal has a special prayer for a priest. He says, these people are entrusted to you, you are to bring them to heaven. How do I do that? With the grace of God, all these things are possible. You are to be all things to all men, Saint Paul said in scripture. You are a shepherd; the word “priest” means he takes care of the sheep. If that means talking, counseling, teaching them, preaching to them, providing the Sacraments, that’s all rolled up into what it means to be a priest.”

### **Do you have a devotion to a particular Saint?**

Fr Marc: “I’m very close to the Blessed Virgin Mary. Mary is the mother of us all. I pray the rosary. Mary is someone I can talk to when I have a problem. When I need extra help, Mary is there to listen to me. She has brought me closer to her Son. Saint John Vianney is the patron saint of priests and is an example of a hard-working parish priest who worked to help people find God.”

### **What advice do you have for young people today to help them grow in their faith?**

Fr Marc: “It’s hard today to maintain faith. Religion is not a top priority in our society today. Young people are not brought up in the same atmosphere as we were brought up in, where faith and religion were very prominent. Today, we are being pulled away from the church. Religion is not held in high regard anymore. Young people have to find their faith in good people like their parents, family members, teachers, coaches, and others who are important in their lives who will bring them to God. Imitate these good people who value life, who live their lives with certain guidelines, people who live a life with God.”

“The students I’ve taught come back to me and say, the values I learned as a kid in the Catholic school have stayed with me. I have a moral compass and I can tell the difference between right and wrong. Society doesn’t show us the difference between right and wrong. We need to understand that there are choices we make in life that bring us to God or take us away from God. Our faith helps us to stay on the right path so that one day we may be with God in heaven.”



# THE JOY OF

# FAITH



*Sunita Kottoor, from the USA, shares how tuning into EWTN Catholic Radio station while commuting to work one day, awakened her to a deeper understanding of her Catholic faith.*

I first began listening to Catholic Radio in 2010. Until then, being a music addict, I only listened to music in my car on my way to and from work. Then, one day at Mass, my parish priest informed the congregation that a new Catholic Radio station had just been commissioned in our area and that we should try it out. I decided to give it a shot.

From the first moment I tuned in to this Catholic Radio station, I was hooked. Slowly but surely, the 15-minute commute to work and back each day, became adult faith formation classes for me. I began to learn more about my faith and to understand why the Catholic faith teaches what it does, even those teachings that are

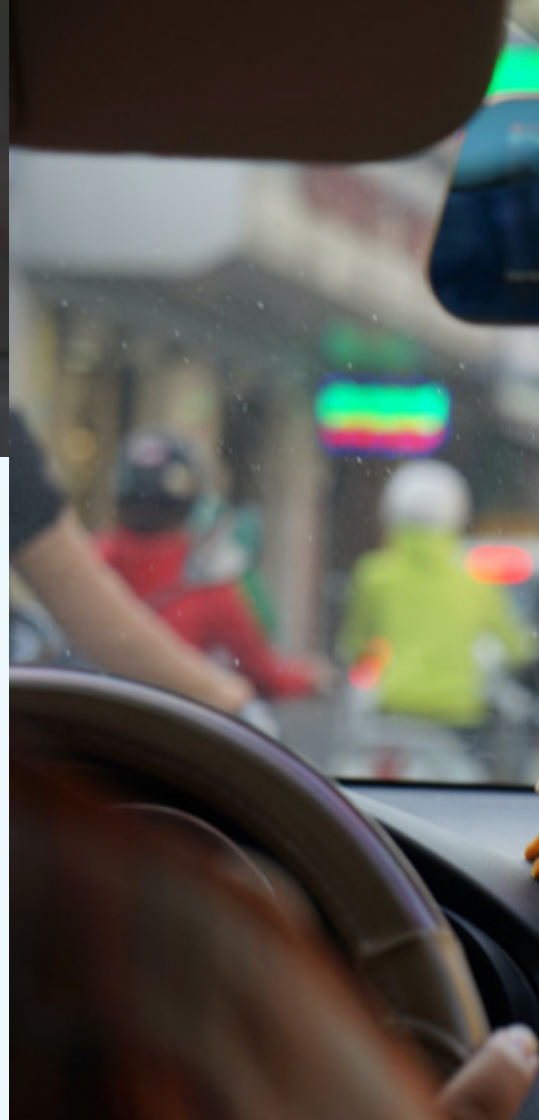
difficult to accept. Without the catechesis I received from this Catholic Radio station, I might have been a casualty of the “Poorly Catechized Cradle

“GOD  
DOES NOT  
CALL THE  
EQUIPPED,  
HE EQUIPS  
THE CALLED.”

ST TERESA OF CALCUTTA

Catholic Syndrome”!

In the summer of 2012, I was asked to teach Religious Education classes for the 2nd graders at my parish, which would include preparing them for the Sacraments of Reconciliation and First Holy Communion. When I first received the phone call to serve in this position, my gut reaction was, “Are you serious? You really want such a poorly catechized person to teach Religious Education and prepare kids to receive the two most important Sacraments? It would be like the blind leading the blind!” Of course, I did not react aloud. Instead, I reluctantly accepted, mainly because the caller, our parish Director of Religious Education, revealed







to me that my son, who had just entered High School at that time, could accumulate service hours as a teacher's aide in my classroom.

Looking back, I have come to realize that God had been preparing me for this role, in a most gentle and unobtrusive way – through the work that Mother Angelica had started in establishing Catholic media. As Mother Teresa, my all-time hero, once said, “God does not call the equipped, he equips the called.” Besides, God does have a plan, a most beautiful one at that! I am filled with gratitude for God's abundant and loving mercy that He chose me to do His work! And the story comes full circle with an additional and fine point

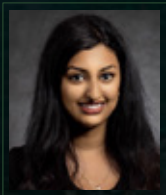
of detail: my patron saint is none other than St Therese of Lisieux, the one who inspired both Mother Teresa and Mother Angelica! One of Mother Angelica's teachings that struck a chord deep within me was that we are all called to be saints. I had never, ever heard it put that way before. For me, sainthood was practically a pie-in-the-sky; a futile attempt. Why would one even waste time contemplating sainthood? We can lead a good life, yes, but sainthood is for the privileged few, right? Thankfully, Mother Angelica and the amazing talk show hosts and apologists helped lead me to the truth that sainthood is a universal call.

Thanks to Catholic Radio, I have been transformed from a poorly catechized Catholic into one who is totally in love with the Catholic Church and all things Catholic!!! Having fully realized the depth and wisdom that is deposited in the Catholic Church, I am immensely proud of my Catholic faith and will defend it at all costs. As Romans 11:33 tells us, “O the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments and how inscrutable his ways!” As a better informed Catholic, I am also well-prepared to make a case against the lies and so-called ‘rights’ that the secular world promotes – such as contraception, abortion, euthanasia, same-sex lifestyle, gender ideology and so on.

Best of all, as a person who used to have a ‘protestant’ attitude towards Our Lady, I am now consecrated to Jesus through Mary. I know she will guide me ever closer to her beloved Son Jesus and prevent me from straying away from the path God has prepared for my salvation. “I pray that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you a spirit of wisdom and revelation as you come to know him” (Ephesians 1:17).



# DEPENDENCE ON GOD



*Stacey Illikal, from Tampa, Florida, shares her testimony of the miracle God worked in her life when she surrendered everything in His hands.*

**H**ave you ever thought to yourself, "I can do this by myself; I don't need anyone else's help!" I would like to share a testimony about how our loving God worked miraculously in my life. I just graduated from the optometry program at Nova South-eastern University. During my first year, we had to receive at least an 83% average from all of our classes by the end of the year, which is a B average. But during my first semester, I received almost all C's, and my average was way below 83%.

When I had my meeting with the Dean of the college halfway through the semester, he told me it is nearly impossible now

for me to reach 83% by the end of the year since I would have to receive straight A's in the next semester. Moreover, these classes were only getting tougher. He told me I could withdraw from the program now to save money since it was practically an impossible feat. Hearing that made me so sad and disappointed, and I thought I would not have a career as an optometrist. But I had faith in the Lord, and I didn't want to give up. I believed that the Lord has everything under control. So, I offered everything to Jesus and Mother Mary so they could do whatever is best for me. And I told the Dean that I don't want to withdraw and that I want to continue on to next semester and will try my best.

The 2<sup>nd</sup> semester was hard for me again and I was getting B's during the first half. Our final exams are worth most of the points and I had to get an 92% in my final exams to pass the year. It was so hard knowing that I had to get at least 92% on all of them, because I barely ever get that high grade in any of my exams. It was also frightening, knowing that





I would get kicked out of the program if I didn't make it. But I believed the Lord had everything under control, and I prayed about it and trusted Him and asked Mother Mary for her intercession.

One day my mother told me to claim John 14:26, which states, "The Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you everything you need to know and remind you of everything that I have taught you." My mother and I claimed this Bible verse, and I had a lot of my family and friends praying for me. I took my final exams, and they were pretty hard. I thought I wasn't going to make it and was feeling very sad. But when the results were declared, I checked my grades, I had received 100/100 on all of them! The Lord God heard our prayers and gave me a score that is much more than I needed! Praise the Lord! I cannot thank the Lord enough for His miracles, abundant blessings, and for His mercy. As stated in Ephesians 3:20, "Now to him who by the power at work within us is able to accomplish abundantly far more than all we can ask or imagine."

Throughout optometry school, there were many times where I didn't get to study much and I felt so unprepared for my exams, or I messed up on

lab practicals. He knows what's best for me and does things according to His will. I came out my board exams a few months ago thinking I had failed for sure. I would pray and claim Bible verses such as Nehemiah 2:20 which states: "It is the God of Heaven who grants success." I asked for God's will to happen. I asked for our beautiful, gracious, blessed Mother Mary's powerful intercession, because everything that I ask Mary to pray for has always been heard. I hope this has inspired you to never give up and to have strong faith in the Lord. God wants us to trust in Him during the difficult trials in our lives. He will use these trials to help us grow spiritually and mold us into a better person. Never give up, keep your faith close to your heart and God will provide.

One way you can surrender everything into the Lord's hands is by attending Holy Mass. By attending Holy Mass, you can tell Jesus everything face to face in front of the Holy Sacrament and He will take away all of your worries. Whatever it may be (family issues, marriage problems, school problems, bad addictions, just anything) tell it all to God and he will help you. Our Lord wants to see you there and waits for you at the Altar every day. He wants to help you and take all your sorrows away. Mathew 11:28 states, "Come to me all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you

rest." Be patient with the Lord and see the miracles He is about to perform in your life!

Another way you can surrender everything to the Lord is through personal prayer and reading the Bible every day. Whenever you need answers, open up the Bible to any page and God will talk to you. He will help you and guide you to the right path. John 15:5 tells us, "I am the vine, you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing." We really cannot do anything without Jesus's help. For example, in my life I have had so many instances where I had doubts and I needed miracles. There were many exams I took in school that I thought I failed but I prayed to Jesus and He worked miracles. Just trust in Him. Sirach 2:6 states: "Trust in him, and he will help you; make your ways straight and hope in him." Trust with all your heart and soul and He will make whatever you're praying for happen. In Mathew 21:22 we hear, "Whatever you ask for in prayer, you will receive!" There are so many spiritual nuggets that you can receive from reading the Bible. Philippians 4:13 affirms, "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me." Say this to yourself over and over again, and watch it happen in your life like it did for me!



# FROM WRETCHEDNESS TO REDEMPTION



*Abraham George, from Birmingham, UK, reflects on the story about the journey of salvation taken by a sinner.*

I can hardly take a step forward because I am completely fatigued - my head is spinning, my eyes are blurry and clamorous, and reverberating voices terrify me. Beggars get their coin monies, but even they don't let me sit with them. Ravens and foxes scavenge together for their food but here am I, a man, the epitome of God's creation who has become the most disgraced creature on the planet, a subject of ridicule.

## Unlimited Freedom

In reminiscing about my past life, I am taken to a different world where my father and I were living peacefully in a mansion. My father was a very loving, caring and

compassionate man of strong character who treated me with extreme respect. But in my youth, I was carried away by the desires of the glamorous world around me and slowly began drifting away from my loving family. Soon I realized that I had limited freedom within my home and family. I wanted to enjoy life to its fullest while still young and at that age didn't want to compromise my luxuries within the clear but unwritten parameters of family life. Friendships are alluring, pleasurable and fun seems unlimited; who is to dictate guidelines for me? Who is to stop me? No one can. Youthful friends are my soulmates, and so I decided to leave the restrictive bondage of the family.

I demanded my fair share of the inheritance from my father, which he gave me on the condition that I would not leave him forever. He loved me so much that it would be devastating for him to live without me. However, my obsession with new found flickering friendships outweighed the family supplications and I left him in tears with my share to a far away land looking for new horizons. I squandered all the money among friends and on parties and was eventually left with nothing but only my life. Little by little, the very people who I once thought were my close friends, moved away from me. They started behaving like strangers and slammed their door against me. Nobody gave



me a job or food until I found someone who employed me to feed his pigs. I lived with the pigs, slept with them, and often fought with them for the fodder. I behaved like a pig and even smelt like one.

### From Bad to Worse

This turn of events made me think, "What a cursed life is mine! In my family, I was a prince. When I was with my father, I had everything. That was the time I enjoyed real happiness. I have sinned so much against Heaven and my father, that I am not worthy even to be called his son." Regretting my sins, I decided to escape from that abysmal way of life and ran away from the pig farm. I walked aimlessly; my throat was parched, and I had no more tears left to cry.

### Turn of Events

In my anguish, I drifted into a slumber. Then, quite abruptly I was stopped by a big crowd who obstructed me from strolling into the city. They were all dressed in white attire, and I overheard them unanimously praising and chanting - "Praise to you, the mightiest King of Kings, at your name every knee should bend, in Heaven and on earth and under the earth. Lord, you are our rock, our fortress and deliverer and in you we take refuge."

Seeing the King sitting on his throne, I exclaimed, "Ah, there you are!" He had the most radiant face I have ever seen in my life, brighter than the sun, and reflecting the most divine serenity, empathy, kindness and love. Instantly, my mind was filled with an overwhelming joy, which I

have never experienced in my entire life. I wished I could get a chance to speak to him, to say sorry for having disobeyed and sinned against him. From unfathomable depths, I repented on my iniquitous past and begged the King to have mercy on me. I felt the tears that were completely dried out, start rolling down my face like streams. I wept profusely, remembering all my transgressions, one after another. Unable to move any further, I fell on my knees.

**"Is He calling me,  
or someone else  
who deserves to  
be called?"**

### Abyss of Mercy

The next minute, I saw the King rising from the throne. All at once, the crowd ceased chanting praises. Everyone bowed their heads and remained still, expecting the King to come forward, bless and grant them rewards. As he walked, everyone in the crowd murmured, "He is approaching, and He will surely touch me. I deserve this honor from Him because I have been righteous and have always obeyed His commandments".

But the King paid no attention to the crowd, instead, He walked past every one of them; He seemed to be looking for someone very special, an unusual stranger. I felt His footsteps as heavy as claps of thunder and in fear of retribution, I sank my head under my knees, sobbing uncontrollably. After a while,

I realized the sound of his footsteps had stopped near me. I heard Him calling in a mild and tender voice, "My son!" The question flared up in my conflicted mind, "Is He calling me, or someone else who deserves to be called?"

Lifting up my chin in perturbation and fear, I found Him looking at me. I stared into His eyes, but they were overflowing with tears. Immediately, He stretched out His hands towards me, and I could see the wounds of His sufferings on both palms. "Go away from me Lord," I cried in a very tearful and fragile voice, "I am a sinful man. I am unclean and my body stinks. I disobeyed your commandments deliberately and am not worthy to be called your son."

### Redeemed

The King said to me, "Heaven is rejoicing more for you today than these people you see, who do not need repentance. I have come not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance. You were the lost sheep, but now I have found you." Steadily, He helped me to my feet and immediately my whole body collapsed into His mighty strong and outstretched arms. He kissed my forehead. His merciful hands caressed my body and embraced me. "My Lord and my God!" I sighed. At that very instant, all my iniquities were washed away, all my wounds were healed, my body stopped reeking and, in His arms, I rested peacefully forever under His eternal protection. I could hear nothing but my Lord whispering to my soul, "Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in paradise."



# PLACES FROM THE BIBLE

By Stacey Illikal from USA



## LYSTRA

**L**ystra was bounded in the North by Iconium, in the West by mountains and in the South by Isauria Venus. Lystra is mentioned six times in the New Testament. Lystra was an important city during the early days of 6<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> centuries because Paul and Barnabas visited this city to spread Christianity. It was also the home of Timothy, who Paul brought up through his teachings.

Being a Roman colony from 6 B.C, Lystra had a diverse population of Roman soldiers, Greeks, Jews and native Lycaonians. Initially Lystra was a pagan city worshipping Greek gods. They had temples dedicated to Zeus. Paul went there and started preaching the Word of God at the local synagogues according to Acts 14:1, and it was the first city in which the apostles preached directly to the Gentiles.

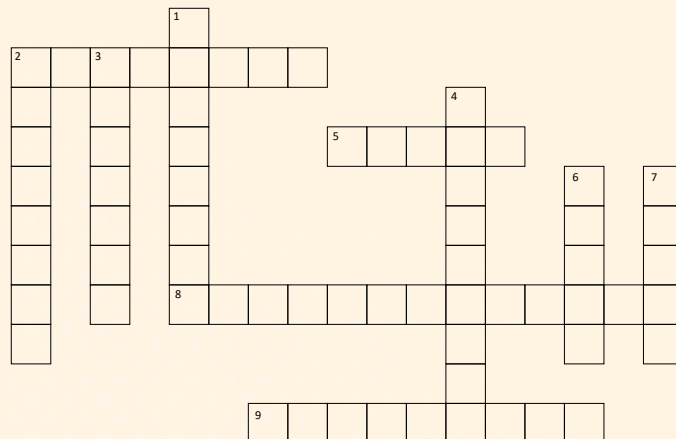
While Paul was preaching and spreading the word of God, he healed a crippled man in Lystra (Acts 14: 8-15). When the priest of Zeus saw this, he thought they were human incarnations of Zeus and Hermes and brought garlanded bulls to sacrifice at their feet. But when Paul corrects them, the crowd started throwing stones at him and dragged him out of the city. But Paul went back to Lystra to preach and many then believed in the Lord.

Many scholars believe the church in Lystra, being in South Galatia, was one of the churches to whom the letter to the Galatians was addressed. Today, little remains of ancient Lystra, apart from being an isolated settlement in modern day Turkey, and is located near Konya city.

# CROSSWORD



By Heinz Sony, Luton, Uk



## Across

2. Paul was introduced to the Apostles by \_\_\_\_.
5. \_\_\_\_ was the head of the Apostles.
8. \_\_\_\_ helped Jesus to carry his cross.
9. Joseph from \_\_\_\_ went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus.

## Down

1. The disciples chose \_\_\_\_ to replace Judas Iscariot.
2. The people asked Pilate to release this person instead of Jesus.
3. Which bird did Jesus say will crow after Peter denies Him?
4. The Holy Spirit came on the disciples on the Feast of \_\_\_\_.
6. How many times did Peter betray Jesus?
7. The Apostles and Mary prayed in the \_\_\_\_ room.



# FIVE PICKS



## BLOG - ZENIT

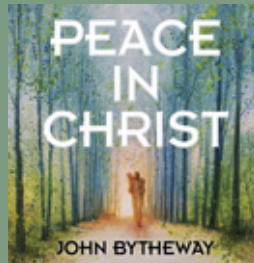
Zenit is an international, non-profit news agency staffed by a team of professionals and volunteers who are convinced that the extraordinary wisdom of the Pontiff and the Catholic Church can nourish hope, and assist all of humanity to find truth, justice and beauty.



## SONG

### PEACE IN CHRIST

by John Bytheway



## BOOK

### MYSTICAL CITY OF GOD

by Venerable Mother Mary of Jesus of Agreda



## MOVIE

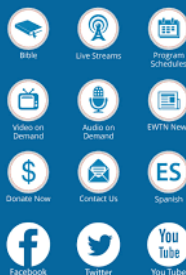
### WOODLAWN

A gifted high school football player must learn to embrace his talent and his faith as he battles racial tensions on and off the field.



EWTN

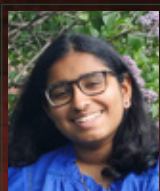
Global Catholic Network



## APP - EWTN

EWTN - You can enjoy EWTN Live Streams (TV & Radio), many of the popular TV and Radio shows On Demand, prayers and devotionals, and keep up on the latest Catholic news.

# FACE **TO** FACE



*Mariya Kunnengode, from USA, talks about the importance of spending quality time in Eucharistic Adoration.*



**A**doration, in my opinion, is one of the best things about being a Catholic. Jesus is visible to you in the form of a piece of bread, usually in a stunning monstrance. You are sitting in the presence of the King of Kings, gazing at Him face to face. He is just talking to you, and you're just listening to His words. But how did it come to be?

### A Little History

In the earlier centuries, consecrated hosts would be taken home to people who were unable to attend Mass. It would be consumed by the person to keep them close to Jesus and their community. In the eleventh century, a French monk named Berengar of Tours taught that the bread and wine were not actually changed into the Body and Blood of Jesus during Consecration at Mass. Pope Gregory VII forced Berengar to retract his statements. The pope's actions prompted the Church to refine her teachings on the Eucharist. As a result, the community of believers developed a stronger Eucharistic devotion.

The practice of visiting the Blessed Sacrament started in Avignon, France, on September 11, 1226. The King of France, King Louis VII, wanted to celebrate his victory over the Albigensians. He asked the Bishop of Avignon to have the Blessed Sacrament exposed in the Chapel of the Holy Cross. Many people came to visit the Holy Sacrament, and the Bishop decided to have the Blessed Sacrament exposed both day and night. As time passed, more people began observing adoration, apart from the Holy

Mass. At first, the worship of the Sacred Host was reserved in the tabernacle. Eventually, the devotion evolved to keeping the tabernacle door open. Later, the practice of keeping the Sacred Host in the monstrance became normal. Visits to the Blessed Sacrament became very common, and many of the Eucharistic songs that are still sung today, were written during this time.



**There is nothing so great as the Eucharist. If God had something more precious, He would have given it to us.**



**St John Vianney**

### Elijah's Encounter

The time I spend during Adoration always reminds me of the time when Elijah, the prophet, talked to God face to face after fleeing from Jezebel, the wicked queen of Israel. She was angry that he had killed all the prophets of Baal, the false God that she worshipped. He cried out to God begging Him to take his life away. He was at rock bottom and wanted all his problems to be gone. His only solution was to die. But God had other plans. God sent an angel to Elijah who made him eat well so he would be ready for the journey to Mount Horeb, where Moses saw God face to face as well.

Once Elijah reached Mount Horeb, he went to a cave and the word of the Lord came to him. He explained his reasoning for wanting to take his life. God listened to him and instructed to go out and stand on the mountain so that he can see the Lord as He passes by (Ref 1 Kings 19:11). Then God sent a strong and powerful wind that crushed rocks, but the Lord was not in the wind; then an earthquake struck, but the Lord was not in the earthquake, and after the earthquake, a fire, but the Lord was not in the fire. After the fire, a sound of silence came forth - the Lord was in the silence. That's the best part!

### Quiet Time

In this day and age, our world is filled with many worldly noises. Every time we hear a phone notification, we have to check it. When we spend time with God, He helps us to quieten the noise of the world and focus on Him. He is like a friend. We tell our friends practically about everything that occurs in our life, right? Shouldn't we do the same thing with the person who created us, and gave us everything our hearts desires? Even if we run out of things to say, we should just sit in silence, thanking and praising Him for our blessings and the beautiful things He made for us. If you have trouble focusing on God in silence, don't worry, just open your Bible. Ever since we were little children, we have been taught that the Bible is God's Word. So, if you desire to hear God's words to you, just open your Bible and read what God wants to tell you. I promise you, you can't go wrong in the presence of God!



The next day after lunch, someone came up to me and asked me if I wanted to go to spiritual sharing. At the time, I didn't know what spiritual sharing was, and I didn't know what to expect but because of the experience I had the previous day, I agreed.

So, I went to spiritual sharing. Since I didn't exactly know what to expect, I was very nervous. The minister started praying with me and right after we finished, she started to tell me about things in my life that only God could ever know. And then she said to me: "You pray the rosary every day, right?" I was shocked that she knew this because my family had only been praying the rosary together for 1 or 2 months, and I hated praying the rosary because I thought it was such a drag. When we prayed as a family, I found it so boring and I hated it. As this was racing through my mind, the minister then told me that when she was praying, she had a vision. In that vision, Mother Mary was standing right beside me, and her mantle was around my shoulders. Right at that moment, I felt her real presence beside me, and I started crying again.

I felt an overwhelming sense of love from her and for once in a long time, I didn't feel alone. I kept sobbing, and I didn't even understand why. It was then that I realized that maybe God truly did exist. At that moment, I finally opened my heart to God, to let in and

took a small step towards Him. That tiny step I took towards Him was all it took for Him to come to me running with His arms wide open, just as it says in James 4:8 - "Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you." When I took a step, just a small one, God came and embraced me. After this, I finally praised and worshiped God with my whole heart for the first time in my life. I finally opened my heart completely and I received the gift of the Holy Spirit.

**If Mamma Mary was that close to me when I had no heart to pray, and no ear to listen to God, then how much more is she with us when we decide to hand over our hearts to her and her Son?**

What struck me the most, and what still surprises me now is the power of the intercession of Mary. I had never sincerely prayed to her, but nevertheless, I believe she was still there beside me all the time, protecting me and watching over me. It was Mary who brought me directly to her son. If Mamma Mary was that close to me when I had no heart to pray, and no ear to listen to God, then how much more is she with us when we decide to hand over our hearts to her and her son?

And so now, every time I fall into spiritual dryness or when I feel distant from the faith, I know that if I just ask Mary to help, she will bring me right back to Jesus. This is why the rosary is so important. Even though it may seem repetitive and boring, it actually has a huge effect on us. When we say the rosary, Mother Mary is really with us and she brings along all the angels and the saints too.

Mother Mary is like the moon, and Jesus is the sun. The moon reflects the light of the sun. In the same way, Mary is the moon, and all she does is reflect the light of her Son Jesus. So, in dark times, in the desert, we should follow the light of the moon until dawn and the sun comes up. And that sun is Jesus.

It is because of Mary that I am the person I am today, and it is because of her that I truly found my worth and identity in Jesus. A few months after this retreat I started to lose the fire I had received but it was then that God picked me up and gave me the opportunity to attend an SOE (School of Evangelization Retreat) conducted by Anointing Fire Catholic Ministries. My experience there is a completely different story, and it was there that I sealed the deal with God and decided that there was no turning back to my old way of life. I had tasted heaven and nothing else on this earth could ever compare, and since then, I became a completely new person, a new creation in Christ.



## CROSSWORD ANSWERS

Across : 2. Barnabas, 5 . Peter, 8. Simon of Cyrene, 9. Arimathea

Down : 1. Matthias, 2. Barabbas, 3. Rooster, 4. Pentecost, 6. Three, 7. Upper



# TO THE ONE ABOVE



*Prof. Nanette Johny  
Padinjath from India.*

**T**hy mighty name, O Lord, is great  
Man-mere man-what is his weight?  
He strains to see You high above  
While You are near, O gentle dove.

Your constant presence I can feel  
So calm, so serene is your appeal  
Bless me thus all my nights and days  
Be with me thru life's uncertain ways.

You are to me life's eternal glow  
You are the spring that forever doth flow  
The moving air, the gentle breeze  
The stillness of all encompassing peace.

You are to me a shining star  
that beckons silently from afar  
The floating wave, the fragrant flower  
Proclaim Your presence and Your power.

Forever will I proclaim Your name  
Though not for glory or for fame  
A driving force within doth swell  
This urge that I just cannot quell.

Your might is greater than the earth  
More wondrous than death, life or birth  
Forever reign of kings O king  
Forever will I your praises sing.

Lead us O Lord from darkness to light  
Lead us O Lord from blindness to sight  
Grant us O Lord the gift of Your grace.  
Grant that we see you Lord in every face  
Take away Lord all that is evil and vice  
Make me a vessel that is virtue and wise.



# A CRY FROM THE HEART



*Fr John Tavares, a priest from UK, explores some of the different descriptions of prayer in the Catholic Church.*

**W**hat do we do when we are praying alone? Our Catholic faith provides so many descriptions of prayer. This is important because I do not think that one single description does it; there might be a particular description that speaks to us more dramatically than another.

## St John Damascene

The first definition is what my parents used to tell me as a little child. It is the definition of St John Damascene: "Prayer is a raising of the mind and heart to God." Whether you are fantasizing or thinking when you are praying, according to St John Damascene, you are praying because prayer is the raising of the mind and heart to God.

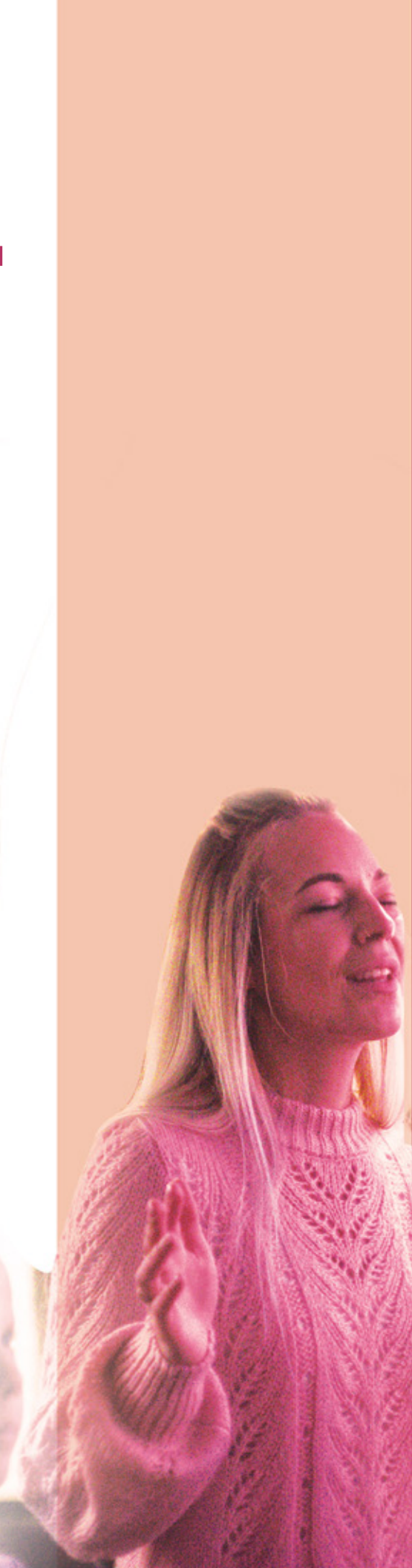
## St Teresa of Avila

St Teresa of Avila defines prayer as an intimate sharing between friends; a conversation with God. Many people believe that a conversation means that one must talk all the time. However, a real conversation is both speaking and listening. According to St Teresa's definition of prayer,

we understand that there is a certain intimacy in it, a certain naturalness about it, and a certain closeness that comes from lovers being in love. One of the definitions of prayer that I have come across is that prayer is moving into a promise and relying on it. When we meditate on the scriptures, we see all the different promises that Jesus makes in the Gospels. Prayer enables us to count on those promises.

## St Giles

An old Swiss hermit by the name of Giles was once asked by his neighbors, "What is prayer like for you?" and Giles answered, "Prayer is like going off to a war or going off to a dance." This is one of the polarities of prayer, because very often prayer is like doing battle or arguing with God, the way Jacob and Job did in the Old Testament. On the other hand, prayer can also be like going off to a dance. King David danced before the Ark of the Covenant. St Teresa used to dance with tambourines or castanets. St Francis of Assisi would pick up sticks and pretend





to be playing a violin and dance in his prayer. When St John of the Cross was praying, he was so caught up in the mystery of Christ's birth that he took up the statue of baby Jesus in the crib and danced with it all through the monastery. This is not something that we do publicly; remember, I am talking about personal prayer.

### St Augustine

Singing is a wonderful way to pray. There is something special about singing your prayer. The Psalms were written to be sung and not to be recited. St Augustine says the one who sings, prays twice. In the Book of Psalms, the whole range of human emotions in all its different settings is present. For example, Psalm 29 expresses great joy, while Psalm 6 is that of sorrow. Psalm 77 speaks of terrible turmoil and anguish. When we are really steeped in the Psalms, they become part of us.

### Karl Rahner

Karl Rahner, one of the greatest theologians of our age, wrote a little book called, *Encounters with Silence*. He was a man of profound prayer. In this book, Rahner says sometimes prayer can be like a slow internal bleeding. A very mysterious kind of prayer,

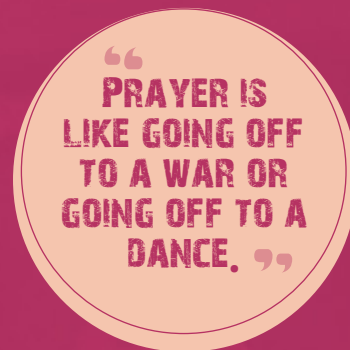
which we don't understand when we are praying it, but somewhere in the very depths of our soul our life's blood feels as though it is ebbing away drop by drop. This is the prayer most priests would find themselves in.

### Personal Prayer

I, on the other hand, discern that the best definition of personal prayer is, 'a cry of the heart.' How do our hearts cry out? They cry out in every conceivable way: in joy and in sorrow, in laughter and tears, in anguish and turmoil, as well as out of tranquillity and serenity. Too many people think that prayer has to happen in a very quiet peaceful way, and that if we are too worked up, we can't pray well. This is not really true, we can pray any way we are, any way in which our heart cries out. Part of our trouble in prayer comes about when we think that we have to say certain words, take a certain posture, be in a certain place, and do it according to with the technical prayer manual, instead of having that natural spontaneous attitude that St Teresa of Avila had, when she said that prayer is an intimate sharing between friends. How would you share with your friends? How would your heart cry out?

Prayer is spontaneous and is natural. In other words, it is really second nature to us; it comes as naturally to us as breathing. If this is how we see it, then we also have to conclude that prayer is also a necessity. An awful lot of people today misunderstand prayer and think that it is a special kind of thing that

is reserved just for religious people, when in fact, prayer is a necessity that answers a very basic need of our being. Prayer is to the heart, what breath is to the body. We know if we don't breathe, we will die physically. In the same way, if we don't pray, we will die spiritually. G.K Chesterton once said, "If we cannot pray, we are gagged, and if we cannot kneel, then we are in chains."



### An Intimate Connection

There is a very intimate connection between how we live and how we pray. So, when people come to talk to you about prayer, ask them how they live, rather than how they pray. Because very often it is not our prayer that is the problem, but it is how we are living that is the problem. If prayer is a cry of the heart, it erupts naturally and spontaneously when we are living life to the hilt, which means life in all its pain as well as all its joy. If we really live then we are bound to pray, it is inevitable, we cannot escape it. Those cries of the heart will keep flowing out of us. Over and over again in the Gospels, the emphasis is on life. Therefore, a man who teaches you how to pray must primarily teach you how to lead a fully human life, so that out of this human life, your prayer will erupt naturally and spontaneously.



# SAINT CASIMIR

PATRON SAINT OF POLAND,  
LITHUANIA & YOUNG PEOPLE



*Shino Marin John,  
from Finland,  
shares the life of  
St Casimir.*

## Early Life

St Casimir, the Prince of Poland, was born in 1458 in Krakow to King Casimir IV and his wife Elizabeth of Austria, who was a pious and virtuous queen. He was the third child and had 12 siblings. He was educated under the priest and historian John Dlugosz, whose deep piety and political expertise influenced Casimir during his upbringing. Prince Casimir was a young man of exceptional intellect and education, humility and politeness, who strove for justice and fairness.

## Christian Virtues

Casimir chose a life of austerity and penance despite the luxuries in the royal palace. He fasted daily, slept on the floor and spend his nights in prayer, sleeping little and attended daily Mass. He

worked among the poor and ill, providing with his own hands for their needs.

## Hungarian Campaign

When the nobles in Hungary became dissatisfied with their king, they requested Casimir's father, the king of Poland, to offer his son as the new king. Although he was not even 15 years old yet Casimir obeyed his father.

Casimir was unsuccessful in the attempt to help the Hungarians defend themselves against the Turks and had to return to Poland. Feeling disgraced, however, the king punished his son by confining him at Dobzki castle for three months. Later, he resumed studying with Dlugosz and began learning politics by observing his father's rule.

## Later Life and Death

In 1479, the king left Poland to attend to state business in Lithuania, leaving Prince Casimir in charge for two years between 1481 and 1483. Although his father and royal advisors tried to convince Casimir for a strategic marriage with the

daughter of Emperor Frederick III, he remained celibate, dedicated to serving God and his people.

Unfortunately, Casimir developed tuberculosis, and died on the way to Lithuania at the age of 26 and was buried with a copy of a Marian hymn (Daily, daily sing to Mary) which he recited quite often.

## Veneration

Pope Adrian VI canonized him in 1522. Numerous miracles were reported at his tomb side, including the healing of the blind, the ill, and the raising of the dead. His body was found incorrupt after 120 years. His feast day is celebrated on March 4<sup>th</sup>.

## Pope John Paul II on St Casimir:

*"St Casimir's witness of great faith and fervent piety continues to have special meaning for us today," the Pope said, noting especially the "challenging call" he offers to young people. "His life of purity and prayer beckons you to practice your faith with courage and zeal, to reject the deceptive attractions of modern permissive society, and to live your convictions with fearless confidence and joy."* ♦♦♦♦



# POPE'S *Voice*

*"Although the life of a person is in a land full of thorns and weeds, there is always a space in which the good seed can grow. You have to trust God."*

Pope Francis

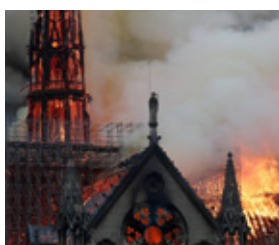


## GLOBAL CATHOLIC NEWS

Compiled by Smitha George

### NEW FUNDRAISER LAUNCHED FOR NOTRE DAME IN PARIS

France: A new fundraising approach to restore one of the most iconic monuments in the world, Notre Dame Cathedral in Paris, enables donors to restore a piece of history. Friends of Notre-Dame de Paris unveiled an interactive website [www.restorenotredame.org](http://www.restorenotredame.org) that allows people to donate by adopting or sponsoring pieces of precious art and artifacts that were damaged in a 2019 fire. Donors can engage with the objects of their choosing and select which they'd like to help restore, whether it is a painting or statue.



### PRAYERS SAID ALOUD LEAD THE WAY TO GOD, POPE

Rome: Prayer is a dialogue with God. We must not despise vocal prayer or be embarrassed to say our prayers, even to whisper them softly, Pope Francis said during his weekly general audience. "Vocal prayer is an essential element of the Christian life," and when Jesus taught the disciples how to pray, it was with a vocal prayer, the "Our Father". Continuing his series of talks on prayer, the pope reflected on the importance of speaking the words of prayers out loud rather than seeing prayer just as a mental exercise or form of meditation.



### POPE CALLS FOR A MONTH LONG GLOBAL PRAYER FOR THE END OF PANDEMIC



Vatican: Pope Francis has called for a global prayer marathon for the entire month of May, praying for the end to the pandemic. The theme refers to the miraculous event recounted in the Acts of the Apostles (12:1-12) when all the church prayed for Peter, who was imprisoned until God sent an angel to free him, illustrating how the Christian community comes together to pray in the face of danger and how the Lord listens and performs an unexpected miracle. The pope will open the monthlong prayer May 1 and conclude it May 31, the council said. Each day of the month has a different prayer intention related to the pandemic.

### CATHOLIC CHURCH CANCELS GUADALUPE PILGRIMAGE OVER PANDEMIC



Mexico: Mexico's Roman Catholic Church announced the cancellation of pilgrimage for the Virgin of Guadalupe, due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Mexico's Episcopal Conference said in a statement that the basilica will be closed from December 10-13. The feast of Virgin is celebrated on Dec. 12 and for weeks in advance, pilgrims travel from across Mexico to gather by the millions in Mexico City.

### POLISH CATHOLICS COMMEMORATE 2000 PRIESTS KILLED IN WORLD WAR II

Poland: Catholics in Poland are commemorating the fifth of the country's diocesan priests who were murdered in World War II as they mark the Day of Martyrdom of the Polish Clergy. Around 2,000 of Poland's 10,000 diocesan priests perished during the Nazi German occupation. They are among those remembered on April 29<sup>th</sup>, the day of commemoration of martyred clergy, instituted by the Polish bishops.

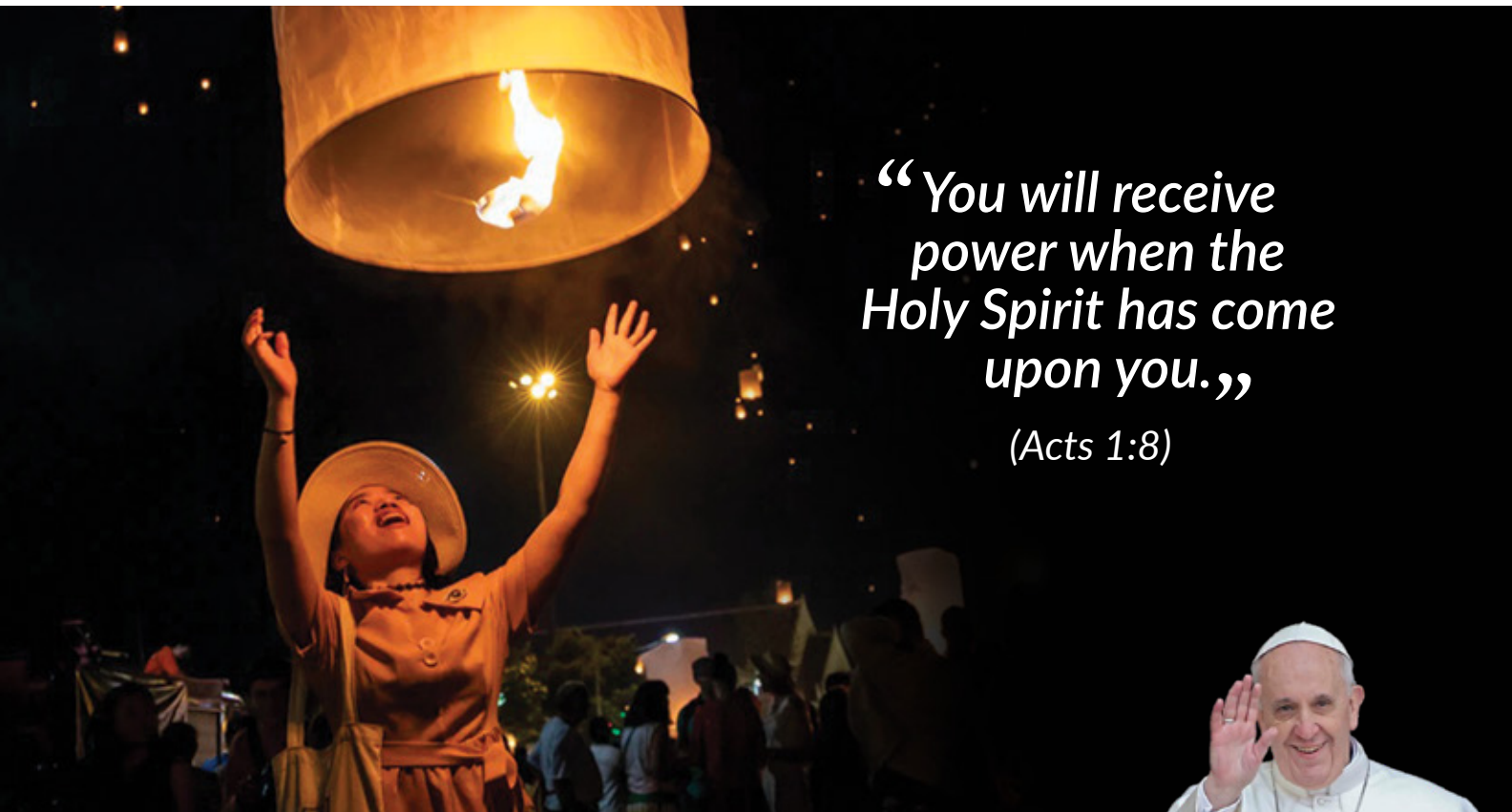


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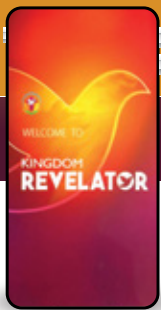
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**“You will receive  
power when the  
Holy Spirit has come  
upon you.,,  
(Acts 1:8)**

**“The Holy Spirit helps us to view others with fresh eyes, seeing them  
always as brothers and sisters in Jesus, to be respected and loved.,,  
(Pope Francis)**



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