

# KINGDOM REVELATOR

|||| CATHOLIC MAGAZINE FOR YOUNG PEOPLE ■ ISSUE 81

**SERVING**  
THE ONE WHO TAUGHT US  
**TO SERVE**

**MY**  
STAIRWAY TO  
**HEAVEN**

**LIFE IS A**  
**GIFT**

I AM NOT AN  
ORPHAN

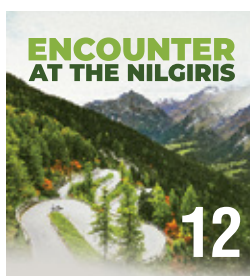






Mother Mary,  
Pray for our Readers

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## Is it permissible to offer assistance in dying?



**382: To bring about death directly is always against the commandment “You shall not kill” (Ex 20:13). In contrast, to stand by and assist a dying person is humane and even obligatory. [CCC 2278-2279]**

The terms active euthanasia and passive euthanasia often confuse the debate. What really matters is whether a dying person is killed or allowed to die. In so-called active euthanasia, someone by direct action “helps” a person to die and thereby breaks the Fifth Commandment; in so-called passive euthanasia, someone helps another person in the dying process and thereby obeys the commandment “Love your neighbor.” Passive euthanasia means that, in view of the certain impending death of a patient, one withholds extraordinary or expensive medical procedures that are not proportionate to the expected outcome. The patient himself must make the decision to forgo “extraordinary” measures or must have stated this intention in an advance directive. If he is no longer capable of doing so, those who are legally entitled must represent the express or probable wishes of the dying person. Ordinary care of a dying person should never be discontinued; this is commanded by love of neighbor and mercy. Meanwhile it can be legitimate and in keeping with human dignity to use painkillers, even at the risk of shortening the patient’s life. The crucial thing is that the use of such medications must not aim at bringing about death, either as an end in itself or as a means of ending pain.

### **How do Christians assist someone who is dying?**

**393:** Christians do not leave a dying person alone. They help him so that he can die in faith-filled trust, in dignity and peace. They pray with him and take care that the Sacraments are administered to him at the right time. [CCC 2299]

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## Editorial

Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you; it’s easier said than done. Forgiving and loving are two of the main teachings of the Lord. As followers of Christ, every Christian is called to follow in the footsteps of the Lord. While hanging on the Cross by three nails, Jesus forgave his tormenters, and prayed to the Father saying, “Father, forgive them; for they do not know what they are doing” (Luke 23:34).

When we forgive and pray for those who persecute us, we not only create the opportunity to save a soul, but we are also indirectly seeking the grace to love that person. Prayer not only can change the other person, but it can also change us. Bit by bit we grow closer to Jesus. In the Book of Job, after Job lost everything, he raised his eyes to the Lord and blessed the Lord, while his wife saw all the hurt caused due to the loss and cursed God. Job put his focus on God and not on his loss and hurt. Rather than looking at the hurt caused by our enemies, if we look to the Lord, we will see how the Lord is molding each one of us through the sufferings we undergo.

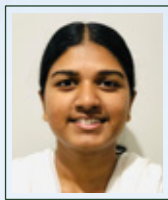
We read in the Bible that Jesus is seated at the right hand of the Father. But the first martyr of the Catholic Church, St Stephen, had the privilege of seeing the Lord standing at the right hand of the Father when he forgave those who were stoning him. From now on how about fasting from hate and feasting on love towards our enemies!



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# MY STAIRWAY TO HEAVEN



*Jeeyol Thomas,  
a teenager from  
Australia, shares how  
she discovered a true  
friend in life.*

As a child born into a Catholic Indian household, prayer, going to Church, and attending yearly parish retreats were all part of my routine. However, these had no real importance in my life. During Mass, I was busy looking for my friends or thinking up random scenarios. In my heart, I always put other things above Jesus and this led to sadness and failure in my studies and social life. I had attended a retreat by AFCM ministries,

SOE (School of Evangelisation) a couple of years ago, but the fire I had received then, slowly died down as worldly thoughts took hold of my mind and body. Ironically, everyone around me treated me like a “holy child”, so I thought to myself that since they say that, then I must be, because I was a person that took other people’s opinions of me seriously. Around May 2019, I found out that Fr Soji Olikkal, (Director of Sehion Ministries, UK) was coming to Australia to conduct a family retreat called, ‘Awake Australia’. At



first, I was not so interested, but when I found out that my friend was going, a smile instantly came over my face.

The retreat was a huge success. I received the gift of tongues during Adoration. I felt the Holy Spirit take hold of my tongue as I screamed out praises in languages I couldn't even understand, while tears streamed uncontrollably down my face. From the moment we left the venue the only thought that possessed my mind was, "I want to be a minister like the people who helped me find the true living Jesus within my heart." As weeks and months went by, I felt dryness and an isolated feeling within my spiritual life. I felt as though I was moving further away from Jesus. As a 13-year-old who had just met the powerful creator and saviour, I thought of Jesus as a king who I can only praise and worship. However, little did I know He was the one true friend who I had, who has always been there for me, guiding me to my Father in Heaven.

### Finding Jesus

Every child when transitioning to high school is nervous and worried. Luckily for me, I had received the comfort of the Holy Spirit, the blessings of my dear parents and I always praised Jesus within my heart. As high school took a grip onto me, I felt myself drifting away from Jesus the one person, who truly cared and loved me, more than my family, friends or social media could ever. It was only during the lockdown due to COVID-19 that I

realized that my friend Jesus, the one who would never abandon me even though I am unworthy, was holding me within the palm of His hands. How did I find out?

"I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."

[John 14:6]

### My One True Friend

Well, in Isaiah 49:16 scripture tells us, "See, I have written your name upon the palms of my hands; your walls are ever before me." This means that Jesus had always been with me, guiding me in my studies and daily life even when I had neglected His presence. If He loved me so much as to die on the cross for me, and then even when I continued to ignore His love for me, He still loved me, then why could I not do the same for Him? I found my answer a year later while listening to a spiritual talk by Fr Xavier Khan Vattayil. He was talking about giving ourselves to Jesus, in other words, surrendering our lives and believing that He will take care of the rest if we surrender all to him. I found that everything I did without

surrendering myself to God never ended in happiness or success. Instead, I was filled either with guilt or sadness, especially in my studies. A few days later while reading the Bible as a family, I read Galatians 2:19-20 - "I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me." Reading this verse was a turning point in life as I had just found the one true reason why I have been sent to earth.

### Final Destination

The Bible verse I received that day taught me that the only way I can reach my final goal – Heaven - is by laying down my life and following Him. Until now, all I craved for was someone I could lean on and share my worries with, but all the while, Jesus was there, calling me and pleading with me to come back to Him.

When I look back at the times I fully surrendered myself, He was there to accept me even though I'm a sinner, unworthy to even call His name. That was when I had the biggest realization of my life: Jesus is my stairway to Heaven. He is the one who will lead me to my Father just as it says in John 14:6. One thing I pray and ask for Mother Mary's intercession is for others to realize just as I've realized that Jesus is our one true friend and our only stairway to Heaven.



# LIFE is LOVE & LOVE is GOD



*Sr Lini Sheeja, MSC, from India, shares an incident from her life which inspired her to carry the baton of hope to the hopeless.*

**G**od wrote my life as a gift-story when He formed me in my mother's womb; He wrote my life as a consecration-story when He called me to serve in His vineyard; He wrote my life as a passionate adventure-story when He called me to be a Social Worker in reaching out to the unreached, in serving the vulnerable and the marginalized, and He wrote my life as a love-story through His faithfulness and accompaniment, as He takes care of me every second of my journey. Now, it's my turn to write the love story of my God the Creator, Redeemer and Sanctifier for His being and His doing in my life.

## God Experience

In 2014, I was doing a spirituality course as preparation for my final commitment. One day a professor asked us in the class whether any of us ever had a 'God-Experience'. As I was seated in the first row, I raised my hand and said that I had. The priest asked me to

share my experience. So, with conviction, I got up and said, "This morning I'm alive and that's my God-Experience". When you walk in the light of the Lord, when you move with the awareness of God, every second of your life becomes a 'God-Experience'. We do not need great miracles to take

place to know that our God is present with us for we have been created by the God who sent His only Son to become one like us and we have been redeemed by the God who went to Calvary and stretched out His hands on the Cross saying, "I love you this much".



## Footprints on the Sand

What does it mean to have a personal relationship with God? It just means loving Him, nothing else. St Augustine says, "Love God and do whatever you please". When you are filled with His love, you will do only good; for He who loves you is all good. My personal relationship with God is the conviction I have of His love and His presence, which enables me to say to myself, "God knows best". Personal relationship with God is to kneel humbly before Him saying 'Yes' to all His plans for our lives.

We follow a God who is ever faithful to us; He is not a God who watch us from a distance, but He is a God who is involved in our being and every one of our doings. He walks with us in our joys and carries us in our lonely and desperate moments, as told in the famous 'Footprints' poem. In the latter part of the poem when the Lord is asked, 'I don't understand why, when I needed You the most, You left me alone.' He whispered, "My precious child, I love you and will never leave you, never, ever, during your trials and testing. When you saw only one set of footprints, it was then that I carried you." This beautiful poem tells us that 'life is love and love is God'.

## Fire for God

I wish to put down in writing an unforgettable experience while working with abandoned women, which was part of the services we offer. In 2007, during the course of our novitiate, we were sent on a 15-day exposure


program to BOSCO (A Non-Governmental Organization working with the Young at Risk). One evening after our supper we received a call from someone in the neighborhood about an abandoned lady lying on the street. I immediately went with another novice to rescue the lady, hoping to place her in Mother Teresa Sisters' Old Age Home at Yelahanka, Bengaluru for shelter and further care. When we reached the spot, we found the lady. She was looking around for helping hands to save her. She was stinking and no one wanted to approach her. Gazing into her eyes I was heartbroken and speechless.

As I held her hands, I was moved to tears. I could understand her unshared feelings through her tears. "Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me" (Matthew 25:40). We were told by the people around that she had nobody and her life was spent on the streets, begging. We carried her with gentle love, placed her in our vehicle and went to the police station. The kind-hearted police attended to us immediately and did all the necessary procedures. It was 11 pm when we reached the old age home, carried the lady inside, gave her a shower, food, thanked the Sisters and left the place. On the way back to BOSCO I was disturbed and spent a sleepless night thinking of the plight of the woman.



**She was stinking, and no one wanted to approach her. Gazing into her eyes I was heartbroken and speechless.**

## Encounter God in the Poor and Needy

That sleepless night led me to walk through slums to see the face of God in their sufferings. The same sleepless night led me to pick up vulnerable children from slums – orphans and needy children - and help them get an education in good schools. The same sleepless night led me to carry the light of hope to the dark cells of prisons. I realized that one doesn't need to have a huge bank balance to encounter God in the poor and do something for them. All that we require is total faith in God and a fire for Him in our heart. He will make a way for us. Dear readers, we have no time to grieve over anything. This pandemic has taught us to be prepared to depart from this world. Be a servant, be humble, know God's will for you and let your hands be generous to the needy! Be a blessing! Let your inner fire burn strongly! 



# I AM NOT AN ORPHAN

*Matilda Dominic, from Birmingham, UK, asserts that we are not alone in this journey of life.*

Sitting on my bed one night, with tears in my eyes and thinking about my sufferings, I felt that no one would understand the pain I was going through. Even though I had all my family around me, some kind of loneliness and sadness was slowly creeping into me. At this particular moment I was immediately inspired to read the Bible. As I opened the Bible, my eyes fell on the following verse: "I will not leave you orphaned, I am coming to you" (John 14:18). I wiped away my tears and kept repeating this verse with my name in place of the word 'you'. Soon, I fell asleep and woke up afresh the next morning. All those depressing thoughts that had been haunting me the previous night had vanished!

## On the Brink of Collapse

My dear friends, you may have been in a situation like mine. Have you ever felt lonely or forsaken? Are you waiting for healing from an illness? Are you grieving the loss of a loved one? Maybe you are in a financial crisis or on the brink of collapse. Have you been misunderstood, although you were in the right? Are you on the verge of divorce or struggling to meet your family needs? As a

child, maybe you are worrying about your exams. You may be in an unhealthy relationship; maybe you have been accused of something you have not done, or you are undergoing a punishment for being guilty. Maybe you have been betrayed by someone close to you and you are not able to console yourself or you may be living in some sort of fear.

## 24/7 Helper

In these moments of crisis, the good news is that we have a Helper who is with us 24 hours, seven days a week. He is the Holy Spirit, the Third Person of the Holy Trinity, consubstantial with the Father and The Son and with the Father and the Son He is worshipped and glorified. Jesus promises this Holy Spirit as quoted in John 14:26, "But the Advocate the Holy Spirit whom the Father will send in my name will teach you everything and remind you of all that I have said to you. "Yes, my friends, the Holy Spirit will teach and guide us.

The Holy Spirit is often referred to as the Advocate, the Paraclete, Helper, Consoler, Comforter, Counsellor and the Spirit of Truth. When we call on Him, He will bring Jesus and the Father to us. In whatever situation we are in, Jesus says






again in John 16:13, "when the Spirit of Truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth, for he will not speak on his own, but will speak whatever he hears, and he will declare to you the things that are to come."

**"I WILL NOT  
LEAVE YOU  
ORPHANED,  
I AM COMING  
TO YOU."  
( JOHN 14:18 )**

### Impartial

The Holy Spirit is totally impartial. He comes to the rich and the poor, the weak and the strong, the saint and the sinner, the healthy and the sick, to those despairing and in hopeless situations, to those unable to communicate with others, and to those who are isolated and depressed. In fact, the Holy Spirit helps us in every situation. Sometimes when we cannot pray, the Holy Spirit helps us even to pray. "Likewise, the Spirit helps us in our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with sighs too deep for words. And he who searches the hearts of men knows what is in the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God." (Romans 8:26-27).


My dear friends let me remind you once again that you are not orphans but children of God. "All who are led by the spirit of God are children of God" (Romans 8:14). I encourage each one of you to call out to this Holy Spirit with faith, no matter what your situation is, I assure you that He will never fail you. 

# PLACES FROM THE BIBLE

By Stacey Illikal from USA

## SHILOH

Shiloh is situated north of Bethel and south of Lebonah in the hill country of Ephraim. The word Shiloh is used 32 times in the Old Testament and comes from the word Shala, which means "to be at ease." The first mention of Shiloh is found in Genesis 49:10 as Jacob is giving blessings to each of his sons. Here, Jacob is referring to a person who would bring peace and tranquility. Not only was Shiloh a promise of our mighty Savior, but it was also a place. When it was built, it was located a little northeast of the center of Ephraim.

In the 11<sup>th</sup> century BC, the Ark of the Covenant was built and rested in the city of Shiloh. It rested here for 3 centuries where the Israelites would come to celebrate feasts and make peace offerings. This was also the central location where the land was divided up into the 12 sections for the 12 tribes (Joshua 18). And this was the background for Hannah when she visited the tabernacle to pour out her heart to God, begging Him for a child, whom God gave her as it says in 1 Samuel 1:1-28. The hearts of God's people grew cold, and they turned their backs on God. God handed them over to the Philistines and the Ark was then captured by the Philistines. God then left His dwelling place, "He abandoned the dwelling place at Shiloh, the tent which He had pitched among men, and gave up His strength to captivity and His glory into the hand of the adversary," Psalm 78:60-61. The Ark was captured, and the city was destroyed (1 Samuel 4:10-11). Today, there is no remains of Shiloh. 



# LIFE IS A GIFT

A couple of years ago, I happened to watch a movie about a young socialite from an aristocratic family. He was leading a pompous life, but then meets with a terrible car accident and becomes paralyzed from neck down. Later he falls in love with the young lady who was hired to take care of him. She brings joy and love back to his life. Sadly, the guy decides to resort to assisted suicide to end his life as he did not want to become a burden to society, especially his loved ones!!

Though it was just a movie, unfortunately, this is a reality that is happening a lot in our society these days. People tend to forget the purpose of our lives. We tend to forget that it is a gift from God and that we are called to preserve this gift and make it fruitful.

As many governments in different parts of the world have already passed or are in the process of passing legislature in favor of euthanasia or assisted suicide, we need to understand what Sacred Scripture and the Catholic Church teaches about life and euthanasia in particular.

## Stewards of Life

In Genesis we read, “God created mankind in his image” (Genesis 1:27). He carefully made me in my mother’s womb in His own likeness. For this reason, the Catechism of the Catholic Church says, “Everyone is responsible for his life before God who has given it to him. It is God who remains the sovereign Master of life. We are obliged to accept life gratefully and preserve it for his honor and the salvation of our souls. We are stewards, not owners, of the life God has entrusted to us. It is not ours to dispose of.” (CCC 2280)

## What is Euthanasia?

Euthanasia in ancient times meant, ‘easy death’ without severe suffering. In modern times, the word is used in a particular sense to mean ‘mercy killing’ for the purpose of putting an end to suffering. In reality, it is a misnomer because there is no mercy in killing someone. Due to the grave concern posed by this act against Divine Law and the dignity of human life, the Catholic Church published a statement called “Declaration on Euthanasia”



*Geenu Kunnengode from Chicago, USA, shares her thoughts on Euthanasia.*





in 1980. In that document, euthanasia is referred to as an action or omission which willfully causes death, in order to put an end to all suffering. In other words, euthanasia involves the purposeful termination of life by direct action, such as lethal injection, or by an omission of food, such as by starvation or dehydration. "It is necessary to state firmly once more that nothing and no one can in any way permit the killing of an innocent human being, whether a fetus or an embryo, an infant or an adult, an old person, or one suffering from an incurable disease, or a person who is dying. Furthermore, no one is permitted to ask for this act of killing, either for himself or herself or for another person entrusted to his or her care, nor can he or she consent to it, either explicitly or implicitly; nor can any authority legitimately recommend or permit such an action. For it is a question of the violation of the divine law, an offense against the dignity of the human person, a crime against life, and an attack on humanity" (Declaration on Euthanasia).

However, that doesn't mean the Church wants us to endure all suffering. In fact we are to pursue the medical advancements, ordinary or extra ordinary, that will alleviate the suffering, enabling us to lead a fruitful life. When we resort to these measures the focus should be on whether the treatment provides reasonable hope of benefit to the patient and the

degree of burden it is to the patient and his family. One should weigh the proportion of pain and suffering against the amount of good to be done. If at some point, death is imminent and the benefit of continuing certain treatments involve burdensome and precarious prolongation of life, it is permitted in conscience to refuse treatment, provided normal care of the sick person is not interrupted. The pleas of gravely ill people who sometimes ask for death should not be implied as a true desire for euthanasia; in fact it is mostly a plea for help and love. What a sick person needs, besides medical care, is love, the human and supernatural warmth from his or her loved ones.

**"Suffering, especially suffering during the last moments of life, has a special place in God's saving plan; it is in fact a sharing in Christ's passion and a union with the redeeming sacrifice which He offered in obedience to the Father's will."**


(Declaration on Euthanasia)

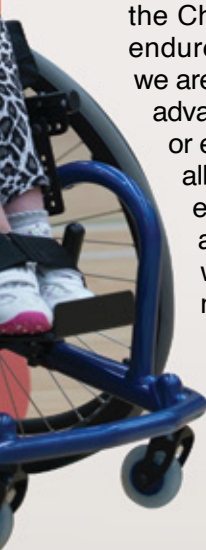
### Redemptive Suffering

I have a friend whose two year old grandson was diagnosed with Leukemia. When I heard

the heart-breaking news, I didn't know how to console her initially. I scrambled for words, but in my heart I was crying out to the Lord for that family. As the months passed by, I witnessed how that little angel underwent all the painful procedures with his characteristic smile and in fact brought together a community of friends and family who stood by them in their pain. As human beings we all face suffering at some point in our life; it could be mental, emotional or physical. But we have to understand that God will not let us suffer beyond what we can handle. He is always there in our swaying boats and has given us the greatest example. He endured the passion and death to give us salvation. We are called to unite our suffering with that of Christ. Venerable Fulton J Sheen once said, "Pain without Christ is suffering; pain with Christ is sacrifice."

### Temporary Abode

The Catechism teaches us that we are created to know God, love Him and to serve Him. At the end of our earthly life, we are meant to live in eternity as sons and daughters of our Heavenly Father. Though our earthly abode, meaning our body, might deteriorate and disintegrate over the course of our life, the soul that has been implanted in us by God should always stay healthy. Sometimes sufferings can be a wakeup call to that effect. "The God of all grace who called you to his eternal glory through Christ Jesus will himself restore, confirm, strengthen, and establish you after you have suffered a little." (1 Peter 5:10). 





# ENCOUNTER AT THE NILGIRIS



*Michelle Mina Joseph, is a grade 10 student from Ottawa, Canada. Hailing from Kerala, India below is a copy of her winning submission to the Knights of Columbus Catholic Citizenship essay competition.*



**A**fter four minutes without oxygen, brain damage occurs; after four to six minutes, a life can be lost. I went without breathing for more than two minutes. I could have breathed my last that day if God had not been by my side. On that day my family truly experienced the meaning of trusting in God. My parents saw how God fills us with strength when we are drained and gives us hope when we are in despair.

To place your life in God's hands, to trust Him is a hard task, but placing someone else's life there is almost impossible. That's what my family thought until they had to put me in His hands. My mother, my grandparents and I were on our way home from a wedding. We were about to enter a route with around 14 hairpin bends, through the beautiful Nilgiris mountains in southern India. We were thirteen minutes behind schedule as there was a lot of traffic, and my family was complaining relentlessly about the inconvenience.

Suddenly my grandma noticed that I was not breathing and had almost turned blue. She got everyone's attention to this emergency and they all jumped out of the car. My mom cried out to Heaven saying, "Give me back my child!" "This poor soul cried, and was heard by the Lord, and was saved from every trouble" (Psalm 34:6).

The passers - by noticed us and gave us directions to the nearest hospital. We arrived at the hospital just before the pediatrician left. If we had arrived even one minute later, all the hospital staff would have finished their shift and gone home. My family had put all their faith and trust in God as the situation was out of their hands. The traffic jam, which we had

relentlessly complained about, had saved us from being stuck in the mountains, far away from civilization, where we wouldn't have made it to the hospital in time. "For surely I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord, plans for your welfare and not for harm, to give you a future with hope" (Jeremiah 29:11).

**THE TRAFFIC JAM  
WHICH WE HAD  
RELENTLESSLY  
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HOSPITAL IN TIME.**

In the well-known story of Abraham's ultimate sacrifice, we hear for the first time God's promise to us, "God will provide" — a testament to Abraham's unshakable faith in God. On the ghat routes of the Nilgiris, God reaffirmed this promise through His life-giving breath that He instilled in me, that breath was given to me through the hospital medical team. We arrived just before the pediatrician and staff were due to leave for the day. God's gentle hand in the events that played out that day showed us that only God has the final say of what does or doesn't happen. So why not just put your trust in Him? Psalm 55:22 says, "Cast your burden on the Lord, and he will sustain you; he

will never permit the righteous to be moved."

My parents and relatives experienced that day a strength and feeling of hope that can only come from the Almighty God. If one noticed their child had not taken a breath for over two minutes, they might start losing all hope and courage to believe that the child could be saved. My family received a fulfilling sense of hope and an abundance of strength that can only come from above. My mother almost thought it was too late for me to be saved; after all, a child can only go so long without oxygen entering their lungs, but suddenly she received a sudden burst of strength that helped her cry out to Heaven for mercy, a strength that allowed her to ask every single car passing by for the directions to the nearest hospital. A life-giving hope was breathed into her that helped her stay strong and courageous knowing that God would save her child, and God provided. The child she almost lost 15 years ago is now healthy and well and writing this testimony.

This is my life experience; an experience that was shared by my entire family and one that shook us to the core. We will always remember that day as a turning point in our faith. We experienced what it means to trust in God, to place a life in His hands. We experienced the abiding love of God - that He will never desert you; that He will provide hope in the darkest hour and strength in the most trying times. Isaiah 43:2 says, "When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you; when you walk through fire you shall not be burned, and the flame shall not consume you."



# MEET THE POPE

THIRD POPE

**POPE ANACLETUS**



By Henoch Sony,  
Luton, UK

## EARLY LIFE

Pope Anacletus also known as Pope Cletus was born around 25 AD in Athens, Greece. His name means "one who is called". He was the third Bishop of Rome. Anacletus knew Peter and had a close working relationship with him. It was Peter who ordained Anacletus as a priest which led to him later becoming a Pope.

## PAPACY

Anacletus succeeded to the papal position after the death of St Linus. He was traditionally thought to be a Roman who served as Pope for a period of twelve years. According to the Annuario Pontificio, "the dates of the start and end of the pontificate are uncertain for the first two centuries", but records list that his papacy lasted between 77 to 88 A.D.

## LATER LIFE AND CONTRIBUTION TO THE CHURCH

During his Papacy he established approximately twenty-five parishes in Rome. He assigned Bishops and others to control these parishes. To ensure that bishops had the necessary experience, Anacletus ordered that at least three current bishops be present when a bishop took his orders. He established a Christian community in Ruvo where he baptized Christian followers in secret. He also established a small chapel near the burial site of St Peter and St Linus which is the site of today's Basilica of St Peter.

## LEGACY

St Anacletus is honored a saint in both the Christian Orthodox and Catholic Church. He died as a martyr during the reign of Emperor Domitian. Exact date of his death is not known. His feast day is April 26<sup>th</sup>.



Lord,  
 In every blade of grass,  
 In every shimmering dew drop,  
 In every golden sunray...  
 ... I see your splendor  
 In every cry of hunger,  
 In every fear of despair,  
 In every suffering borne silently...  
 ... I perceive your call  
 In every look of compassion,  
 In every kind word spoken,  
 In every charity done quietly...  
 ...I recognise your will being done.

*Poem by Thomas Makil*

# CROSS WORD



*By Heinz Sony,  
Luton, UK*



## Down

1. Blessed are the \_\_\_\_\_ for they shall be called the children of God.
2. Blessed are those who are \_\_\_\_\_ because of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
7. Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall \_\_\_\_\_ God.
9. Which physician kept a record of the Sermon on the Mount?
10. Blessed are the poor in \_\_\_\_\_ for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

## Across

3. Which apostle recorded the Sermon on the Mount?
4. Blessed are the \_\_\_\_\_ for they shall inherit the earth.
5. Blessed are they that mourn for they shall be \_\_\_\_\_.
6. Blessed are they who do hunger and thirst after \_\_\_\_\_ for they shall be filled.
8. \_\_\_\_\_ are the merciful for they shall obtain mercy.

# SERVING THE ONE WHO TAUGHT US TO SERVE



*Brian Johnny, from Miami, Florida, shares the inspiration behind his decision to become an altar server.*



**I**n the liturgy, you are much more than simple ‘helpers of the parish priest.’ Above all, you are servers of Jesus Christ, of the eternal High Priest. Thus, you, altar servers, are called in particular to be young friends of Jesus.” -St John Paul II

It was after reading this quote by St John Paul II that I realized the importance of being an altar server. Prior to reading this quote by St John Paul II, my parents were often the reason why I would serve at the altar. When my parents initially presented the idea that I should be an altar server, I despised the thought. I now not only had to go to church on Sundays but on Fridays as well for training (back

in 2014). When I saw my parents smiling while I was serving on the altar, I often did it just to gratify them and make them proud.

**“For they will be made holy who observe holy things in holiness, and those who have been taught them will find a defence.”**

**(Wisdom 6:10)**

However, after attending a retreat I understood that my underlying reason to serve

was not based on good motives. Wanting to know more, through google I searched other people’s experience of serving at the altar. Upon my quest for more knowledge about altar serving, I randomly found the quote from St John Paul II, stated above. After reading the quote, I recognized that as an altar server, I was not merely an individual who chanted prayers, but a server of Christ Himself.

Since then, I decided to serve with a clean heart and with pure intentions. I began to pray before each Holy Mass and offered each Holy Mass for a special intention. As I served more frequently, Jesus himself





## Tips for Altar Servers

- ▶ **Prepare yourself the evening before Mass in prayer.**
- ▶ **Wear your very best to church.**
- ▶ **Avoid all unnecessary usage of social media- TV, ipad, phone, computer.**
- ▶ **Sleep early after the family prayers the evening before.**
- ▶ **Clean yourself.**
- ▶ **Pray.**
- ▶ **Cleanse yourself with holy water as you enter the church because Jesus is awaiting you.**
- ▶ **Enter the sacristy with reverence.**

slowly molded my heart into loving the liturgy and placing the Holy Mass at the center of my life. As an altar server, I truly felt that I was offering a significant contribution to the liturgy. Focusing my attention closer on the priest and the various duties I had to carry out, enabled me to further grasp the meaning of the Holy Mass and its importance in our lives.

During the period of COVID-19, I was the only altar server who was serving on both Fridays and Sundays. One Friday after an exhausting day in my senior year in school, I was very stressed and anxious, but while serving at Mass, I truly felt God's love and

his gentle embrace. I offered the Holy Mass for my personal intentions, and I truly knew that God was healing me in the areas I prayed for. By just altar serving, I gained the ability to trust God completely, despite being in the midst of trials and tests. By devoting all my time for serving, and even serving some weekdays, God bestowed on me graces which allowed me to sustain myself thus far, especially in high school.

God's open invitation for me to serve at the altar is chief and important aspect of my faith journey. Nowadays, kids often refrain from serving on

the altar because of the various tasks required. Nevertheless, being an altar server for my parish allowed me to form a close relationship with Jesus and have an open connection to God. What started out as a push from my parents and motivation stemming from pleasure, turned out to be the source of nourishment and strength for my faith. As I journey on to college, my experience of altar serving will allow me to serve others just as Christ Himself served us here on earth. The experience of standing in the presence of God during Holy Mass will always remain vivid and powerful in my heart.





## WHAT CAN WE LEARN FROM SAINT JOSEPH?



*Felius Perveiz Nawab,  
from Pakistan, dwells  
on the character of St  
Joseph as a role model  
to be emulated by  
Christians.*

About a hundred and fifty years ago, Pope Pius IX proclaimed Saint Joseph as the patron of the Universal Church. It was a moment of immense significance for the Catholic Church as it encouraged the faithful to ponder on and appreciate the role of St Joseph in God's plan of salvation. While today many titles, feasts and devotions are attributed to the foster father of our Lord, last year, on December 8<sup>th</sup> 2020,

Pope Francis formally initiated the Year of Saint Joseph to commemorate the 150-year-old declaration. As we journey through this year, let us consider a few aspects of Saint Joseph's life and character, and reflect on what we can learn from them.

### **The Silent Saint**

The Gospels present Joseph as a silent individual. Whether it is providing for Mary and Jesus, taking them to Egypt,

protecting them from Herod or going to Nazareth, he executes all his duties in silence. He's always working in a hushed manner in the background while performing the most essential of tasks. Those individuals who do great things without drawing attention to themselves, can relate to him.

Joseph's silent nature can teach us a lot about humility, as his greatness lies in his meekness. It teaches us to work for God's kingdom, magnifying not ourselves, but Jesus Christ.

Joseph's character also inculcates us to respect and cherish the silent and humble people in our lives. There are always family members and friends in our lives who may not often verbalize their love for us but demonstrate it through their actions. We must revere them, as lack of words does not mean lack of love. Moreover, as we are in the midst of a pandemic and most of us are or were locked up in our houses for a long time, let us acknowledge all the essential workers, who like Joseph, keep on working in the background to ensure that everything runs smoothly.

### **An Obedient Man Who Trusted in God**

In the Bible we see many holy men and women of God who initially question the Lord and even at certain times wrestle with their faith when acquainted with a revelation. Zechariah, Jeremiah, Barak, Sarah, Gideon and Moses are but a few examples. Jonah even



tried to run away from God. However, in Joseph's case, we witness an unparalleled obedience. When the angel of the Lord instructs him to take Mary as his wife, he obeys without questioning. When the angel instructs him to escape to Egypt, he wakes up, obeys immediately and leaves Bethlehem with the Holy Family in the middle of the night.

We too, often struggle with our faith and with obedience. In such burdensome times, we should always remember the example of Joseph. Leaving everything behind, escaping to Egypt, living there as a foreigner and returning back years later to a new life in Nazareth was undoubtedly a daunting task for him. Thousands of questions must have popped up in his mind. Where will I live? What will I do? How will I feed my wife and son? Yet he trusted in God's plan amidst all the difficulties and allowed God to lead him. He allowed God's will and not his own to be done in his life. We see the same trait of trust in Jesus, where He trusts in God and shows his obedience by selflessly praying for God's will to be done and not His own.

### **A Compassionate, Courageous and Resourceful Man**

The Gospel according to Matthew introduces us to Joseph in its first chapter. He is engaged to Mary and finds out that she is already with child. He doesn't know the bigger picture yet and feels wronged. However, instead of being bitter, vengeful and vindictive, we see him being

compassionate, and planning to leave her privately instead of disgracing her publicly. His example catechizes us to be forgiving and compassionate towards those whom we perceive to have ill-treated us, and to protect their dignity and secrets.


Saint Joseph displays immense courage in the Gospels; the most courageous act being to accept God's plan and undertaking - the responsibility of being the earthly father of Christ. Joseph does whatever it takes to protect his family. He whisks the holy family off to Egypt and with the help of God's angel outsmarts King Herod and his armies.

His example teaches us to be courageous and to show strength even in times of fear and uncertainty. Furthermore, wherever he takes his family, he provides food, shelter and nourishment for them despite being a simple carpenter. Not only was he a righteous, compassionate and courageous man, he was also a resourceful individual too.

### **The Loving and Responsible Father**

In the Bible we see Joseph acting as a loving father to our Lord. Along with being the earthly protector and provider for Mary and Jesus, Joseph fulfills all the responsibilities of a father. He names Jesus, gets Him circumcised according to the law, presents Him in the temple and dedicates Him to God. Furthermore, in Joseph we witness a tender hearted and concerned father who searches the entire city of Jerusalem for three days to find his lost son.

While much is written about Christ's public life, most of his hidden, formative years were spent with Mary and Joseph. We can speculate that it was Joseph who saw, held and kissed baby Jesus for the first time after Mary when he was born. It was Joseph who would gently hold Christ's hand and take Him through the streets of Egypt, to the synagogues of Nazareth and to the temple in Jerusalem. It was Joseph who later trained Jesus to be a carpenter and it was Joseph who instilled values, especially that of obedience, into Jesus when He was growing up.



**He allowed  
God's will be  
done in his  
life and not  
his own.**

In his apostolic letter, *Patris Corde*, His Holiness Pope Francis observes, "In Joseph, Jesus saw the tender love of God." As we journey through the year of St Joseph, let us contemplate on his life, his struggles, his character, his obedience and his fatherhood. Let us follow his example and devote our lives to God's plan. Saint Joseph, patron and protector of the Universal Church, pray for us!





# ONGOING DISCERNMENT



*Rev Fr William C Frie, from USA, reflects on one of the significant contributions of St Ignatius of Loyola to the Catholic Church.*

## Courageous Knight

Iñigo de Loyola was born in 1491 in the Basque province of Northern Spain. As Luis Gonçalves de Camara, who dictated part of the life of St Ignatius from the lips of Ignatius himself, wrote: “up to

his twenty-sixth year, Ignatius was a man given to worldly vanities and having a vain and overpowering desire to gain renown, he found special delight in the exercise of arms.” Eventually, Ignatius, now a knight, found himself, around the age of thirty, defending the fortress of the town of Pamplona against the French, who claimed the territory as their own against Spain. Though the Spanish were outnumbered, and the commander of the Spanish forces desired to surrender, Ignatius convinced the men to fight on for the honour of Spain. During the battle, a cannonball struck Ignatius, shattering one of his legs and wounding the other. Admiring Ignatius for

his courage, the French soldiers, rather than throwing him into prison, carried Ignatius back to his home in Loyola where he could recuperate.

## Conversion

While Ignatius — after having his shattered leg set twice and undergoing a painful operation — spent time resting, God was hard at work. Since Ignatius was an avid reader, and because he was rather bored during his time of recovery, he asked for books to help pass the time. The only two books that could be found in the castle of Loyola were Rudolph of Saxony’s Life of Christ and James of Voragine’s Flos Sanctorum (a book on the lives of the saints). By frequent reading of these books, Ignatius



began undergoing a profound change. “Setting his reading aside, Ignatius sometimes paused to think about the things he had read, and at other times he thought of the worldly things that had formerly occupied his mind.”

Among these worldly thoughts, one occupied his mind most often. This was about what he would achieve in the service of a certain lady and all of the many words that he would speak to her and the deeds that he would perform for her. “Our Lord, nevertheless, came to Ignatius’ aid, bringing it about that these thoughts were followed by others arising from his reading. While reading the life of our Lord and those of the saints, he used to pause and meditate, reasoning with himself: ‘What if I were to do what Saint Francis did, or to do what Saint Dominic did?’” Ignatius would, thus, consider all the many good deeds he would do, and do with significant ease.

## Enlightenment

After these thoughts, though, Ignatius would return to considering worldly thoughts, and he dwelt on them for quite some time. Soon, Ignatius noticed an important difference:

When he thought of worldly matters, he found much delight; but after growing weary and dismissing them, he found that he was dry and unhappy. But when he thought of going barefoot to Jerusalem and eating nothing but herbs and of imitating the saints in all the austerities they practiced, he not only found consolation in these thoughts, but even after they had left him he remained happy and joyful. He did not consider, nor did he stop to

examine this difference until one day his eyes were partially opened, and he began to wonder at this difference and to reflect upon it. From experience he knew that some thoughts left him sad while others made him happy, and little by little he came to perceive the different spirits that were moving him; one coming from the devil, the other coming from God.

**WHILE READING THE  
LIFE OF OUR LORD AND  
THOSE OF THE SAINTS,  
HE USED TO PAUSE AND  
MEDITATE, REASONING  
WITH HIMSELF: ‘WHAT  
IF I WERE TO DO WHAT  
SAINT FRANCIS DID,  
OR TO DO WHAT SAINT  
DOMINIC DID?’**

## Journaling his Experience

From this initial conversion experience, Ignatius grew more accustomed to the ways in which these different spirits worked. He decided to begin a journal in which he could write his newfound insights about the different spirits. This journal would eventually develop into a manual that would help him lead others into a deeper knowledge of the spiritual life, a work that Ignatius eventually named the Spiritual Exercises. Since its approval in 1548, the Spiritual Exercises of St Ignatius has helped countless numbers of men and women grow in their experience and knowledge of God and continues to do so even today.

One of the themes of the Spiritual Exercises consists of a distinctive and systematically worked-out doctrine on the subject of decision-making. While this doctrine can be found in the development of the Exercises as a whole, a particular section in which decision-making is explicitly discussed is in the Second Week of the exercises, in which Ignatius refers to decision-making as making a choice, or an election. Elections may be about one’s way of life, or vocation, about other important decisions, or about one’s decision to follow Jesus more seriously or fervently. The central feature of Ignatius’ discussion on elections is the ‘times of election’, in which he distinguishes three signs, or kinds of evidence, by which God manifests His will.

There are many excellent commentaries written on the three times of election (such as Timothy Gallagher’s *A Handbook for Spiritual Directors*) which present each time of election in greater detail and offer more helpful examples of situations in which the three times of election may be utilized — something for which the space of this article does not allow. The reader of this article, too, may decide to put Ignatius’ three times of election into practice in his or her own life, at least, the second and third times of election, as the first time of election is a gift given by God to whom He freely chooses, in order to more easily discern the will of God and to do it, so as, then, to increase His very glory. St Ignatius of Loyola, pray for us.



# FROM JASMINE TO JESUS

*Molly Mathew from Houston, USA, encourages the readers to praise God in every creation.*



One morning last month, I was rushing out to work. As I opened my front door, I saw that my little Jasmine plant had bloomed like a new bride and was filled with fresh white beautiful flowers. This sight boosted my mind with positive energy. The gentle breeze carried the aroma of the flowers all around the surrounding area. My mind and heart arose with fresh dreams and thoughts. I took a picture of the beautiful Jasmine flowers on my phone. While I was driving to my workplace, I was praising and thanking God for His providence – for nature, sunshine, and for giving me a thankful heart to enjoy all these. “Bless the Lord, all his works, in all places of His dominion; Bless the Lord, O my soul!” (Psalm 103:22).

During my lunch break, I was enjoying the picture I had taken earlier that

day. Suddenly this thought came as a whisper into my mind: “Enjoy the fragrance of Jasmine; experience the fragrance of Jesus.” As my mind prompted me, I forwarded this picture with this quote to all my friends. I am sure when they read it, they would be in one way, experiencing the fragrance of Jesus. I thought that this would be a simple way to spread the Gospel and open a channel to search and experience God’s love.

I urge everyone to seek and find the treasures hidden in each simple thing around us, maybe in nature – in the trees or in the birds. Let us open our eyes wide to see, open ears to hear the singing of birds and thus to give all glory to our Creator who is worthy to be glorified. Let us enjoy and experience the fragrance of Jesus while enjoying the fragrance of Jasmine!

Praise the Lord from the heavens; praise him in the heights!

Praise him, all his angels; praise him, all his hosts!

Praise him, sun and moon, praise him, all you shining stars!

Praise him, you highest heavens, and you waters above the heavens!

Let them praise the name of the Lord! For he commanded and they were created.

And he established them forever and ever; he gave a decree, and it shall not pass away.

Praise the Lord from the earth, you great sea creatures and all deeps,

fire and hail, snow and mist, stormy wind fulfilling his word!

Mountains and all hills, fruit trees and all cedars!

Beasts and all livestock, creeping things and flying birds!

Psalm 148:1-10



## CROSSWORD ANSWERS

Across : 3. Matthew 4. Meek 5. Comforted 6. Righteousness 8. Blessed  
Down : 1. Peacemakers 2. Persecuted 7. See 9. Luke 10. Spirit



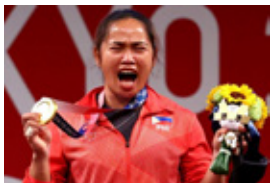
*"Although the life of a person is in a land full of thorns and weeds, there is always a space in which the good seed can grow. You have to trust God." Pope Francis*



## GLOBAL CATHOLIC NEWS

Compiled by Smitha George

### PHILIPPINE WEIGHTLIFTER CREDITS HER OLYMPIC SUCCESS TO HER FAITH



Japan: Hidilyn Diaz became the Philippines' first Olympic gold medal winner, set an Olympic record and thanked her friends who prayed the Miraculous Medal novena. After winning July 26<sup>th</sup>

the four-time Olympian praised God and lifted up Our Lady's Miraculous Medal from around her neck while repeatedly shouting "Thank You, Lord", "It is a sign of my faith to Mama Mary and Jesus Christ," she said.

### FIFTH CHINESE BISHOP ORDAINED WITH GOVERNMENT, PAPAL APPROVAL



China: The fifth Chinese bishop was appointed under the terms of a Vatican-China agreement signed in 2018 and renewed in 2020. Father Anthony Li Hui was ordained a bishop on July 28<sup>th</sup> in the cathedral of the Diocese of Pingliang, China. The Vatican-China provisional agreement outlines procedures for ensuring that Catholic bishops are elected by the Catholic community in China and approved by the pope before their ordinations and installations.

### MILWAUKEE DEACON TO EXPERIENCE ZERO-G AT 35,000 FEET



America: Deacon Gary Nosacek Archdiocese of Milwaukee, USA became the first ordained Catholic clergyman to experience zero gravity, or zero-g. The opportunity came with the Zero Gravity Corp. or Zero-G, the only US company certified by the Federal Aviation Administration to take the general public into the sky to experience what astronauts experience in Earth's orbit. On July 11, the world found him floating weightless at 35,000 feet wearing his clerical collar no less.



### POPE TO YOUTH: FOLLOW CHRIST WITH COURAGE AND JOY

Bosnia: Pope Francis send a message to the young people gathered at Mladifest, Medjugorje the annual international prayer meeting held in the first week of August. Entrusting them to the example of Mary, the Pope invited them to believe in the fullness and true happiness by giving oneself to God. The guiding theme of the youth festival in Medjugorje until August 6 was: "What must I do to inherit eternal life?" Mt 19:16-22. The Pope recalled that the young man recounted in the Gospels was "educated and very knowledgeable" and motivated with a "healthy restlessness that urged him to seek true happiness, life in its fullness."

## CATHOLIC UNIVERSITIES IN ARGENTINA CALL ON COURTS TO DEFEND THE UNBORN




Argentina: An organization of Catholic universities in Argentina has issued a declaration demanding that the legal system protect the unborn from the nation's abortion law, enacted less than a year ago. The Argentine Network of Catholic and Catholic Oriented Universities reaffirmed their identity "with the culture of life" and demanded that "the legal order protect human beings from conception to natural death." In the statement, the universities pointed out that the abortion law passed by the National Congress Dec. 30, 2020 is an "offense to the constitutional legal order" and to the "scientific foundations" of the humanity of the unborn child that were refuted during the legislative debate "with only ideological arguments."

Image Credit: [www.google.com](http://www.google.com)

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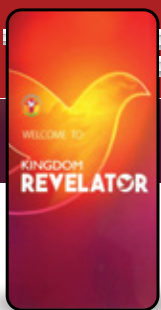
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And Mary  
said, My soul  
magnifies the  
Lord, and my  
spirit rejoices in  
God my Savior.

(Luke 1:46-47)

*“Never be afraid of loving the Blessed Virgin too much. You can never love her more than Jesus did.”* (Saint Maximilian Kolbe)



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