We remember those who served:

THOUGHTS ON MEMORIAL DAY AND OUR CATHOLIC FAITH

Each Issue Featuring

CATHOLIC NEWS
DAILY READINGS
LIVES OF THE SAINTS
DEVOTIONAL PRAYERS
SPIRITUAL TEXTS
PUZZLES
ACTIVITIES
May 22, 2020

Dear Parishioners and Readers,

Well, it is issue six of THE LANTERN. And once again we are replete with scripture, spiritual writings, lives of the saints, Catholic news, a pastor’s column, puzzles, trivia and and great photos. For those new to THE LANTERN welcome!

This issue’s cover features a photo of a Catholic Cemetery in Florida. In this photo, from the angle at which it was shot, gives a wonderfully juxtaposed view of the Cross of our Lord, and the flag of our nation — of His Glory, and ol’ Glory. This image serves to remind of the sacrifice made by those who served unto death in our armed forces, and puts their sacrifice in the context of the Sacrifice of our Lord.

So, this issue in the “Sightings” pages I will use images to pay tribute to those we remember on Memorial Day, especially in the context of our faith.

Back in the day, Memorial Day was known as Decoration Day (May 30), when the graves of our beloved dead who died in the service of the nation would decorated so as to beautify their graves and our memories. This Memorial Day, and in the days ahead, let’s spiritually decorate the memories of all of the faithful departed with spiritual bouquets of prayers, and in a special way, let us remember, prayerfully, with gratitude the deceased who made the ultimate sacrifice for us, here in these United States, so that we might enjoy the right to life to its fullest.

Enjoy this issue of THE LANTERN.

Yours in Christ,
Fr. James Lentini
Pastor
OF MEMORIAL DAY AND THOSE WHO GAVE ALL

A country singer, a Gospel Truth, and Battle Hymn of the Republic are mixed together for a Memorial Day reflection on our faith.

By Fr. James Lentini, Pastor

Singer Billy Ray Cyrus, a country singer with pop ambitions, topped the music charts for over a month in 1994 with the painful but memorable song, “Achy Breaky Heart.” Even those who loathed that song (and there are likely many), nonetheless still have it echoing somewhere in the recesses of their brain.

Though that song was that one hit wonder’s one big hit, on this Memorial Day, I want to invoke a lesser known song by Billy Ray Cyrus. A song which was a relative flop (peaking at #52 on the country chart), but possessing a powerful message, entitled, “Some Gave All.”

Remembering. “Some Gave All” always pops into my head whenever Memorial Day comes on the horizon, as it reminds us of exactly what it is that we are “morializing” on this special national holiday. The song’s lyrics tell of a conversation between the singer and a veteran named Sandy Cane, who spoke about the value of remembering those who gave their life in the service of their fellow man. The chorus of the song goes as follows:

All gave some, some gave All. 
Some stood through for the red, white and blue, and some had to fall.
And if you ever think of me, think of all your liberties -- and recall: Some gave all.

Those Who Gave All. On Memorial Day, we remember those men and women who “gave all” and made the ultimate sacrifice in the service of our nation. We remember their bravery, their commitment and their love of God and country. They may no longer be here with us, but they are not forgotten. They may no longer be here with us, but they collectively serve as a landmark to show us the way to serve others.

No Greater Love. In the Gospel of St. John (15:11-12), Christ tells his faithful followers: “This is my commandment: love one another as I love you. No one has greater love than this, to lay down one’s life for one’s friends.” On this Memorial Day, we remember those brave soldiers, sailors, Marines, airmen, and others in the Armed Forces of our nation who showed that ultimate love of which there is none greater; we remember those who gave their lives so that we might enjoy the right to life.

They Laid Down their Lives. That being said, there are those for whom this day is a painful reminder of a personal loss – perhaps, a son, a daughter, a mother, a father, a sister, a brother lost in the service of our nation. In our faith, we are called, indeed commended to pray for those who have gone before us, that they might find rest in Heaven and that we can find peace in that hope given us by Christ. Author Aldous Huxley (who

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Monday, May 25


While Apollos was in Corinth, Paul traveled through the interior of the country and down to Ephesus where he found some disciples. He said to them, “Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you became believers?” They answered him, “We have never even heard that there is a Holy Spirit.” He said, “How were you baptized?” They replied, “With the baptism of John.” Paul then said, “John baptized with a baptism of repentance, telling the people to believe in the one who was to come after him, that is, in Jesus.” When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. And when Paul laid his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came upon them, and they spoke in tongues and prophesied. Altogether there were about twelve men.

He entered the synagogue, and for three months debated boldly with persuasive arguments about the Kingdom of God.

Psalm 68

God arises; his enemies are scattered, and those who hate him flee before him. As smoke is driven away, so are they driven; as wax melts before the fire.

R. Sing to God, O kingdoms of the earth.

But the just rejoice and exult before God; they are glad and rejoice. Sing to God, shout praise to his name; whose name is the LORD.

R. Sing to God, O kingdoms of the earth.

The father of orphans and the defender of widows is God in his holy dwelling. God gives a home to the forsaken; he leads forth prisoners to prosperity.

R. Sing to God, O kingdoms of the earth.

Gospel - St. John 16:29-33

The disciples said to Jesus, “Now you are talking plainly, and not in any figure of speech. Now we realize that you know everything and that you do not need to have anyone question you. Because of this we believe that you came from God.” Jesus answered them, “Do you believe now? Behold, the hour is coming and has arrived when each of you will be scattered to his own home and you will leave me alone. But I am not alone, because the Father is with me. I have told you this so that you might have peace in me. In the world you will have trouble, but take courage, I have conquered the world.”

Tuesday, May 26


From Miletus Paul had the presbyters of the Church at Ephesus summoned. When they came to him, he addressed them, “You know how I lived among you the whole time from the day I first came to the province of Asia. I served the Lord with all humility and with the tears and trials that came to me because of the plots of the Jews, and I did not at all shrink from telling you what was for your benefit, or from teaching you in public or in your homes. I earnestly bore witness for both Jews and Greeks to repentance before God and to faith in our Lord Jesus. But now, compelled by the Spirit, I am going to Jerusalem. What will happen to me there I do not know, except that in one city after another the Holy Spirit has been warning me that imprisonment and hardships await me. Yet I consider life of no importance to me, if only I may finish my course and the ministry that I received from the Lord Jesus, to bear witness to the Gospel of God’s grace.

“But now I know that none of you to whom I preached the kingdom during my travels will ever see my face again. And so I solemnly declare to you this day that I am not responsible for the blood of any of you, for I did not shrink from proclaiming to you the entire plan of God.”

Psalm 68

A bountiful rain you showered down, O God, upon your inheritance; you restored the land when it languished; Your flock settled in it; in your goodness, O God, you provided it for the needy.

R. Sing to God, O kingdoms of the earth.
Blessed day by day be the Lord, who bears our burdens; God, who is our salvation. God is a saving God for us; the LORD, my Lord, controls the passageways of death.

R. Sing to God, O kingdoms of the earth.

**Gospel - St. John 17:1-11a**

Jesus raised his eyes to heaven and said, “Father, the hour has come. Give glory to your son, so that your son may glorify you, just as you gave him authority over all people, so that your son may give eternal life to all you gave him. Now this is eternal life, that they should know you, the only true God, and the one whom you sent, Jesus Christ. I glorified you on earth by accomplishing the work that you gave me to do. Now glorify me, Father, with you, with the glory that I had with you before the world began.

“I revealed your name to those whom you gave me out of the world. They belonged to you, and you gave them to me, and they have kept your word. Now they know that everything you gave me is from you, because the words you gave to me I have given to them, and they accepted them and truly understood that I came from you, and they have believed that you sent me. I pray for them. I do not pray for the world but for the ones you have given me, because they are yours, and everything of mine is yours and everything of yours is mine, and I have been glorified in them. And now I will no longer be in the world, but they are in the world, while I am coming to you.”

**Acts of the Apostles 20:28-33**

At Miletus, Paul spoke to the presbyters of the Church of Ephesus: “Keep watch over yourselves and over the whole flock of which the Holy Spirit has appointed you overseers, in which you tend the Church of God that he acquired with his own Blood. I know that after my departure savage wolves will come among you, and they will not spare the flock. And from your own group, men will come forward perverting the truth to draw the disciples away after them. So be vigilant and remember that for three years, night and day, I unceasingly admonished each of you with tears. And now I commend you to God and to that gracious word of his that can build you up and give you the inheritance among all who are consecrated. I have never wanted anyone’s silver or gold or clothing. You know well that these very hands have served my needs and my companions. In every way I have shown you that by hard work of that sort we must help the weak, and keep in mind the words of the Lord Jesus who himself said, ‘It is more blessed to give than to receive.’”

When he had finished speaking he knelt down and prayed with them all. They were all weeping loudly as they threw their arms around Paul and kissed him, for they were deeply distressed that he had said that they would never see his face again. Then they escorted him to the ship.

**Psalm 68**

Show forth, O God, your power, the power, O God, with which you took our part; For your temple in Jerusalem let the kings bring you gifts.

R. Sing to God, O kingdoms of the earth.

You kingdoms of the earth, sing to God, chant praise to the Lord who rides on the heights of the ancient heavens. Behold, his voice resounds, the voice of power: “Confess the power of God!”

R. Sing to God, O kingdoms of the earth.

Over Israel is his majesty; his power is in the skies. Awesome in his sanctuary is God, the God of Israel; he gives power and strength to his people.

R. Sing to God, O kingdoms of the earth.

**Gospel - St. John 17:11-19**

Lifting up his eyes to heaven, Jesus prayed, saying: “Holy Father, keep them in your name that you have given me, so that they may be one just as we are one. When I was with them I protected them in your name that you gave me, and I guarded them, and none of them was lost except the son of destruction, in order that the Scripture might be fulfilled. But now I am coming to you. I speak this in the world so that they may share my joy completely. I gave them your word, and the world hated them, because they do not belong to the world any more than I belong to the world. I do not ask that you take them out of the world but that you keep them from the Evil One. They do not belong to the world any more than I belong to the world. Consecrate them in the truth. Your word is truth. As you sent me into the world, so I sent them into the world. And I consecrate myself for them, so that they also may be consecrated in truth.”

**Thursday, May 28**

** Acts of the Apostles 22:30; 23:6-11**

Wishing to determine the truth about why Paul was being accused by the Jews, the commander freed him and ordered the chief priests and the whole Sanhedrin to convene. Then he brought Paul down and made him stand before them.

Paul was aware that some were Sadducees and some Pharisees, so he called out before the Sanhedrin, “My brothers, I am a Pharisee, the son of Pharisees; I am on trial for hope in the resurrection of the dead.” When he said this, a dispute broke out between the Pharisees and Sadducees, and the group became divided. For the Sadducees say that there is no resurrection or angels or spirits, while the Pharisees acknowledge all three. A great uproar occurred, and some scribes belonging to the Pharisee party stood up and sharply argued, “We find nothing wrong with this man. Suppose a spirit or an angel has spoken to him?” The dispute was so serious that the commander, afraid that Paul would be torn to pieces by them, ordered his troops to go down and rescue Paul from their midst and take him into the compound. The following night the Lord stood by him and said, “Take courage. For just as you have borne witness to my cause in
Jerusalem, so you must also bear witness in Rome.”

Psalm 16

Keep me, O God, for in you I take refuge; I say to the LORD, “My Lord are you.” O LORD, my allotted portion and my cup, you it is who hold fast my lot.

R. Keep me safe, O God; you are my hope.

I bless the LORD who counsels me; even in the night my heart exalts me. I set the LORD ever before me; with him at my right hand shall I not be disturbed.

R. Keep me safe, O God; you are my hope.

Therefore my heart is glad and my soul rejoices, my body, too, abides in confidence; Because you will not abandon my soul to the nether world, nor will you suffer your faithful one to undergo corruption.

R. Keep me safe, O God; you are my hope.

You will show me the path to life, fullness of joys in your presence, the delights at your right hand forever.

R. Keep me safe, O God; you are my hope.

Gospel - St. John 17:20-26

Lifting up his eyes to heaven, Jesus prayed saying: “I pray not only for these, but also for those who will believe in me through their word, so that they may all be one, as you, Father, are in me and I in you, that they also may be in us, that the world may believe that you sent me. And I have given them the glory you gave me, so that they may be one, as we are one, I in them and you in me, that they may be brought to perfection as one, that the world may know that you sent me, and that you loved them even as you loved me. Father, they are your gift to me. I wish that where I am they also may be with me, that they may see my glory that you gave me, because you loved me before the foundation of the world. Righteous Father, the world also does not know you, but I know you, and they know that you sent me. I made known to them your name and I will make it known, that the love with which you loved me may be in them and I in them.”

For as the heavens are high above the earth, so surpassing is his kindness toward those who fear him. As far as the east is from the west, so far has he put our transgressions from us.

R. The Lord has established his throne in heaven.

The LORD has established his throne in heaven, and his kingdom rules over all. Bless the LORD, all you his angels, you mighty in strength, who do his bidding.

R. The Lord has established his throne in heaven.

Gospel St. John 21:15-19

After Jesus had revealed himself to his disciples and eaten breakfast with them, he said to Simon Peter, “Simon, son of John, do you love me more than these?” Simon Peter answered him, “Yes, Lord, you know that I love you.” Jesus said to him, “Feed my lambs.” He then said to Simon Peter a second time, “Simon, son of John, do you love me?” Simon Peter answered him, “Yes, Lord, you know that I love you.” He said to him, “Tend my sheep.” He said to him the third time, “Simon, son of John, do you love me?” Peter was distressed that he had said to him a third time, “Do you love me?” and he said to him, “Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you.” Jesus said to him, “Feed my sheep. Amen, amen, I say to you, when you were younger, you used to dress yourself and go where you wanted; but when you grow old, you will stretch out your hands, and someone else will dress you and lead you where you do not want to go.” He said this signifying by what kind of death the crimes I suspected. Instead they had some issues with him about their own religion and about a certain Jesus who had died but who Paul claimed was alive. Since I was at a loss how to investigate this controversy, I asked if he were willing to go to Jerusalem and there stand trial on these charges. And when Paul appealed that he be held in custody for the Emperor’s decision, I ordered him held until I could send him to Caesar.”

Psalm 103

Bless the LORD, O my soul; and all my being, bless his holy name. Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits.

R. The Lord has established his throne in heaven.
he would glorify God. And when he had said this, he said to him, “Follow me.”

Saturday, May 30

Acts of the Apostles 28:16-20, 30-31

When he entered Rome, Paul was allowed to live by himself, with the soldier who was guarding him.

Three days later he called together the leaders of the Jews. When they had gathered he said to them, “My brothers, although I had done nothing against our people or our ancestral customs, I was handed over to the Romans as a prisoner from Jerusalem. After trying my case the Romans wanted to release me, because they found nothing against me deserving the death penalty. But when the Jews objected, I was obliged to appeal to Caesar, even though I had no accusation to make against my own nation. This is the reason, then, have requested to see you and to speak with you, for it is on account of the hope of Israel that I wear these chains.”

He remained for two full years in his lodgings. He received all who came to him, and with complete assurance and without hindrance he proclaimed the Kingdom of God and taught about the Lord Jesus Christ.

Psalm 11

The LORD is in his holy temple; the LORD’s throne is in heaven. His eyes behold, his searching glance is on mankind.

R. The just will gaze on your face, O Lord.

The LORD searches the just and the wicked; the lover of violence he hates. For the LORD is just, he loves just deeds; the upright shall see his face.

R. The just will gaze on your face, O Lord.

Gospel - St. John 21:20-25

Peter turned and saw the disciple following whom Jesus loved, the one who had also reclined upon his chest during the supper and had said, “Master, who is the one who will betray you?”

When Peter saw him, he said to Jesus, “Lord, what about him?” Jesus said to him, “What if I want him to remain until I come? What concern is it of yours? You follow me.” So the word spread among the brothers that that disciple would not die. But Jesus had not told him that he would not die, just “What if I want him to remain until I come? What concern is it of yours?”

It is this disciple who testifies to these things and has written them, and we know that his testimony is true. There are also many other things that Jesus did, but if these were to be described individually, I do not think the whole world would contain the books that would be written.

Sunday, May 31

Pentecost


When the time for Pentecost was fulfilled, they were all in one place together. And suddenly there came from the sky a noise like a strong driving wind, and it filled the entire house in which they were. Then there appeared to them tongues as of fire, which parted and came to rest on each one of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in different tongues, as the Spirit enabled them to proclaim.

Now there were devout Jews from every nation under heaven staying in Jerusalem. At this sound, they gathered in a large crowd, but they were confused because each one heard them speaking in his own language. They were astounded, and in amazement they asked, “Are not all these people who are speaking Galileans? Then how does each of us hear them in his native language? We are Parthians, Medes, and Elamites, inhabitants of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the districts of Libya near Cyrene, as well as travelers from Rome, both Jews and converts to Judaism, Cretans and Arabs, yet we hear them speaking in our own tongues of the mighty acts of God.”

Psalm 104

Bless the LORD, O my soul! O LORD, my God, you are great indeed! How manifold are your works, O Lord! the earth is full of your creatures;

R. Lord, send out your Spirit, and renew the face of the earth.

May the glory of the LORD endure forever; may the LORD be glad in his works! Pleading to him be my theme; I will be glad in the LORD.
R. Lord, send out your Spirit, and renew the face of the earth.

If you take away their breath, they perish and return to their dust. When you send forth your spirit, they are created, and you renew the face of the earth.

R. Lord, send out your Spirit, and renew the face of the earth.

1st Corinthians 12:3-7, 12-13

Brothers and sisters: No one can say, “Jesus is Lord,” except by the Holy Spirit.

There are different kinds of spiritual gifts but the same Spirit; there are different forms of service but the same Lord; there are different workings but the same God who produces all of them in everyone. To each individual the manifestation of the Spirit is given for some benefit.

As a body is one though it has many parts, and all the parts of the body, though many, are one body, so also Christ. For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, slaves or free persons, and we were all given to drink of one Spirit.

Gospel - St. John 20:19-23

On the evening of that first day of the week, when the doors were locked, where the disciples were, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood in their midst and said to them, “Peace be with you.” When he had said this, he showed them his hands and his side. The disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. Jesus said to them again, “Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you.” And when he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, “Receive the Holy Spirit. Whose sins you forgive are forgiven them, and whose sins you retain are retained.”

CLICK HERE TO READ DAILY REFLECTIONS ON THE SCRIPTURE BY OUR CLERGY

Word on Fire: From Last Sunday —
Bishop Barron’s Homily from the Sixth Sunday of Easter

SUNDAY HOMILY from Bishop Barron

May 17, 2020
OFFICE OF READINGS

Below are daily selection from the Office of Reading — extended scriptures and spiritual writings. Let these beautiful texts help your grow in your spiritual life!

Monday, May 25

First reading
From the first letter of the apostle John 4:1-10
God has loved us first

Beloved, do not trust every spirit, but put the spirits to a test to see if they belong to God, because many false prophets have appeared in the world. This is how you can recognize God’s Spirit: every spirit that acknowledges Jesus Christ come in the flesh belongs to God, while every spirit that fails to acknowledge him does not belong to God. Such is the spirit of the antichrist which, as you have heard, is to come; in fact, it is in the world already.

You are of God, you little ones, and thus you have conquered the false prophets. For there is One greater in you than there is in the world. Those others belong to the world; that is why theirs is the language of the world and why the world listens to them. We belong to God and anyone who has knowledge of God gives us a hearing, while anyone who is not of God refuses to hear us. Thus do we distinguish the spirit of truth from the spirit of deception.

Beloved, let us love one another because love is of God; everyone who loves is begotten of God and has knowledge of God. The man without love has known nothing of God, for God is love.

God’s love was revealed in our midst in this way: he sent his only Son to the world that we might have life through him. Love, then, consists in this: not that we have loved God but that he has loved us and has sent his Son as an offering for our sins.

Second Reading
From a catechetical instruction
by Saint Cyril of Jerusalem, Bishop

The living water of the Holy Spirit

The water that I shall give him will become in him a fountain of living water, welling up into eternal life. This is a new kind of water, a living, leaping water, welling up for those who are worthy. But why did Christ call the grace of the Spirit water? Because all things are dependent on water; plants and animals have their origin in water. Water comes down from heaven as rain, and although it is always the same in itself, it produces many different effects, one in the palm tree, another in the vine, and so on throughout the whole of creation. It does not come down, now as one thing, now as another, but while remaining essentially the same, it adapts itself to the needs of every creature that receives it.

In the same way the Holy Spirit, whose nature is always the same, simple and indivisible, apportions grace to each man as he wills. Like a dry tree which puts forth shoots when watered, the soul bears the fruit of holiness when repentance has made it worthy of receiving the Holy Spirit. Although the Spirit never changes, the effects of this action, by the will of God and in the name of Christ, are both many and marvelous. The Spirit makes one man a teacher of divine truth, inspires another to prophesy, gives another the power of casting out devils, enables another to interpret holy Scripture. The Spirit strengthens one man’s self-control, shows another how to help the poor, teaches another to fast and lead a life of asceticism, makes another oblivious to the needs of the body, trains another for martyrdom. His action is different in different people, but the Spirit himself is always the same. In each person, Scripture says, the Spirit reveals his presence in a particular way for the common good.

The Spirit comes gently and makes himself known by his fragrance. He is not felt as a burden, for he is light, very light. Rays of light and knowledge stream before him as he approaches.

Tuesday, May 26

First Reading
From the first letter of the apostle John 4:11-21
God is love

Beloved, if God has loved us so, we must have the same love for one another. No one has ever seen God. Yet if we love one another
God dwells in us, and his love is brought to perfection in us. The way we know we remain in him and he in us is that he has given us of his Spirit.

We have seen for ourselves, and can testify, that the Father has sent the Son as savior of the world. When anyone acknowledges that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwells in him and he in God. We have come to know and to believe in the love God has for us. God is love, and he who abides in love abides in God, and God in him.

Our love is brought to perfection in this, that we should have confidence on the day of judgment; for our relation to this world is just like his love. Love has no room for fear; rather, perfect love casts out all fear. And since fear has to do with punishment, love is not yet perfect in one who is afraid. We, for our part, love because he first loved us.

If anyone says, “My love is fixed on God,” yet hates his brother, he is a liar. One who has no love for the brother he has seen cannot love the God he has not seen. The commandment we have from him is this: whoever loves God must also love his brother.

**Second Reading**
*From a sermon by Saint Augustine, Bishop*

*Rejoice in the Lord always*

The Apostle tells us to rejoice, but in the Lord, not in the world. Whoever wishes to be a friend of this world, says Scripture, will be reckoned an enemy of God. As a man cannot serve two masters, so one cannot rejoice both in the world and in the Lord.

Let joy in the Lord prevail, then, until joy in the world is no more. Let joy in the Lord go on increasing; let joy in the world go on decreasing until it is no more. This is said, not because we are not to rejoice while we are in this world, but in order that, even while we are still in this world, we may already rejoice in the Lord.

You may object: I am in the world; if I rejoice I certainly rejoice where I am. What is this? Do you mean that because you are in the world you are not in the Lord? Listen again to the Apostle, speaking now to the Athenians: in the Acts of the Apostles he says this of God and the Lord our creator: In him we live and move and have our being. If he is everywhere, where is he not? Surely this was what he was exhorting us to realize. The Lord is near, do not be anxious about anything.

This is a great truth, that he ascended above all the heavens, yet is near to those on earth. Who is this stranger and neighbor if not the one who became our neighbor out of compassion?

The man lying on the road, left half-dead by robbers, the man treated with contempt by the priest and the levite who passed by, the man approached by the passing Samaritan to take care of him and help him, that man is the whole human race. When the immortal one, the holy one, was far removed from us because we were mortal and sinners, he came down to us, so that he, the stranger, might become our neighbor.

He did not treat us as our sins deserved. For we are now sons of God. How do we show this? The only Son of God died for us, so that he might not remain alone. He who died as the only Son did not want to remain as the only Son. For the only Son of God made many sons of God. He bought brothers for himself by his blood; he made them welcome by being rejected; he ransomed them by being sold; he honored them by being dishonored; he gave them life by being put to death.

So, brethren, rejoice in the Lord, not in the world. That is, rejoice in the truth, not in wickedness; rejoice in the hope of eternity, not in the fading flower of vanity. That is the way to rejoice. Wherever you are on earth, however long you remain on earth, the Lord is near, do not be anxious about anything.

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**Wednesday, May 27**

*First Reading*
*From the first letter of the apostle John 5:1-12*

*Our faith is our victory over the world*

Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ has been begotten of God. Now, everyone who loves the father loves the child he has
begotten. We can be sure that we love God’s children when we love God and do what he has commanded. The love of God consists in this: that we keep his commandments— and his commandments are not burdensome.

Everyone begotten of God conquers the world, and the power that has conquered the world is this faith of ours. Who, then, is conqueror of the world? The one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God.

Jesus Christ it is who came through water and blood— not in water only, but in water and in blood. It is the Spirit who testifies to this, and the Spirit is truth. Thus there are three that testify, the Spirit and the water and the blood— and these three are of one accord.

Do we not accept human testimony? The testimony of God is much greater: it is the testimony God has given on his own Son’s behalf. Whoever believes in the Son of God possesses that testimony within his heart. Whoever does not believe God has made God a liar by refusing to believe in the testimony he has given on his own Son’s behalf. The testimony is this: God gave us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. Whoever possesses the Son possesses life; whoever does not possess the Son of God does not possess life.

Second Reading
From the dogmatic constitution on the Church of the Second Vatican Council
The mission of the Holy Spirit in the Church

When the Son completed the work with which the Father had entrusted him on earth, the Holy Spirit was sent on the day of Pentecost to sanctify the Church unceasingly, and thus enable believers to have access to the Father through Christ in the one Spirit. He is the Spirit of life, the fountain of water welling up to give eternal life. Through him the Father gives life to men, dead because of sin, until he raises up their mortal bodies in Christ.

The Spirit dwells in the Church and in the hearts of the faithful as in a temple. He prays in them and bears witness in them to their adoption as sons. He leads the Church into all truth and gives it unity in communion and in service. He endows it with different hierarchical and charismatic gifts, directs it by their means, and enriches it with his fruits.

By the power of the Gospel he enables the Church to grow young, perpetually renews it, and leads it to complete union with its Bridegroom. For the Spirit and the Bride say to the Lord Jesus: “Come!”

In this way the Church reveals itself as a people whose unity has its source in the unity of Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

The whole company of the faithful, who have an anointing by the Holy Spirit, cannot err in faith. They manifest this distinctive characteristic of theirs in the supernatural instinct of faith (sensus fidei) of the whole people when, from the bishops to the most ordinary lay person among the faithful, they display a universal agreement on matters of faith and morals.

This instinct of faith is awakened and kept in being by the Spirit of truth. Through it the people of God hold indefectibly to the faith once delivered to the saints, penetrate it more deeply by means of right judgment, and apply it more perfectly in their lives. They do all this under the guidance of the sacred teaching office: by faithful obedience to it they receive, not the word of men but in truth the word of God.

Moreover, the Holy Spirit not only sanctifies and guides God’s people by the sacraments and the ministries, and enriches it with virtues, he also distributes special graces among the faithful of every state of life, assigning his gifts to each as he chooses. By means of these special gifts he equips them and makes them eager for various activities and responsibilities that benefit the Church in its renewal or its increase, in accordance with the text: To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for a good purpose.

These charisms, the simpler and more widespread as well as the most outstanding, should be accepted with a sense of gratitude and consolation, since in a very special way they answer and serve the needs of the Church.

Thursday, May 28
First Reading
From the first letter of the apostle John 5:13-21
Prayer for sinners

I have written this to you to make you realize that you possess eternal life— you who believe in the name of the Son of God.
We have this confidence in God: that He hears us whenever we ask for anything according to his will. And since we know that he hears us whenever we ask, we know that what we have asked him for is ours. Anyone who sees his brother sinning, if the sin is not deadly, should petition God, and thus life will be given to the sinner. This is only for those whose sin is not deadly. There is such a thing as a deadly sin; I do not say that one should pray about that. True, all wrongdoing is sin, but not all sin is deadly.

We know that no one begotten of God commits sin; rather, God protects the one begotten by him, and so the evil one cannot touch him. We know that we belong to God, while the whole world is under the evil one. We know, too, that the Son of God has come and has given us discernment to recognize the One who is true. And we are in the One who is true, for we are in his Son Jesus Christ. He is the true God and eternal life.

My little children, be on your guard against idols.

Second Reading
From a commentary on the gospel of John
by Saint Cyril of Alexandria, Bishop

If I do not go away, the Comforter will not come to you

After Christ had completed his mission on earth, it still remained necessary for us to become sharers in the divine nature of the Word. We had to give up our own life and be so transformed that we would begin to live an entirely new kind of life that would be pleasing to God. This was something we could do only by sharing in the Holy Spirit.

It was most fitting that the sending of the Spirit and his descent upon us should take place after the departure of Christ our Savior. As long as Christ was with them in the flesh, it must have seemed to believers that they possessed every blessing in him; but when the time came for him to ascend to his heavenly Father, it was necessary for him to be united through his Spirit to those who worshipped him, and to dwell in our hearts through faith. Only by his own presence within us in this way could he give us confidence to cry out, Abba, Father, make it easy for us to grow in holiness and, through our possession of the all-powerful Spirit, fortify us invincibly against the wiles of the devil and the assaults of men.

It can easily be shown from examples both in the Old Testament and the New that the Spirit changes those in whom he comes to dwell; he so transforms them that they begin to live a completely new kind of life. Saul was told by the prophet Samuel: The Spirit of the Lord will take possession of you, and you shall be changed into another man. Saint Paul writes: As we behold the glory of the Lord with unveiled faces, that glory, which comes from the Lord who is the Spirit, transforms us all into his own likeness, from one degree of glory to another.

Does this not show that the Spirit changes those in whom he comes to dwell and alters the whole pattern of their lives? With the Spirit within them it is quite natural for people who had been absorbed by the things of this world to become entirely other-worldly in outlook, and for cowards to become men of great courage. There can be no doubt that this is what happened to the disciples. The strength they received from the Spirit enabled them to hold firmly to the love of Christ, facing the violence of their persecutors unafraid. Very true, then, was our Savior’s saying that it was to their advantage for him to return to heaven: his return was the time appointed for the descent of the Holy Spirit.

Friday, May 29

First reading
The second letter of the apostle John
Whoever is faithful to the teaching of Christ possesses both the Father and the Son

The elder to a Lady who is elect and to her children.

In truth I love each of you—and not only I but also all those who have come to know the truth. This love is based on the truth that abides in us and will be with us forever. In truth and love, then, we shall have grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father and from Jesus Christ, the Father’s Son.

It has given me great joy to find some of your children walking in the path of truth, just as we were commanded by the Father. But now, my Lady, I would make this request of you (not as if I were writing you some new commandment; rather, it is a commandment we have had from the start): let us love one another. This love involves our walking according to the commandments, and as you have heard from the beginning, the commandment is the way in which you should walk.

Many deceitful men have gone out into the world, men who do not acknowledge Jesus Christ as coming in the flesh. Such is the deceitful one! This is the antichrist! Look out that you yourselves do not lose what you have worked for; you must receive your reward in full.

Anyone who is so “progressive” that he does not remain rooted in the teaching of Christ does not possess God, while anyone who remains rooted in the teaching possesses both the Father and the Son. If anyone comes to you who does not bring this teaching, do not receive him into your house; do not even greet him, for whoever greets him shares in the evil he does.
While there is much more that I could write you, I do not intend to put it down on paper; instead, I hope to visit you and talk with you face to face, so that our joy may be full.

The children of your elect sister send you their greetings.

Second Reading
From the treatise On the Trinity by Saint Hilary, Bishop
The Father’s gift in Christ

Our Lord commanded us to baptize in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. In baptism, then, we profess faith in the Creator, in the only-begotten Son and in the gift which is the Spirit. There is one Creator of all things, for in God there is one Father from whom all things have their being. And there is one only-begotten Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom all things exist. And there is one Spirit, the gift who is in all. So all follow their due order, according to the proper operation of each: one power, which brings all things into being, one Son, through whom all things come to be, and one gift of perfect hope. Nothing is wanting to this flawless union: in Father, Son and Holy Spirit, there is infinity of endless being, perfect reflection of the divine image, and mutual enjoyment of the gift.

Our Lord has described the purpose of the Spirit’s presence in us. Let us listen to his words: I have yet many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. It is to your advantage that I go away; if I go, I will send you the Advocate. And also: I will ask the Father and he will give you another Counselor to be with you for ever, the Spirit of truth. He will guide you into all the truth; for he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak, and he will declare to you the things that are to come. He will glorify me, for he will take what is mine.

From among many of our Lord’s sayings, these have been chosen to guide our understanding, for they reveal to us the intention of the giver, the nature of the gift and the condition for its reception. Since our weak minds cannot comprehend the Father or the Son, we have been given the Holy Spirit as our intermediary and advocate, to shed light on that hard doctrine of our faith, the incarnation of God.

We receive the Spirit of truth so that we can know the things of God. In order to grasp this, consider how useless the faculties of the human body would become if they were denied their exercise. Our eyes cannot fulfill their task without light, either natural or artificial; our ears cannot react without sound vibrations, and in the absence of any odor our nostrils are ignorant of their function.

Not that these senses would lose their own nature if they were not used; rather, they demand objects of experience in order to function. It is the same with the human soul. Unless it absorbs the gift of the Spirit through faith, the mind has the ability to know God but lacks the light necessary for that knowledge.

This unique gift which is in Christ is offered in its fullness to everyone. It is everywhere available, but it is given to each man in proportion to his readiness to receive it. Its presence is the fuller, the greater a man’s desire to be worthy of it. This gift will remain with us until the end of the world, and will be our comfort in the time of waiting. By the favours it bestows, it is the pledge of our hope for the future, the light of our minds, and the splendor that irradiates our understanding.

Saturday, May 30
First reading
The third letter of the apostle John 1:1-15
Let us live in the truth

The elder to the beloved Gaius, whom indeed I love.

Beloved, I hope you are in good health—may you thrive in all other ways as you do in the spirit. For it has given me great joy to have the brothers bear witness to how truly you walk in the path of truth. Nothing delights me more than to hear that my children are walking in this path.

Beloved, you demonstrate fidelity by all that you do for the brothers even though they are strangers; indeed, they have testified to your love before the church. And you will do a good thing if, in a way that pleases God, you help them to continue their journey. It was for the sake of the Name that they set out, and they are accepting nothing from the pagans. Therefore, we owe it to such men to support them and thus to have our share in the work of truth.

I did write to the church; but Diotrephes, who enjoys being their leader, ignores us. Therefore, if I come I will speak publicly of what he is doing in spreading evil nonsense about us. And that is not all. Not only does he refuse to welcome the brothers himself but he even hinders those who wish to do so and expels them from the church!

Beloved, do not imitate what is evil but what is good. Whoever does what is good belongs to God; whoever does what is evil has never seen God. Demetrius is one who gets a good testimonial from all, even from truth itself. We give our testimonial as well, and you know that our testimony is true.
There is much more that I had in mind to write you, but I do not wish to write it out with pen and ink. Rather, I hope to see you soon, when we can talk face to face.

Peace be with you. The beloved here send you their greetings; greet the beloved there, each by name.

Second reading

From a sermon by a sixth century African author

The Church in its unity speaks in the language of every nation

The disciples spoke in the language of every nation. At Pentecost God chose this means to indicate the presence of the Holy Spirit: whoever had received the Spirit spoke in every kind of tongue. We must realize, dear brothers, that this is the same Holy Spirit by whom love is poured out in our hearts. It was love that was to bring the Church of God together all over the world. And as individual men who received the Holy Spirit in those days could speak in all kinds of tongues, so today the Church, united by the Holy Spirit, speaks in the language of every people.

Therefore if somebody should say to one of us, “You have received the Holy Spirit, why do you not speak in tongues?” his reply should be, “I do indeed speak in the tongues of all men, because I belong to the body of Christ, that is, the Church, and she speaks all languages. What else did the presence of the Holy Spirit indicate at Pentecost, except that God’s Church was to speak in the language of every people?”

This was the way in which the Lord’s promise was fulfilled: No one puts new wine into old wineskins. New wine is put into fresh skins, and so both are preserved. So when the disciples were heard speaking in all kinds of languages, some people were not far wrong in saying: They have been drinking too much new wine. The truth is that the disciples had now become fresh wineskins, renewed and made holy by grace. The new wine of the Holy Spirit filled them, so that their fervor brimmed over and they spoke in manifold tongues. By this spectacular miracle they became a sign of the Catholic Church, which embraces the language of every nation.

Keep this feast, then, as members of the one body of Christ. It will be no empty festival for you if you really live what you are celebrating. For you are the members of that Church which the Lord acknowledges as his own, being himself acknowledged by her, that same Church which he fills with the Holy Spirit as she spreads throughout the world. He is like a bridgroom who never loses sight of his own bride; no one could ever deceive him by substituting some other woman.

To you men of all nations, then, who make up the Church of Christ, you, the members of Christ, you, the body of Christ, you, the bride of Christ—to all of you the Apostle addresses these words: Bear with one another in love; do all you can to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. Notice that when Paul urges us to bear with one another, he bases his argument on love, and when he speaks of our hope of unity, he emphasizes the bond of peace. This Church is the house of God. It is his delight to dwell here. Take care, then, that he never has the sorrow of seeing it undermined by schism and collapsing in ruins.

Sunday, May 31

First reading

From the letter of the Apostle Paul to the Romans 8:5-27

All who are led by the Spirit of God are God’s children

Those who live according to the flesh are intent on the things of the flesh, those who live according to the spirit, on those of the spirit. The tendency of the flesh is toward death but that of the spirit toward life and peace. The flesh in its tendency is at enmity with God; it is not subject to God’s law. Indeed, it cannot be; those who are in the flesh cannot please God.

But you are not in the flesh; you are in the spirit, since the Spirit of God dwells in you. If anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Christ. If Christ is in you the body is dead because of sin, while the spirit lives because of justice. If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, then he who raised Christ from the dead will bring your mortal bodies to life also, through his Spirit dwelling in you.

We are debtors, then, my brothers—but not to the flesh, so that we should live according to the flesh. If you live according to the flesh, you will die; but if by the spirit you put to death the evil deeds of the body, you will live.

All who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God. You did not receive a spirit of slavery leading you back into fear, but a spirit of adoption through which we cry out, “Abba!” (that is, “Father”). The Spirit himself gives witness with our spirit that we are children of God. But if we are children, we are heirs as well: heirs of God, heirs with Christ, if only we suffer with him so as to be glorified with him.

I consider the sufferings of the present to be as nothing compared with the glory to be revealed in us. Indeed, the whole created world eagerly awaits the revelation of the sons of God. Creation was made subject to futility, not of its own accord but by him who once subjected it; yet not without hope, because the world itself will be freed from its slavery to corruption and share in the glorious freedom of the children of God. Yes, we know that all creation groans and is in agony even until now. Not only that, but we ourselves, although we have the Spirit as first fruits, groan inwardly while we await the redemption of our bodies. In hope we were saved. But hope is not hope if its object is seen; how is it possible for one to hope for what he sees? And hoping for what we cannot see means awaiting it with patient endurance.

The Spirit too helps us in our weakness, for we do not know how to pray as we ought; but the Spirit himself makes intercession for us with groanings that cannot be expressed in speech. He who searches hearts knows what the Spirit means, for the Spirit intercedes for the saints as God himself wills.
Second reading
From the treatise Against Heresies
by Saint Irenaeus, Bishop
The sending of the Holy Spirit

When the Lord told his disciples to go and teach all nations and baptize them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, he conferred on them the power of giving men new life in God.

He had promised through the prophets that in these last days he would pour out his Spirit on his servants and handmaids, and that they would prophesy. So when the Son of God became the Son of Man, the Spirit also descended upon him, becoming accustomed in this way to dwelling with the human race, to living in men and to inhabiting God’s creation. The Spirit accomplished the Father’s will in men who had grown old in sin, and gave them new life in Christ. Luke says that the Spirit came down on the disciples at Pentecost, after the Lord’s ascension, with power to open the gates of life to all nations and to make known to them the new covenant. So it was that men of every language joined in singing one song of praise to God, and scattered tribes, restored to unity by the Spirit, were offered to the Father as the first-fruits of all the nations.

This was why the Lord had promised to send the Advocate: he was to prepare us as an offering to God. Like dry flour, which cannot become one lump of dough, one loaf of bread, without moisture, we who are many could not become one in Christ Jesus without the water that comes down from heaven. And like parched ground, which yields no harvest unless it receives moisture, we who were once like a waterless tree could never have lived and borne fruit without this abundant rainfall from above. Through the baptism that liberates us from change and decay we have become one in body; through the Spirit we have become one in soul.

The Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and strength, the Spirit of knowledge and the fear of God came down upon the Lord, and the Lord in turn gave this Spirit to his Church, sending the Advocate from heaven into all the world into which, according to his own words, the devil too had been cast down like lightning.

If we are not to be scorched and made unfruitful, we need the dew of God. Since we have our accuser, we need an advocate as well. And so the Lord in his pity for man, who had fallen into the hands of brigands, having himself bound up his wounds and left for his care two coins bearing the royal image, entrusted him to the Holy Spirit. Now, through the Spirit, the image and inscription of the Father and the Son have been given to us, and it is our duty to use the coin committed to our charge and make it yield a rich profit for the Lord.

DEBUNKING MYTHS ABOUT THE CATHOLIC FAITH

Catholics Aren’t Christians

[Video icon]
A CATHOLIC MESSAGE TO CATHOLIC GRADS 2020

WORD ON FIRE: THE HERESY OF Gnosticism
LIVES OF THE SAINTS

Let's remember these exemplars of the faith who have gone before.
Let's ask their intercession before the Lord, in our need.

Monday
May 25
St. Bede the Venerable
Pray for us

Dubbed as "The Father of English History," St. Bede the Venerable was born in 672, around the time England was fully Christianized. St. Bede was raised from age seven in the abbey of Saints Peter and Paul at Wearmouth-Jarrow. He lived there for the rest of his life. As he became an adult, he became Benedictine monk, and was ordained a priest in 702. St. Bede the Venerable was considered the most learned man of his day. He worked as both a teacher and an author of books in vast areas of study. His writings began the tradition of dating this era from the incarnation of Christ (A.D.). He was an especially great writer of History, with one of his great works being a "History of the Church." Much of our knowledge of England before the 8th century is mainly the result of Bede's writing. He died May 25, 735. He was declared a Doctor of the Church in 1899 by Pope Leo XIII.

St. Quadratus was the Bishop of Athens, Greece, in the second century. This learned man’s strong and fluent background in Greek literature allowed him to easily interact with and speak to the Greek people. His familiarity with the Greek culture ensured his quick acceptance by the people, including the many pagans in his diocese. St. Quadratus the Apologist was the first person to ever write an "apology" (i.e., a written explanation of a topic for the purpose of teaching) regarding Christianity. His writing was addressed to Emperor Hadrian, in the year 124. Saint Eusebius and Saint Jerome quoted St. Quadratus in their writings. Additionally, he is mentioned in many early martyrlogies of the Church.

Tuesday
May 26
St. Quadratus the Apologist
Pray for us

Born in Rome in the 6th century, St. Augustine of Canterbury, along with forty other monks, was sent as a missionary priest to begin England’s evangelization. After crossing the English Channel, he and his entourage landed in the territory of Kent (for which Kent County is named). England was ruled at that time by King Ethelbert, who welcomed these visitors. Their effect on England was so powerful that, one year later, on Pentecost Sunday in 597, King Ethelbert requested Baptism. St. Augustine was later ordained a bishop in Rome, and was sent back to Canterbury, England, where he founded the diocese there. He laid the groundwork for what would become the Diocesan Cathedral. Working diligently, and battling against long held Pagan customs, St. Augustine achieved success in establishing Christianity in England, and was later dubbed "The Apostle to England." He died of natural causes on May 26, 605.
This is a rare example of a father and son who both became saints. St. Conan the Elder was father of St. Conan the Younger. On the death of his wife, St. Conan the Elder urged his son to religious life. At age twelve, the young boy became a lector, and later a deacon. St. Conan the Elder then began living a life of prayer and solitude. One day Roman authorities appeared and arrested both father and son; they were charged with the treasonous Roman crime of being Christian. At their trial, they denied nothing, and confessed freely to being Christian. Conan the Elder told the judge: "I forfeit my life here, that I may forever reign with Jesus Christ." Father and son were sentenced to be roasted over a fire and then killed on the rack on May 29, 275 in Iconium, Turkey.

Born in 1412, St. Joan was one of five children born to Jacques d'Arc and Isabelle Romee. From age thirteen, Joan received visions from several saints. In the early 15th century, England, controlled most of what is modern France. In May of 1428, Joan's visions told her to find the true king of France and help him reclaim his throne. She resisted for more than three years, but she finally went to Charles VII in Chinon and told him of her visions. Carrying a banner that read "Jesus, Mary", she led troops from one battle to another. Her victories ultimately brought Charles VII to the throne. However, St. Joan was later captured by the Burgundians and was sold to the English for 10,000 francs. She was tried and convicted of being a heretic. Her conviction ultimately led to her death sentence; she was burned at the stake on May 30, 1431. In 1456, her case was re-tried, and Joan was posthumously acquitted (albeit 23 years too late). She was canonized as a saint in May 1920 by Pope Benedict XV.

Following a wild and misspent youth, St. Vitalis had a great conversion and sought to do penance for his past sins. To this end, he went on a pilgrimage to the most important shrines throughout Europe, spent time in prayer and sought forgiveness in each of them. He went on to become a Benedictine monk at Monte Subasio in Umbria, Italy. Late in life, he left the community at the monastery to live as a barefoot hermit near Assisi, Italy. His only possession there was a basket which he used to fetch water. Vitalis was known throughout the region for his piety, holiness and healing miracles. He died of natural causes on May 31, 1370 in Assisi. He is the patron saint invoked against diseases of the bladder.

Anna de Corro consecrated herself to God as a young woman. She would go on to become a nun of the Order of Our Lady of Mercy (the Mercedarians) in their monastery in Seville, Spain. In her religious life, this nun took the name "Mary of the Nativity." She was known by her fellow nuns and many people in the area for her great contemplative spirit. Sr. Mary of the Nativity experienced many visions of Heaven and many ecstasies during her time as a nun. She spent much of her time praying to and praising God. She was often sought out by visitors and pilgrims who asked for her prayers. In 1580, Blessed Mary of the Nativity died in her monastery, the Convent of the Assumption, in Seville.
SIGHTED

Boy visiting his grandfather's grave wearing his grandfather's military dress cap.

Pope Francis lays roses on graves at the Sicily-Rome American Cemetery and Memorial in Nettuno, Italy.

Priests lead casket with Marine Honor Guard to grave for Catholic Burial rites.

Army Honor Guard lays one of their fellow soldiers to rest at Arlington National Cemetery.
"Memorial to Faith and Courage" is the title of this stained-glass window located in the Army War College Chapel, Carlisle Barracks Garrison, Pennsylvania. Pictured in the window are Military Chaplains — Fr. John Washington (Catholic Priest), Alexander Goode (Rabbi), George Lansing Fox (Methodist Minister), and Clark Poling (Dutch Reformed Minister) — who gave up their lifejackets, sang hymns and prayed for soldiers as the USAT Dorchester sank from a torpedo hit from a German U-Boat in the North Atlantic.

Men of the Navy bury one of their own

Members of the United States Air Force's Patriot Honor Guard perform a seven-member funeral detail at a cemetery, as they bury one of their own.
wrote “Brave New World”) noted that, “Every man’s memory is his private literature.” This means that the memories you have — difficult or joyful — help to guide you in life. The most important memory we must always hold is that one imbued into us by faith: that Christ, suffered, died and rose for us that we might have life to the full. That is the memory that will give us hope to get beyond any pain, any loss.

In Imitation of Christ. Thus, as faithful Catholics, we are reminded that we are also called to be faithful, and at the service of our fellow man. While we might not be called to lay down our lives in the same way as those we remember on Memorial Day, we are called, nonetheless, to lay down our lives in the service of God and neighbor, as we remember the sacrifice that Christ made for us. As Christians, every day is a sort of a memorial — we remember what Christ did for us and we remember what Christ called on us to do in his name, in imitation of Him. At every Mass, we remember these very things in a most profound way. Likewise, in every moment of our own daily lives we are called to be watchful and dutiful in heeding Christ’s call to serve God and neighbor. We are to seek His protection in the battles, not only on the battlefields of wars, but in the battles of daily life as we strive to bring God's kingdom into this world.

Memorializing. On Memorial Day, though, we focus on those who gave all serving not just God and neighbor, but also God and country, and often on the field of battle; thus, on Memorial Day we memorialize (remember) them. Historically, memorializing those who went before is an important part of our Christian values, and in our Catholic faith. It is our way of remembering our brothers and sisters in Christ, and all of the children of God, and honoring their memory. Scripture tells us “The memory of the just serves as blessing.” (Proverbs 10:7). The memories of our loved ones, and on this Memorial Day, the memories of our fallen, bear this out.

Admonitions. In “Some Gave All,” the song concludes with an admonition: “Love your country and live with pride / but don't forget those who died.” A beautiful consideration for all of us on this Memorial Day weekend. Even more profound to recall is the Sacrifice of Christ, who died, that we all might live and have

"Some Gave All" -- Memorial Day Song by Billy Ray Cyrus
the hope of eternal life and be freed from the slavery to sin. In this regard, the patriotic song, “The Battle Hymn of the Republic,” speaks well to the Christian call for sacrifice and appreciation of the value of sacrifice, with this admonition:

In the beauty of the lilies
Christ was born across the sea,
With a glory in His bosom
that transfigures you and me.
As he died to make men holy
let us die to make men free
while God is marching on.

With this in mind, this Memorial Day let us remember, is a special way, those who died to make us free and who did so much for our nation. But above all, on this Memorial Day, and indeed every day, when thinking about those who died to make us free, let us give praise and thanks to the One who did so much for our salvation and theirs, Jesus Christ.

WORD ON FIRE: ABOUT HOLY ORDERS AND MARRIAGE

EIGHT FUNNY CATHOLIC JOKES
PUZZLE PAGE

CLICK ON THE PUZZLE IMAGE BELOW TO TRY TO SOLVE "CATHOLIC MOVIES AND TV" CROSSWORD PUZZLE ONLINE

There are plenty of Movies and TV shows that have been made over the years with Catholic theme. See how many of them you know about.

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ACTIVITIES
TEST YOU CATHOLIC TRIVIA SKILLS
ON THIS CHALLENGING TRIVIA QUIZ!

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THE SEVEN SACRAMENTS OF THE CHURCH
There are seven Sacraments in the Catholic Church: Baptism, Confirmation, Eucharist, Penance, Anointing of the Sick, Matrimony and Holy Orders. Let's see how much you know about some of the details of these Sacraments!
ST. PAUL, Minn. (CNS) -- On March 20, as Minnesota residents prepared to follow Gov. Tim Walz’s stay-at-home order to curb the spread of COVID-19, men studying for the priesthood at St. Paul Seminary in St. Paul embarked on an opportunity: Instead of returning home, they began a “cloister” at the seminary.

While many major seminaries in other parts of the country chose to send their seminarians home, Fr. Joseph Taphorn, seminary rector and vice president, met with his leadership team and decided to keep the facility open to its graduate-level seminarians. It would operate in a cloistered environment, with little direct contact with the outside world.

The decision took effect the weekend before spring break. "It made the most sense to me because this is home," Father Taphorn said. The vast majority of the seminarians live at the seminary, where they also worship and take classes.

"We might as well do it together (rather) than scatter to the four winds," he said. "Let’s continue the work we were doing."

Seminary leadership gave the men and their bishops a choice to stay or go home. "Rather than say ‘everybody has to do this,’ we phrased it like an invitation: If you would like to ... ride out the storm together, this is what it will look like. And we’d love to have you stay together and be part of it," Father Taphorn told The Catholic Spirit, newspaper of the Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis.

One diocese asked its three seminarians to return home, and another seminarian from a second diocese also left. Four Pro Ecclesia Sancta brothers and deacons, as well as one other seminarian, already lived off-site.

The other 59 seminarians decided to stay. Twelve priests also are living at the seminary, including spiritual and formation directors and Father Taphorn.

There have been challenges under the unique circumstances, but it also has borne great fruit and offered opportunities for growth, several seminarians said.

At first it seemed daunting to live so close with others, with no chance to break away by going to a restaurant or a movie, said Jason Lee of St. Boniface Parish in Waukee, Iowa.

"But that also allows friendships to become closer," Lee said. "A lot of guys play board games or go for walks together or bike rides, so it’s a great opportunity for fraternity and solidarity."

The special fraternity developing among the seminarians will impact their future ministries, said Kyle Etzel of St. Hubert Parish in Chanhassen, Minnesota.

"Once we’re ordained and have the kinds of bonds that we’re developing in this sort of pressure-cooker situation, I think it’s going to pay off, he said. "Fraternity within a seminary is something every seminarian hopes for and every rector is trying to accomplish."

The faithful will benefit, too, Etzel said, when their priests know each other well and can have a good, holy, healthy fraternity. "I think that’s the single biggest thing that’s going to come out of this."

The cloister experience also has presented the seminarians with an opportunity to take a hard look at their interior lives, said seminarian John Rumpza of Nativity of Our Lord Parish in St. Paul, referring to what C.S. Lewis called “a severe mercy.”

"It’s given me the opportunity to spend time with the Lord and show him those places ... and actually bring healing, joy and peace," he said. It’s difficult but powerful work, Rumpza said, and it has profoundly changed him.

The seminarians had high praise for Father Taphorn. "It’s been inspiring to watch him lead us," Rumpza said, "with his characteristic sense of ease and openness, yet also with great strength and vision. He truly is the house father, and we are so grateful."

Today, seminarians can access the chapel, a kitchen area and community room while practicing social distancing. They can leave the building for exercise, but no one from outside can come into the "cloister," which draws on the idea of a monastery community whose members rarely, if ever, leave.

Classes are livestreamed or prerecorded. "That’s been great," Rumpza said. "When I didn’t quite catch something, I can simply rewind." Online classes pose challenges, he said, but he is grateful to be
able to continue his studies.

Class times vary, but the in-common schedule includes eucharistic adoration at 6:30 a.m., morning prayer at 7:15 a.m. followed by breakfast, Mass at 11:45 a.m. followed by lunch, an optional rosary at 4:30 p.m. and evening prayer at 5 p.m. followed by dinner.

A food service worker from the University of St. Thomas -- where the seminarians normally eat their meals -- wheels a large food cart just steps away from the university to the seminary three times a day, leaving it in the vestibule for someone to retrieve and disinfect. Wearing gloves, an assigned team lays out individual meals. Each seminarian takes a meal to a table where chairs are spaced apart, or to another room or the back patio.

The seminarians are scheduled to leave for the summer May 23. In cloister mode, Lee said, life is simplified. "Our schedule is simplified. Our food has become more simple. ... We just have what we need. And that is good enough."

In that simplicity, Lee said he sees how God provides for daily needs. "Everything comes from God. We're not wanting. ... It's a very beautiful way to live."

**PRO-LIFE NEWS**

**Planned Parenthood coronavirus loans could face DOJ investigation**

More than two dozen senators asked the attorney general on Thursday to investigate Planned Parenthood affiliates that have received emergency federal loans.

A letter from 27 senators, led by Senator Tom Cotton of Arkansas, asked U.S. Attorney General William Barr to investigate 37 Planned Parenthood affiliates that reportedly applied for and received $80 million in emergency small business loans in recent weeks, during the pandemic.

The senators noted that "it seems clear that Planned Parenthood knew that it was ineligible for the small business loans under the CARES Act long before its affiliates fraudulently self-certified that they were eligible," the senators stated.

"As you know, fraudulent loan applications can trigger both civil and criminal penalties," their letter stated. The letter from the 27 senators cited Planned Parenthood's "clear eligibility under the statutory text" of the CARES Act which set up the first round of PPP loans. "It was also well-publicized at the time that the CARES Act did not allow Planned Parenthood affiliates to utilize these loans," the letter stated.

**DAILY REFLECTIONS BY OUR CLERGY**

During the time when the faithful are challenged by an ongoing health crisis, the clergy serving our Parishes are providing Daily Reflections on the scriptures for the faithful.

-Click here to see the latest Daily Reflections-•

**DEVOTIONS FOR THE DAYS OF THE WEEK**

In its tradition, the Church has a focus of devotion for each day of the week to nourish the prayer life of the faithful and keep them close to the heart of Christ and his Church.

In Catholic tradition, these are the focus of prayers each day of the week:

- Monday — Poor Souls in Purgatory
- Tuesday — The Holy Angels
- Wednesday — St. Joseph
- Thursday — The Most Blessed Sacrament
- Friday — The Passion of our Lord Jesus Christ
- Saturday — Blessed Virgin Mary
- Sunday — The Most Holy Trinity

Click on any of the links above to access these litanies for your prayer life.
REFLECTION FOR THE ASCENSION OF THE LORD

Of Theophilus and the Ascension

by Deacon Vince Pisano

If you were to look up the word “reflection” in the dictionary you may find several definitions. For example, the word reflection can mean, (1) the reflecting of light off a surface, (2) to see a reflection of oneself in a mirror, (3) to meditate on the past, or to look back in time, or remembering the past.

Many times, when people get together, they reflect on the past and bring up events that occurred in their lifetime. Sometimes we remember past events that we enjoyed such as the family gathering at grandma’s house for that Fourth of July Picnic. There are times when we gather for a wedding or a funeral and we talk about the various events in our lives and “catch-up” on life in general.

In our readings today we find the evangelist Luke and the Apostle Paul, reflecting on the past events when Jesus was with them, what he said to them and the mighty deeds he did. In a few short paragraphs we are given just enough information that it piques our interest and we ant to know more about this Jesus. Luke, in our first reading calls the reader, Theophilus, a word that means, Love of God or Friend of God. So, the question may be asked was Theophilus a real person or is Luke calling anyone who reads his works a Friend of God?

I would like to think that we are all friends of God. In John’s Gospel Jesus tells his Apostles that he no longer calls them servants but friends. He tells them that a servant does not know his master’s business, but instead he calls them friends because everything that the Father revealed to him, he made known to them.

Jesus also points out to them that, “You did not choose me, but I chose you.”

Can you imagine for a moment that you are a chosen friend of God? Everything there is to know is revealed to you by God because you are His friend. Isn’t that what friends are about? They tell each other secrets that no one else knows and they confide in each other because they trust each other. That is the relationship that Jesus wants to have with all of us. He says to be his friend we need to do what he commands.

In the Gospel Jesus commands his disciples to, “go and make disciples of all nations and teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you.” In essence he is telling them, or ordering them, to go out into the world and make friends of everyone. Hence, the command is “to Love one another as I have loved you.” We are God’s friend if we do as Jesus commands.

Being a friend of Jesus, we become the inheritors of the things Paul writes about in his letter to the Ephesians. Paul writes, “May the eyes of your hearts be enlightened, that you may know what is the hope that belongs to his call, what are the riches of glory in his inheritance among the holy ones…” Because of our Baptism we have become “friends” of Jesus and as such we join the Holy Ones in the inheritance of the things promised by Christ.

As the Church celebrates the Ascension of the Lord into Heaven, we reflect and remember the things the Lord has done for us. As Church, we “listen” to the stories of the past in how Jesus suffered, died, and rose from the dead in order that we might be saved. The commands and instructions of Jesus are recounted in the readings at Mass, and we are given instructions as to live the life worthy of being a friend of Jesus. We are Theophilus!

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ONLINE GIVING

HERE'S HOW YOU CAN SUPPORT YOUR PARISH ONLINE

During this current lockdown period, with many stuck at home, with the Churches of the Diocese closed, and with public Masses suspended, many people want to know how they can continue to donate to their Parish with their weekly offertory. Many mail in their envelopes or donations, but please be aware that there is also an a way of giving your offertory or other donations by online — electronic — means. Here’s how:

- **Holy Cross Parish** is part of the Faith Direct program, which allows for one-time gifts, or regular giving. You can make a one-time gift or sign up for a Holy Cross - Faith Direct account for even easier access.
- **Immaculate Conception Parish** has a “My Parish Offering” page for weekly offertory or other donations. Just click, fill out the form, and make your donation with a few clicks.

Click below to access Holy Cross' Faith Direct Online Giving Page

![Online Giving through Faith Direct](image)

Click below to access Immaculate Conception's "My Parish Offering" Online Giving Page

![Immaculate Conception Parish - My Parish Offering](image)