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Reflections on the papal transition

Pope Francis, a pastor after the heart of Christ

Papal elections are always moments of great spiritual intensity for the whole Church, and this most recent election was no different. The eyes of the world were turned to the Vatican Hill for the better part of the month between Pope Benedict's unexpected announcement of his intention to resign the papal office and the election of Pope Francis on the evening of March 13. For us as believers, it was a time of prayer for the Holy Spirit's guidance, but also a time to reflect, in the light of faith, on how God's Providence is being worked out in the life of the Church in our day.

Much has been made of the humility of Pope Benedict in acknowledging that his strength was no longer equal to the task required of him. What we saw even in the last days of the pontificate, however, was his undiminished commitment to the Petrine ministry of encouraging his brothers and sisters in the faith.

In his final General Audience, Benedict spoke in warm and simple terms of the joy of being a Christian and of the importance of gratitude for the precious



POPE FRANCIS EMBRACES ONE OF 10 NEWLY-ORDAINED PRIESTS DURING THE ORDINATION MASS IN ST. PETER'S BASILICA ON APRIL 21, 2013. (AP PHOTO/GREGORIO BORGIA)

gift of faith in Christ. I believe that this is how Pope Benedict will be remembered: as a sincere and eloquent witness to the beauty and truth of the Christian faith. This is certainly the way we, as Americans, remember

him from his Pastoral Visit to the United States in the early years of his papacy. I suspect that historians will note that this distinguished theologian and

➤ PLEASE TURN TO [POPE](#) ON PAGE 2

ON THE INSIDE

Rest in Peace, Msgr. William A. Nagle, Tenth Pastor of St. John's	page 3
Deacon Pat Toole, Jr. on the Holy Spirit and Miracles	page 4
George Weigel on the Enduring Legacy of Jackie Robinson	page 6
Pope Francis Says Jesus Speaks to Us Through the Shroud of Turin	page 7
Fr. Terry Walsh Visits the Shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe in Mexico.....	page 10
Fr. F. John Ringley, Jr. on the True Meaning of Happiness	page 12
Msgr. Stephen DiGiovanni Offers a "Last Word" on Boston	page 16

professor chose to devote his Papal Magisterium to reaching the minds and hearts of ordinary Christians, above all by his moving homilies on the mysteries of the liturgical year and his popular books on the life of Jesus.

In the best Roman tradition, Benedict withdrew with an utter simplicity tinged with majesty. The television cameras showed his helicopter circle St. Peter's Square and then fly over the Tiber, the Forum, the Colosseum, and the aqueducts of the Appian Way before landing in the Alban Hills where he was to take up residence at Castel Gandolfo. It was a magnificent early spring evening, bathed in a golden sunset. The image of the retiring Pope flying silently over the timeless monuments of the Eternal City was impressive beyond words.

The Romans believe that, when the Colosseum falls, the world itself will collapse. For me, seeing the humble Successor of Peter fly over the ancient ruins as he yielded his place to another evoked instead the Lord's promise that He will remain with His Church all days, even to the end of the age. As the old adage goes: *stat crux, dum volvitur mundus*. The cross remains, even as the world turns.

The period preceding the election of a new Pope is a time of transition, as attention is gradually focused on the impending Conclave. Here another, very different, contrast entered into play as the area surrounding the Vatican Hill was dotted with tents for the press and their cameras. The sight of these white pavilions looming over St. Peter's Square



reminded me of old paintings of the siege of Vienna. Of course, it is ironic to see such intense media interest in an institution regularly dismissed as irrelevant, albeit colorful. Yet moments like these do tend to bring out the best in us and our world-weary culture.

At least for a time, we're reminded of bigger, more lasting things: the things that, as St. Paul says, really matter. I slightly envy our seminarians from Bridgeport who have this opportunity to witness history in the making. They are committing their youth and their idealism to the service of the Lord and His Church in this new century; in their own way, they know full well how important this election will be for the life which lies ahead of them.

Naturally, the election was a surprise, as special graces always are. I was working with a colleague whose window opens onto St. Peter's Square when the roar of the crowd erupted upon seeing unmistakably white smoke pouring from the chimney atop the Sistine Chapel. We ran to the terrace overlooking the square; despite the rain, it had been filled for hours

and was now overflowing.

When the name of the newly-elected Pope was announced, I was taken aback. Cardinal Bergoglio was considered a strong candidate in the Conclave eight years ago; this time around, no one had mentioned his name. When he emerged, dressed in a simple white cassock and asked for our prayers, the response was overwhelming.

This was the fourth papal election I have witnessed: what is

“When I first met Cardinal Bergoglio many years ago, he gave me a holy card bearing the image of Our Lady, ‘Undoer of Knots’. When we think of all the knots present in our lives and all the knots that our new Holy Father will encounter daily, how better can we show our love, devotion, and spiritual solidarity than to ask Our Lady to guide him in his ministry of keeping straight the paths that lead to Jesus her Son?”

always striking is the joy – spiritual joy – which the appearance of a new Pope evokes. Paradoxically, this elderly priest, who stood humbly on the balcony of St. Peter’s and wished only to be called Francis, symbolized the Church’s youth, her unflinching capacity for spiritual rebirth and interior renewal.

We know that every Pope is Christ’s vicar on earth. In Pope Francis, we have been given as our Holy Father a man from the global South, a witness to the Church’s preferential option for the poor and to the demands of social justice. Most importantly, though, we have been given a wise and tested priest, a faithful son of St. Ignatius, and a pastor after the heart of Christ.

The early days of this pontificate have given us a first taste of how he will mirror our Lord’s Presence and the Gospel’s call to ever deeper conversion. Let us pray that he will continue to touch hearts that have grown cold, instill new hope and, like the saint of Assisi, build up Christ’s Church in holiness, fidelity, and evangelical love.

When I first met Cardinal Bergoglio many years ago, he gave me a holy card bearing the image of Our Lady, “Undoer of Knots”. It is a little-known devotion which he first encountered during his studies in Germany. In the picture, the Virgin Mary is shown holding a rope filled with large knots which she is calmly untying. The reference is to a mysterious phrase of St. Irenaeus who, in the second century, wrote that Mary, by her obedience, had untied the knot tied by Eve.

When we think of all the knots present in our lives and in the life of the Church, and all the knots that our new Holy Father will encounter daily, how better can we show our love, devotion and spiritual solidarity than to ask Our Lady to guide him in his ministry of keeping straight the paths that lead to Jesus her Son?

– Msgr. William V. Millea

Since 1989, Msgr. Millea, a priest of the Diocese of Bridgeport, has worked as an official in the Vatican Secretariat of State.

Tenth Pastor of St. John’s

Msgr. William Nagle, 1923-2013

Msgr. William A. Nagle, who served as Pastor of St. John the Evangelist Parish from 1973 until 1998, passed away on Friday, April 26, 2013. He was one month short of his 90th birthday, and had completed 63 years of priesthood.

Born in Hartford on June 1, 1923 and raised in Stamford, Msgr. Nagle entered St. Thomas Seminary in Bloomfield in 1937 as a 13-year-old; he graduated as valedictorian in 1943. He won a scholarship to the Catholic University of America in Washington, DC (where he studied under Servant of God, Archbishop Fulton Sheen), and earned a B.A. and two Master’s degrees.

Msgr. Nagle was ordained a priest in the then-Diocese of Hartford in 1949. Over the next 18 years he served in parishes in Old Lyme, Kent, Sharon, Fairfield, South Norwalk, Shelton, and Darien, before being appointed pastor of St. Bridget of Ireland Parish in Stamford.



In 1973, Msgr. Nagle became the tenth pastor of St. John’s. He inherited a parish beset by financial problems, a church fabric that was deteriorating, and a declining downtown. “*My biggest fear was that the parish would go under,*” he recalled. “*This is one of the prize parishes of the diocese.*”

His proudest achievements, Msgr. Nagle would say, were the spiritual renewal of the parish and the restoration of the church, now a Basilica. “*We have a classic English Gothic cathedral, probably the finest in the diocese,*” he once said, “*not like those converted basketball courts.*”

On his retirement in 1998, Msgr. Nagle lived at the Queen of Clergy Residence in Stamford. In 2000, the renovated parish hall was christened the “Msgr. Nagle Hall” in his honor by the present Pastor, Msgr. Stephen DiGiovanni.

A Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated for Msgr. Nagle at St. John’s on May 1.

Msgr. Nagle knew he wanted to be a priest when he was just nine years old. In 2009, when he celebrated his 60th anniversary of priestly life, he said he always felt unworthy of the gift of priesthood, but worked every day to be a good priest.

“*The important thing as a priest is to worship God and realize He’s above all and try to do everything for Him,*” Msgr. Nagle recalled. “*The many things we have to do as priests are important, but it’s all in God’s hands.*”

“*The one thing I can say is, I wanted to be a priest, I became a priest, and I have no regrets,*” Msgr. Nagle concluded. “*I loved it, and I’m thankful for the gift. Being a priest is my biggest happiness in life.*”

A miracle from Cardinal Newman

The Holy Spirit is ever-present in our busy lives

It's hard to know who or what to believe any more. My doctor told me to avoid the sun so I don't get skin cancer. I did, and now I have a vitamin D deficiency.

I recently had a discussion with a friend of mine about global warming. He's convinced that global warming is being unfairly blamed for our changing weather patterns. I'm not an expert on the subject, so I decided to Google "Is Global Warming Real?" The answer, according to one scientific website: "*It can be hard to figure out. The extent of the problem and the danger posed by its effects are wide open for debate.*"

With so much confusion in the visible world, it is no wonder people are having a crisis of faith with the invisible world.

Despite all of the confusion in our lives, I can testify that the Holy Spirit is still with us. Miracles occur every day. Miracles both small and large, but miracles nevertheless.

A few weeks ago, I met a man who is a living example of this. Deacon Jack Sullivan, from the Archdiocese of Boston, was miraculously healed through the intercession of Blessed John Henry Newman (1801-1890). It was his miracle that the Church used to approve Cardinal Newman's beatification.

On June 6, 2000, Deacon Jack woke up with excruciating pain in his legs. Unable to walk, he was rushed to the hospital. A CAT scan revealed that along a 12-inch section of his spinal column a succession of lumbar disc and vertebrae deformities were protruding inward. These deformities were literally squeezing the life out of his spinal cord. It was only a matter of time before he would become completely paralyzed. A normal spinal cord is the size of a quarter. In Deacon Jack's case, it was the size of a piece of string. Deacon Jack was still in diaconate formation when he was diagnosed. He had

about two years to go until ordination.

That evening he sat devastated in front of his television. Flipping through the channels, he came to a special on Cardinal John Henry Newman. At the end of the show, the narrator detailed the ongoing efforts for



"Jack prayed a very simple prayer: 'Please Cardinal Newman, help me to walk so that I can return to classes and be ordained.' The next morning he woke up pain free."



Cardinal Newman's beatification. At this point, they had been waiting 120 years for a miracle. An address was posted to write to if you had received a miracle through Cardinal Newman's intercession.

Jack wrote the address down and then prayed a very simple prayer: "*Please Cardinal Newman, help me to walk so that I*

can return to classes and be ordained." The next morning he woke up pain free.

Unfortunately, it turned out that his physical condition was unchanged. His doctor could not explain why he was pain free, so he was told to go back to class. The day after classes ended, the pain came back in full force. Deacon Jack said that he didn't initially pray for a cure because he thought it was too much to ask for.

So on August 9, 2001 he went in for surgery just a few weeks before his last year in formation. His doctor, one of the foremost spinal surgeons in the world, said after surgery that it was the worst back that he had ever operated on. He told Jack that the rehabilitation time would probably be one to two years.

Still in complete agony five days after surgery, Jack knew he could not return to class. Not willing to give up though, he worked his legs to the edge of the bed. Finally he got his legs on to the floor and was bent over, leaning with his elbows on his hospital bed. In complete despair, he prayed to Cardinal Newman as he had done many months before. Suddenly he felt tremendous heat throughout his body. This lasted for quite awhile. Then he felt indescribable peace and joy. It was at this moment that he knew he could walk. He stood up and began to walk around the room. Then he walked past the nurses station, waving and smiling to everyone as he passed by.

The hospital released him that afternoon. No rehabilitation was necessary. In an interview with the BBC, his doctor said, "*After his prayer to Cardinal Newman, his condition was as if he never had a spinal problem or even surgery. There is absolutely no medical or scientific explanation for what happened. It was truly a miracle.*" Jack returned to class and was ordained the following year.

There are times when we clearly feel Our Lord's Presence. We receive the peace and joy that only comes from Jesus Christ. There are other times, however, when we feel as though Jesus has abandoned us. We see poverty, violence, and greed all around us. We struggle with the pain and disappointment in our own lives. We wonder if Jesus had failed. After all, what did Jesus bring us of lasting value?

Jesus brought us God. He gave us Himself, lowering Himself to take on human flesh. He died and rose from the dead so that we could have the hope of eternal life. He gave us His Spirit to guide us and be with us always.

Blessed Cardinal Newman once wrote,

"Who among us cannot feel God's Providence guiding us and blessing us personally? Who among us has not had strange coincidences during our lives, which brings us, in an overpowering way, to the hand of God? Who among us have not had thoughts that came upon us with a sort of mysterious force? During these moments God may be teaching us knowledge of His ways, if we but open our eyes in faith to all the ordinary matters of the day. All things work together, even in our trials and sorrows, for our greater good because our compassionate Father will always act in our best interests!"

It may be hard to know who or what to believe at times, but it is clear that this world will not bring us lasting happiness. Our hope and joy rests in Jesus Christ.

We pray, dear Lord, that we feel Your Presence. Send Your Spirit to guide us to serve You, to do Your will, to surrender ourselves totally to You, who are all good and deserving of all of our love. May we always place our trust in Your infinite love and divine mercy.

– Deacon Patrick Toole, Jr.

Deacon Toole serves as Permanent Deacon at St. Thomas Aquinas Parish in Fairfield.

Welcome, Pope Francis

When the white smoke cleared

There appears to be a slight limp, but he walks with a rhythmic stride. He has an arresting face with its shadows of sorrow and thought. It's a kind face softly crossed with lines that indicate a quickness to smile or to deepen with sympathy. One is struck by the kindness of the smile. At times I detected something wonderfully sad in his look – a face that has seen and absorbed pain. Sometimes there is a serene but odd, distant look. I sensed this when he greeted the faithful from the loggia of St. Peter's Basilica for the first time.

There's a deep, hearty, benevolent voice that says things like: *"The core message of God is that of mercy . . . A little bit of mercy makes the world less cold and more just."* *"People are often harder on each other than God is toward sinners."* *"Hatred, envy, and pride defile our lives."* *"Let us not be afraid of goodness and even tenderness . . . great tenderness."*

It is hard not to be impressed by someone who makes observations like: *"Let us try to let a shaft of light break through the heavy clouds."* *"Let us not forget that authentic power is service."* He even speaks of atheists as *"our precious allies for peace."*



"I find reassurance in Pope Francis' age, that he is a man of many winters. Age can bring about a flowering of the spirit."

I am, of course, speaking of the 265th Pope, Jorge Mario Bergoglio, who took the papal name Francis. Concern has been expressed that the new Pope is 76 years old, in the eventide of life. The concern is about the possible governance by a man who may experience the slow debilitation of old age. I find reassurance in his age, that he is a man of many winters. Age can bring about a flowering of the spirit. There is a wisdom that comes from experience and suffering. *"The years teach much which the days never know."* Older people are able to trust more in their inner experience. There is the inner light of old age. Generally speaking, people mellow with age; there are the tempering effects of old age, and people's judgments are kinder, more forgiving. The older we get, the more sympathetic we get. And old age is pre-eminently the time of reparation. All this applies to a Pope as to anyone else.

So far, much of Francis' style has been the antithesis of Vatican splendor. In his actions before he became Pope, he has shown that he wishes to live simply, poorly. He gave up an Archbishop's and the Cardinal's palace for a small two-room apartment, rode public transportation instead of a chauffeur-driven car, and cooked his own meals. So far, as Pope, he has refused to dress in all the drapery usually worn by Popes. He seems anxious to set aside much of the arcane Roman pageantry. He seems to recognize how anachronistic and unnecessary this part of the tradition is. Francis told journalists, *"How I wish for a poor Church for the poor."*

His choice of the name "Francis" is telling. Francis was the Saint who turned his back on power and wealth and assigned extraordinary importance to poverty. He spoke about "the tyranny of things" and "the prison of possessions." St. Francis argued that from poverty flows the virtue of humility, which is opposed to the

 PLEASE TURN TO POPE ON PAGE 11

Jackie Robinson, the Hollywood film “42,” and us

Baseball and movies don't often play well together. William Bendix as a Marine who dies happy in *Guadalcanal Diary* because he's just heard that the Dodgers have won is an icon of 1940s Americana; the same William Bendix as the Bambino in *The Babe Ruth Story* is a sad business, to be consigned to the (bad) memory bank. *The Natural* and *Bull Durham* have their moments, but when push comes to shove, they're both, finally, about something other than baseball. *61**, Billy Crystal's made-for-HBO flick about Mickey Mantle, Roger Maris, and the chase for Ruth's single-season home-run is a terrific story of male friendship (and gave this lifelong Yankees-deplorer a soft spot for the 1961 Bronx Bombers); but computer-graphic reconstructions of old ballparks being what they were when it was made in 2001 – i.e., not that persuasive – *61** just misses being a great baseball movie.

Now comes *42*, the long-awaited cin-

ematic telling of the Jackie Robinson story, which I recently saw on a snowy April Sunday afternoon in the Twin Cities. I wouldn't call it a great movie (like, for example, *The King's Speech*); but it's a very, very good movie, and an entirely plausible challeng-

“Jackie Robinson was a ‘very close second’ to Martin Luther King Jr. in the pantheon of African Americans who reversed a nation’s racial attitudes and helped create what is, today, the most racially egalitarian society in history.”



er to *61** as the best baseball movie ever made. Chadwick Boseman captures some of the fierce intensity, and a lot of the raw courage, of the man who broke baseball's color line.

It wasn't easy to imagine Han Solo, Indiana Jones, or President James Marshall (*Air Force One*) as Branch Rickey, the

cigar-chomping, ultra-Methodist general manager of the Brooklyn Dodgers whose Christian decency and shrewd business sense led him to take on the entire baseball establishment by signing Jackie Robinson; but Harrison Ford pulls off that role with aplomb. Kudos, too, to Nicole Beharie for capturing the steely grace, beauty, and guts of Rachel Robinson, Jackie's wife, who put up with all the racism that her husband endured and who, with him, embodied for millions of Americans the meaning of the civil rights' anthem, “We Shall Overcome.”

Columnist George F. Will once wrote that Jackie Robinson [who lived in Stamford] was second – a “very close second” – to Martin Luther King Jr. in the pantheon of African Americans who reversed a nation's racial attitudes and helped create what is, today, the most racially egalitarian society in history. *42* is a useful reminder of just how much those men, and others, had to overcome: Robinson's

BASILICA CALENDAR: MAY 2013

Every Sunday: Sung Vespers/Evening Prayer and Benediction, 4:15-4:45 p.m. in the Basilica.

Every Monday: Holy Hour, with Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament and the Rosary: 7 p.m. in the Basilica.

Every Wednesday: Latin Reading Group, 6:15 p.m. in the Rectory. • **Legion of Mary**, 7:30 p.m. in the Rectory.

Every Thursday: Introduction to Biblical Greek class, 6:30 p.m. in the Rectory.

Every Friday: Holy Name Men's Society, 7-8 a.m. in the Rectory.

Tuesday, May 7: Sacrament of Confirmation, 7 p.m. in the Basilica.

Thursday, May 9: Feast of the Ascension, a Holy Day

of Obligation. Masses: Wednesday, May 8, at 5:15 p.m.; Ascension Thursday at 8 a.m., 12:10 p.m., and 5:15 p.m.

Saturday, May 11: First Holy Communion, 10 a.m. Mass in the Basilica.

Sunday, May 12: Procession and Crowning of Mary, during the 10 a.m. Family Mass.

Sunday, May 19: St. Anne Society, following the 5 p.m. Mass. Celebration of the Sacraments and Presentation of Awards: Perfect Mass Attendance, Perfect Class Attendance, and Class Leadership Award. Pizza and pasta served.

Thursday, May 30: 127th Anniversary of the Dedication of St. John the Evangelist Church in 1886. A plenary indulgence is offered to all on this day, subject to the usual conditions: Sacramental Confession, Holy Communion, and prayers for the intentions of the Holy Father.

teammates are, to put it gently, unenthusiastic about his presence among them; the Phillies' race-baiting manager, Ben Chapman, mercilessly harasses Number 42 when he comes up to the plate; the Cardinals' Enos Slaughter deliberately spikes Robinson on a routine play at first base; Pirates' pitcher Fritz Ostermueller throws a killer pitch that smashes into Robinson's temple (in the days before batting helmets); potty-mouthed fans remind us just how foul American racial epithets could be – and how children were taught to imitate the sins of their parents.

And through it all, Jackie Robinson, in that first, crucial season, stuck to the promise he had made to Branch Rickey: he would have the courage not to fight back, save in playing some of the most electrifying baseball ever seen, especially on the basepaths.

Rickey was dubbed “the Mahatma” by a Brooklyn sportswriter who thought the Dodger G.M.'s style akin to Mohandas Ghandi, whom John Gunther once described as “an incredible combination of Jesus Christ, Tammany Hall, and your father.” And to the credit of screenwriter Brian Helgeland, *42* doesn't gloss over Rickey's Christian faith, or Jackie Robinson's, and the role that Christian conviction played in forging their relationship and their ultimate victory.

Still, when the packed crowd in that Minneapolis theatre burst into applause at the end of the movie a few weeks ago, I didn't read it as an endorsement of Methodist theology or piety.

Rather, it seemed to me welcome evidence that, amidst vast cultural and political confusions, Americans still believe in moral truths, moral absolutes, and moral courage – and yearn for opportunities to celebrate them.

There's an important lesson in that for the country's religious and political leaders.

– George Weigel

Weigel is Distinguished Senior Fellow of the Ethics and Public Policy Center in Washington, DC.



ARCHBISHOP OF TURIN CESARE NOSIGLIA BEFORE THE SHROUD OF TURIN, ON DISPLAY FOR A SPECIAL TV APPEARANCE ON MARCH 30, 2013. (AP PHOTO/ALESSANDRO DI MARCO, POOL)

On Easter weekend, Pope Francis recorded a video message for the special exhibition of the Shroud of Turin on Italian television, arranged as part of the “Year of Faith.” New testing has now dated the burial cloth of Jesus to the first century.

Dear Brothers and Sisters, I join all of you gathered before the Holy Shroud, and I thank the Lord who, through modern technology, offers us this possibility. Even if it takes place in this way, we do not merely “look”, but rather we venerate by a prayerful gaze. I would go further: we are, in fact, looked upon upon ourselves. This face has eyes that are closed, it is the face of One who is dead, and yet mysteriously He is watching us, and in silence He speaks to us. How is this possible? How is it that the faithful, like you, pause before this icon of a man scourged and crucified? It is because the Man of the Shroud invites us to contemplate Jesus of Nazareth. This image, impressed upon the cloth, speaks to our heart and moves us to climb the hill of Calvary, to look upon the wood of the Cross, and to immerse ourselves in the eloquent silence of love.

“By means of the Holy Shroud, the Word of God comes to us.”

Let us, therefore, allow ourselves to be reached by this look, which is directed not to our eyes but to our heart. In silence, let us listen to what He has to say to us from beyond death itself. By means of the Holy Shroud, the unique and supreme Word of God comes to us: Love made Man, incarnate in our history; the merciful love of God who has taken upon Himself all the evil of the world to free us from its power. This disfigured face resembles all those faces of men and women marred by a life which does not respect their dignity, by war and violence which afflict the weakest. And yet, at the same time, the face in the Shroud conveys a great peace; this tortured body expresses a sovereign majesty. It is as if it let a restrained but powerful energy within it shine through, as if to say: Have faith, do not lose hope; the power of the love of God, the power of the Risen One overcomes all things.

So, looking upon the Man of the Shroud, I make my own the prayer which St. Francis of Assisi prayed before the Crucifix: “Most High, glorious God, enlighten the shadows of my heart, and grant me a right faith, a certain hope and perfect charity, sense, and understanding, Lord, so that I may accomplish Your holy and true command. Amen.”

“That boy, Will, has our family stutter! Can it be?”

CHAPTER ELEVEN

Days of rain had washed Hosea County anew. The air was clean, the sky bright, and the night stars brilliant enough to grab from the sky. Addie Tutter felt as free and as happy as the air that rippled into the roofless top of Doc Hendricks' Jeep. She looked at Harry. She loved the frown of concentration that furrowed his brow, maneuvering through traffic. He's so perfect, she thought, so strong, so very masculine! She gazed at his profile, drinking in this man who was completely and wonderfully hers.

Harry caught her gaze, “Know how much I love you?”

Addie nodded yes. “And I love you so, so much. Did we waste our 12 years? Sometimes I think that had we struggled together, we'd have children by now and things would be very different. It hurt to wait. It was a struggle for me.” She pressed into his shoulder. “We made a promise and we kept it.”

“Darling, regrets are the Devil's playground. The best to come started the moment you said yes!” Harry winked and grinned. He meant every word. “His Eminence is quite a guy. I think he looks at you as his daughter. When you said we'd like a date in June he was very happy to accommodate!”

Addie laughed, pulling herself closer to him. “Yes, maybe we can have it in the late afternoon, letting him rest after his noon Mass. We should begin pre-Cana with him in a few weeks.”

Harry turned the Jeep onto a cross-town road, the shortcut to Addie's house. As he began the turn, the flashing red lights of a car in distress made him pull a wide turn. Reaching for his medical kit, he pulled to the curb in front of the car.

“That's a woman waving.” He pulled to a stop. “Can we help out?” he called.

“Oh, thank you for stopping! Our car just stalled and it won't start!” she called back.

Addie and Harry hurried to the car. He pressed his police hand phone. “Hi, this is Doc Hendricks. I have a stalled car with a



“Addie's eyes were wide, her teeth grasped her lower lip. She could hardly say a word. Finally, almost in a rasp: ‘Are, are you saying, Mrs. Parker, that his speech impediment is hereditary?’”

family, at this fix. Can you send a car?”

“Roger that, Doc, one's on the way,” came a quick reply.

Approaching the car, he said, “Hello, I'm Doc Hendricks, and this is Judge Tutter. Everything ok? Police are on the way.”

“Hi, I'm Isz Hunter. It just stalled here in the middle of the intersection! My husband's on his way!”

“Hey! Judge Tutter! It's me, Park!” a young voice called from the car.

“Park Hunter! The best basketball player in town!” Addie exclaimed in surprise.

“This is my Mom Isz and my brother Will.” Isz Parker took her hand. “How do you do, Judge. I know you, Doctor Hendricks; you

did such a spectacular job putting the Fair together.” Her laugh was sweet and softly said. “You should do it for us every year. It was a gigantic success!”

“Why, thank you! Nice to see you again, Park. Your brother Will? Nice to meet you, son.” Will nodded, silent.

Isz Parker leaned toward him. “Say hello to Judge Tutter and the doctor, Willie.”

“Ta... Ta... Ta-atter, Tutter, Hi, Judge. Ha... Ha hello, da-da-doctor.”

Isz's smile was loving and not at all one of concern, “Park was just like Will until he turned 12. I mean, the same way of speaking. We guess that William has another year or so to go before his voice clears up.”

Addie's eyes were wide, her teeth grasped her lower lip. She could hardly say a word. Finally, almost in a rasp: “Are, are you saying, Mrs. Parker, that his speech impediment is hereditary?”

“Why, yes. Here is the police car...”



Addie was silent all the way home. Finally, comfortable in the Great Chair, she felt shock growing deeper by the moment, rooted in utter dismay. Red-faced, almost shaking, her heart beating almost too rapidly, she shook her head quickly, attempting to regain control. She looked at Lillie and Harry. “That boy, Will, has our family stutter! It's like hearing myself 30 years ago. Over and over again!”

Lillie brought some tea. “Has to be a coincidence, Addie, and it's an extraordinary one, to say the least.”

“I don't think it's a coincidence. His mother said that Parker had the same impediment until a few years ago. It's a family thing, just like ours.”

Lillie shot up. "Good Lord, Addie, this is too big a coincidence. If there is a link between you and them, DNA will solve that question instantly!"

Harry smiled. "Does the name Hunter have any relevance to your family tree, Addie?"

Addie's eyes misted. She looked into Harry's soft and emoted face; a smile of recollection and dim memory broadened into a romantic grin. "I recall Great Grandfather's stories of his family in Virginia, how after Great Granduncle Hosea's death, he couldn't go home and face the family. He blamed himself for his brother's death and, especially, the broken dreams of Hosea's fiancée, Sally Hunter! They were to be married the Christmas of that very year!"

"Parker Hunter! This is crazy!" Addie reached across the chair to Harry.

Suddenly, Lillie stood, waving to everyone to stop talking. An incredulous thought made her wave again. As quick as that, her thought had found what could be the answer to everything!

Lillie choked with anticipation: "Addie. Isn't there an old oil-skin packet in your safe at the courthouse?"

"Why, yesss, it's to be opened in 2022. It's in grandfather's second Will! To be opened 200 years after his death. No one has any idea of its content."

"Yes!" interjected Lillie, "And doesn't the Will read that it is to be opened on that date, or earlier, if 'a direct heir deems dire need'?"

"Dear Lillie. You recall as much, if not more, of this family than I do! How can we live without you? If tomorrow doesn't tell us anything, DNA will. Without you, Lillie, where would we be?"



Of a sudden, Lillie shot up; hands to her face, she fell back into her chair. A shiver she couldn't suppress trembled her fingers. Addie's

last words had exposed a deep secret.

"Lillie, dear, what's wrong?" Addie said. You're trembling!"

Lillie gasped. "Hadley and I have made an offer on a little cottage just behind the courthouse!"

Harry found his voice first. "You've what? A cottage? But why, Lillie?"

"But why?" Addie repeated, her eyes flushed with anxiety.

Lillie's mind raced, she had to speak carefully and be absolutely nonchalant. She had to ask the question she's feared all her life. "Don't you see Addie?" she asked, looking

"After lunch tomorrow, I want to close the loop with Chief Joanna, Detective Monty, and that Canadian spy-woman. A murderess is at large!"

to be more curious than afraid, to mask the fear that clutched her very heart.

"When," she smiled, "when you turn this old place over to the County, you know, as an historic site, it's also in the Will. You'll be looking for a place. . . ." No matter what was to be said in the next few minutes, her life would cease to have its present meaning. For years she knew that when Addie married, everything would change. She was prepared to take the initiative and make things easy for her.

Addie took the wood poker from her hand. "Lillie, my dear, dear Lillie. We are afraid the County will have a long time waiting for this house. Tell her, Harry what we've been thinking."

Harry frowned, worried what Lillie would think of their plan. "When June comes, Lillie, you will have a bigger family on your hands, Lord knows how big this family will grow. We're sure you'll want to take on some help!"

Lillie froze, not daring to signal anything

but the most agreeable and positive expression.

"Addie and I want to add on a small wing to the house, one that would connect to our rooms, about the size of a new suite of rooms for us: bigger bedroom, a nursery, if God wills, and you, Lillie, have to design that latter part. We need room for my office and research and, maybe, a small workout room. Billie's brother is an architect and will get the ball rolling this coming Saturday! What do you think?"

Addie watched carefully for Lillie's reaction; after all, Lillie had raised her. Would she prefer a life of her own?

After moments, Lillie could no longer hold back her emotions. She began to weep, a deep and silent sobbing that released more than she realized.

"Since you took your first steps, Addie, I knew that this time would come. You would marry, and I'd surely retire. But just now, you and Harry have made this one of the happiest of days. No, my very dear family, I will never need 'help' around this house, no matter how big you make it! I don't care how many children you bring home. A nursery? I can't wait! There is a great deal of work to do and I am so proud and happy." With that, more tears, but quite obviously happy ones.

"Oh, and another thing – wouldn't I fit in the category of Grandmother of the Bride? I know it's none of my business, but wouldn't Joanna be the better Maid of Honor?" The three began to laugh in giddy relief, quite content with the turn of events!

"That said, I am going to fix us a late-evening supper. After all, tomorrow is the Will and Saturday is just a few days away. After lunch tomorrow, I want to close the loop with Chief Joanna, Detective Monty, and that Canadian spy-woman. A murderess is at large!"

– A. Moses Attleboro

The Tutterville Saga concludes in the next edition of THE EAGLE.

Our Lady of Guadalupe, Patroness of the Americas

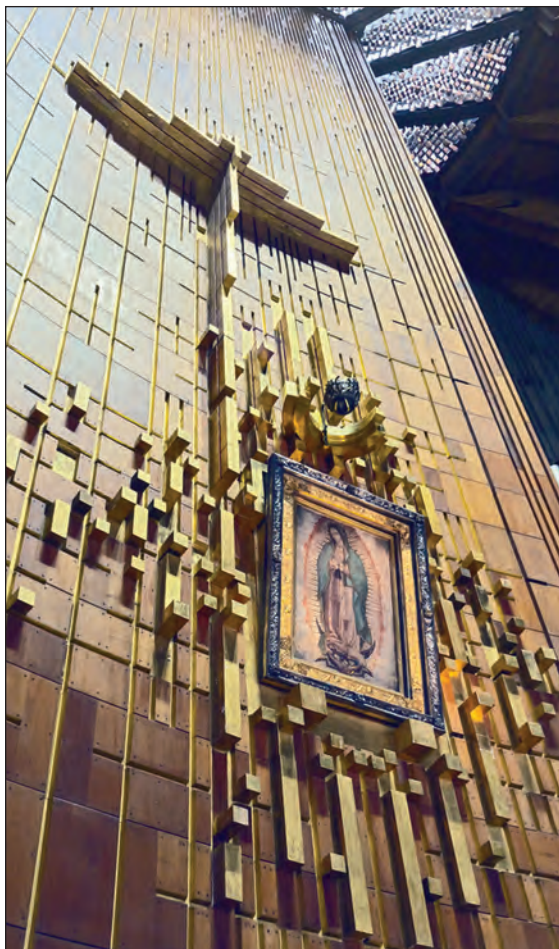
“Moreover the light of the moon will be as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun will be sevenfold, as the light of seven days, in the day when the Lord binds up the hurt of His people, and heals the wounds inflicted by His blow.”

– Isaiah 30:26

One of the interesting similarities among the various Marian Apparitions is the fact that Our Lady always seems to appear to the poor, the marginalized, and the most humble people. At Fatima, she appeared to three shepherd children, and at LaSalette, she appeared to two shepherd children; at Lourdes, the humble Bernadette, and in the West of Ireland, she appeared to several humble residents of the hamlet known as Knock, to name but a few.

In Mexico, Our Lady of Guadalupe (Patron Saint of the Americas) appeared to Juan Diego, a poor, 55-year-old farmer who walked 15 miles every day to attend Holy Mass. It was on one of those days, December 9, 1531, when he encountered the Blessed Mother. As the story goes, Mary asked him to go to the local Bishop and tell him that she wanted a church built on the spot where she met Juan Diego. The Bishop would not believe him unless he provided a sign to prove his claim. And so, the Blessed Mother provided the most extraordinary sign: she told Juan to collect roses she provided that were growing out of season and, after she had arranged them for him in his cloak (the *Tilma*), she told him to bring them to the Bishop.

When Juan Diego opened his *Tilma* to show the Bishop the miraculous roses, the Bishop gazed on an even greater sign – the image of Mary on the *Tilma*. Moreover, this simple garment made from organic material would normally have disintegrated after a few years.



THE *TILMA*, THE MIRACULOUS IMAGE OF OUR LADY, IS DISPLAYED ABOVE THE HIGH ALTAR IN THE BASILICA IN MEXICO CITY.

But this miraculous *Tilma* with Our Lady's image upon it still hangs above the High Altar in the Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe in Mexico City – nearly 500 years later.

The extraordinary miracles of Our Lady among the people of Mexico in the 16th century call to mind the vision of St. John in the Book of Revelation: “*And a great portent appeared in Heaven, a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars; she was with child*” (Revelation 12:1-2). Appearing to the people as a beautiful young pregnant woman “*clothed with the sun,*” our Blessed Mother enabled the people to understand that she truly was the Mother of God. They eagerly came to the

waters of Baptism and were healed of false notions.

Interestingly, Mary appeared at a time of oppression and violence in that region. Five hundred years later, it seems a different sort of violence permeates the region: corruption and intimidation. And yet, she is there to comfort all who come to her. Mexico City, one of the world's largest cities, is among the most dangerous cities in the world. Despite enormous natural resources, Mexico is rated as a third-world country.

It was a tremendous grace to visit the Basilica and offer Mass there in a small chapel and to see the *Tilma* while celebrating Mass. While fear and violence seem to cast a veil over the lives of the people there, the Shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe is like an oasis of peace. Its sprawling piazza is lined with various churches and monuments. The new Basilica, built in the round, was completed in 1976, and can hold 10,000 people! Masses are offered on the hour throughout the day, and the 6:00 p.m. Mass each of the three days of our pilgrimage was standing room only. I imagine it is that way every day.

Despite the poor conditions in the surrounding neighborhoods and in general throughout Mexico, the pilgrims visiting the Shrine were joyful. They knew they were loved, and they seemed to have a great desire to share the Light of Christ with one another.

Beside the Basilica and along the piazza are various other churches, including the old Basilica, which had been closed recently due to structural problems. Today, there is Perpetual Adoration in the Old Basilica. The Pocito Chapel and the Capuchins' Church also line the piazza. At the far end, a church was built over the hermitage of St. Juan Diego. It was there



THE ENORMOUS PIAZZA IN FRONT OF THE SHRINE OF OUR LADY OF GUADALUPE,
WHICH MANY PILGRIMS APPROACH ON THEIR KNEES.

that the four apparitions took place. Well-appointed gardens and statues spread out behind the churches and continue up Tepeyac Hill. At the top of the hill, a church has been constructed to mark the place where Mary made the roses miraculously grow out of season.

One of the most remarkable memories I had of my pilgrimage to the Shrine was witnessing the extraordinary faith of the people. Many pilgrims approached

“Appearing to the people as a beautiful young pregnant woman ‘clothed with the sun’ our Blessed Mother enabled the people to understand that she truly was the Mother of God.”

the Basilica traveling from the far end of the Shrine on their knees. One young father did so carrying his child as his wife walked beside him with her hand on his shoulder. While their petition was known only to Our Lord and Our Lady, their faith was known to all. They often entered the gates of the Shrine in grand processions, singing and dancing and filled with joy. It seemed that they

understood their Catholic identity.

The Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of God, is our spiritual mother by virtue of our Baptism, and she loves us more deeply, more tenderly than we could ever comprehend. There is a beautiful phrase attributed to Mary which states, “If you knew how much you were loved, you would cry tears of joy!” Yet, so many seem to be unaware of this truth and are in need of the healing rays of Christ.

Mary is leading us to that Light. Naturally, she is fighting for our salvation through her powerful intercession with her Son. At the same time, she is appealing to all of us through the grace of her apparitions, pleading with us to return to God.

Like John the Baptist, Mary beckons us to repent and to live holy lives – to live the Gospel. She is the Queen of Heaven and Earth, yet she stoops down to us, to encourage us and lead us along a path of conversion into the arms of our Heavenly Father.

– Rev. Terry Walsh

Fr. Walsh is Parochial Vicar and Director of Religious Education at the Basilica.



Pope Francis’ Prayer Intentions

MAY 2013

General Intention: Administrators of Justice. That administrators of justice may act always with integrity and right conscience.

Missionary Intention: Seminaries. That seminaries, especially those of mission churches, may form pastors after the Heart of Christ, fully dedicated to proclaiming the Gospel.

POPE CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5

system of power and domination, opposed to people who lord it over other people. St. Francis’ simplicity and humility gave new life to the Church of the 13th century.

Our understanding of Pope Francis and his vision has to be regarded as still superficial. But I think it is a watershed moment for the Church. I believe the new Pope will be able to address some unmet spiritual hunger of our times and young people. He strikes me as a man who can speak in a familiar way about God and the things of God to a secular world whose soul is slowly starving and has been waiting for the Church to find them.

– Dr. Thomas Hicks

Dr. Hicks is Professor Emeritus of Theology and Psychology at Sacred Heart University in Fairfield.

Happiness is . . . doing what God wants me to do

“Happiness is anyone and anything at all that’s loved by you.” So say the words of a song from the musical *You’re a Good Man Charlie Brown*. While this definition of happiness may elicit a warm, fuzzy feeling from those who see the musical, it was not particularly useful during a debate in my theology class at Kolbe Cathedral High School last week.

As we discussed the many and varied aspects of the Sacrament of Matrimony, I pointed out the need on the part of the couple to intend to be married permanently and to be faithful to one another, as well as their intention to be open to life. These intentions, along with other factors, distinguish the Sacrament of Matrimony from a simple contractual arrangement between two people.

Once the Sacrament of Matrimony is exchanged, it is considered permanent. One cannot get “un-baptized”, “un-confirmed”, or “un-married” from this sacramental perspective. This explanation led to a lengthy discussion of divorce, the annulment process, and many other related issues, including the happiness of the couple.

If people are unhappy in their marriage, argued one student, they should be able to leave that marriage and enter another one. Unfortunately, this happens all the time, and seems reasonable enough on the surface, but we need to be a little clearer in our thinking. What exactly is “happiness”?

My student defined “happiness” as essentially “doing whatever you want”. Some would add, “as long as it doesn’t hurt anyone else.” If I am not happy with my spouse, should I not be able to leave him or her and go live with someone with whom I am happier?

It took me a while to steer the students away from thinking about their own happiness toward thinking about



“Happiness is anyone and anything at all that’s loved by you.” So says the musical ‘You’re a Good Man Charlie Brown’. While this definition of happiness may elicit a warm, fuzzy feeling from those who see the musical, it is not particularly useful.”

someone else’s. For example, I told them a story of a married couple with two young children who seemed “happy” until one of the spouses “fell in love” with someone else and left marriage and children to be “happier”. The spouse left behind and the two children were devastated (i.e. not so happy).

All sorts of similar cases are imaginable. When someone steals my car and gets away with it, he is happy, but I am not too happy. Why is it that so many movie star types do whatever they want but are clearly not happy? Perhaps we need a better definition of happiness than “doing whatever I want.”

I suggested a Christian definition: Happiness is doing what God wants me to do. Now, at first glance this definition is not particularly appealing to teenagers (or grown-ups either). They already “have” to do what

Mom and Dad (or the Boss) want them to do and it never makes them very “happy”. But in fact, when we reason that God loves us and only wants the best for us, it becomes clearer that to live the way God would have us live will make us happiest.

If we consider Aristotle’s understanding of happiness (*eudaimonia*) as “that activity of the soul that functions in accord with excellence,” or “life lived in accord with intellectual and moral virtue,” we can see that happiness results from doing what we ought to do, or what we were created to do, rather than from doing what we mistakenly think we want to do.

Returning to our question of the happiness of married couples, everyone who has been married or has grown up in a household with married parents knows that not every moment of every day is “happy”. Married couples go through difficult times just like monks, priests, nuns, firemen, astronauts, shopowners, and everyone under the sun. While there are cases in which married couples simply cannot maintain a life together, working through the “unhappy” days of a marriage is part of what it means to love someone and to be happy.

The happiness which comes to those who do their best to do what they ought to do is completely different from the fleeting “happiness” which comes to those who do whatever they want to do.

In the end I was not able to convince my 15-year-old student that her notion of happiness is incomplete. But I was able to help her see things from another point of view. God willing she will have many years to learn the true meaning of happiness and to enjoy it forever.

– Rev. F. John Ringley, Jr.

Fr. Ringley is Spiritual Director of Kolbe Cathedral High in Bridgeport.

“The Song of Bernadette” (1943): A Saint is born

Here in glorious May when we luxuriate in the joys of a long-awaited Spring, we especially remember the Blessed Virgin Mary, to whom we dedicate this month. And so it is fitting that we recall 1943's *The Song of Bernadette*, a touching yet powerful chronicle of the miraculous visitations of Our Lady to St. Bernadette Soubirous at Lourdes in 1858.

This encounter with the eternal at the age of 14 forever changed the life of this sickly young girl. From the day of her first vision at the grotto at Massabielle, France, her remaining days were fraught with both joy and sorrow, much like the life of the “beautiful little lady” who appeared to her.

The movie is quite faithful to the actual events at Lourdes, with a just few plot contrivances inserted here and there. Director Henry King does a wonderful job of portraying the poverty of the Soubirous family; in fact, the whole film stresses that most Catholic of doctrines: that poverty and suffering – stumbling blocks to the rest of the world – can cultivate virtue and lead to eternal glory. Indeed, Our Lady told Bernadette, “*I cannot promise you happiness in this world, only in the next.*”

Jennifer Jones, in her first starring role, is indeed lovely as Bernadette, with that innocent, faraway quality which served her well throughout most of her career, particularly in the haunting *Portrait of Jennie*, which we'll review at a later date. And while her Oscar-winning performance is paramount to the film, to me the most compelling parts of the storyline deal with the disbelief and scorn exhibited by



secondary characters; particularly those of Sister Marie-Thérèse Vauzous (Gladys Cooper) and of the Imperial Prosecutor, Vital Dutour, played with elegance and wit by Vincent Price, himself a Catholic convert.

“Oh God, I have tried to storm the gates of Heaven by sacrificing myself. I know now that we must be chosen; that we must be graced, as you have graced this child. God forgive me!”

Sister Marie-Thérèse, Bernadette's teacher and, later, novice-mistress at the convent at Nevers where she took the veil, is so full of jealousy that her heart becomes twisted by it. When assigned to care for her, the older nun is very severe with Bernadette, lecturing

that she does not deserve to see the Blessed Virgin because she has not suffered enough. After learning that Bernadette is dying from tuberculosis of the bone, she prays,

“Oh God, I have tried to storm the gates of Heaven by sacrificing myself. I know now that we must be chosen; that we must be graced, as you have graced this child. God forgive me! I have persecuted her and did not believe her because I was filled with hate and envy. God help me to serve this chosen soul for the rest of my days.”

And so she does.

But it is Price as the supercilious Dutour who steals the show; watching the pilgrims with the snide arrogance of modern atheists and agnostics, sneering: “*Poor ignorant sheep; why do they come?*” Ironically, he finds this out near the end of the film when, stricken with throat cancer, he approaches the grotto, thinking:

“I am a stranger here. I am not like these thousands of souls flickering hopefully and brightly in the darkness. My pride has always stood between them and me, the pride of being a superior human being . . . I'll be alone because I have loved no one and nothing, not even myself.”

He then slides to his knees, bows his head, and whispers, “*Pray for me, Bernadette.*”

– Lisa Fabrizio

Lisa is a columnist for the [American Spectator](http://www.spectator.org) (www.spectator.org).

Each month, Msgr. Stephen DiGiovanni will answer your questions about the Catholic Faith and Church. Send questions to: MailtheEagle@gmail.com.

Some people think “Christ” is Jesus’ last name. Why do we say “Jesus Christ”? Should it be, “Jesus the Christ” or simply “Jesus” or just “Christ”?

Our Lord asked His Apostles, “*Who do people say I am?*” And the answer of Simon Peter was, “*You are the Christ, the Son of the Living God*” (Matthew 16:16).

Since the beginning, then, the Church has joined the name of Jesus with the Greek title of *Christ* – the “Anointed of God.” Christ, then, is not a last name, but a title identifying Jesus as the One Son of God, anointed as the Messiah. We don’t say “Jesus the Christ” as we might identify “Joe the Plumber”, because Joe’s whole existence is separate from his job; whereas Jesus by His very essence is the Anointed One, Christ. He wasn’t a carpenter Monday-Friday, and Christ on Saturdays. Christ is Jesus’ very being, sent by the Father.

Supporters of same-sex “marriage” claim that to deny this is to impose a religious definition of marriage on an age-old secular “right”. Since marriage existed long before the Catholic Church, when did the Church decide that marriage had a religious dimension and should be regarded as a Sacrament?

Marriage and reproduction have always been linked, at least since the beginning of human culture and society. As culture developed, so, too, did the recognition that social stability was important by linking human mating with the notion of human family as the essential basis of human culture.

The Catholic Church’s teaching about marriage is that this relationship is natural, designed by God, whereby a man and a woman are God’s vehicles for mutual support, reproduction, and preservation of the species. Once

God began revealing Himself more and more to humankind, especially through the Patriarchs and Prophets of Israel, the reality of the importance of this foundational human relationship of a man and a woman was given a more explicit sacred aspect: man and woman consecrated their relationship that God might bless them and make their human love fruitful in co-operating with the Creator. Children were seen as a blessing from God throughout the Old Testament centuries.

Since Christ is the fulfillment of the Old Testament, the teachings of His Catholic Church cannot be seen as breaking with those foundational ideas and realities, but as bringing them to a deeper perfection of the individuals involved through Christ. So, for starters, Our Lord teaches clearly that marriage between one man and one woman is permanent:

“Have you not read that the Creator from the beginning made them male and female and that He said: ‘This is why a man must leave father and mother, and cling to his wife, and the

“We don’t say ‘Jesus the Christ’ as we might identify ‘Joe the Plumber’, because Joe’s whole existence is separate from his job; whereas Jesus, by His very essence, is the Anointed One, Christ. He wasn’t a carpenter Monday-Friday, and Christ on Saturdays.”

two become one body? They are no longer two, therefore, but one body. So then, what God has united, man must not divide” (Matthew 19:3-6; also in Matthew 5:31 ff; Mark 10:2-12; Luke 16:18).

Early in the Church’s life, the notions of permanence in the marriage relationship, and consecrating that marital love to Christ, are foundational. This can be seen in the writings of the Apostles (for example, I Corinthians 7:10-16). The Apostolic Church was also clear in its warnings that certain sexual relationships were unhealthy. Harkening back to creation of Adam and



Quick Answers to Short Questions

Eve, “*In the image and likeness of God*”, whom God blessed and instructed to “*Be fruitful and multiply*” (Genesis 1:27-28), through chapter 19 in the condemnation of Sodom, the Church stood contrary to contemporary society by cautioning true disciples of Christ to pursue virtue in imitation of Christ, either in marriage or in celibacy. The fidelity of the individual to Christ in daily virtue was paramount.

For our 21st-century society, any notion of sexual abstinence or virtue is absurd, so that every friendship should include a sexual component as normal and expected.

But the Church’s teachings about any form of sexual intimacy are founded on one principle: fidelity to Christ in virtue. Sexual intimacy is linked to God’s Creation, and should be entered into only by a man and woman who have devoted themselves to each other in Christ.

Anything other than that is merely self-serving, leading to the opposite of personal or social stability, virtue, or creativity.

– Msgr. Stephen DiGiovanni, H.E.D.

Msgr. DiGiovanni is Pastor of the Basilica.

“Through the Spirit we have become one in soul”

St. Irenaeus (d. c. 202 A.D.), Bishop, Martyr, and Father of the Church, was one of the first theologians. His most famous work, Against Heresies (c. 180 A.D.), was a detailed attack on Gnosticism. This treatise on the Holy Spirit anticipates Pentecost Sunday on May 19.

“**W**hen the Lord told His disciples to go and teach all nations and to 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.”



“We need the dew of God.”



**IGNATIUS
CARDINAL
KUNG
PIN-MEI**

Please pray one
“Hail Mary” daily
for the opening of his
cause of canonization.

THE EAGLE

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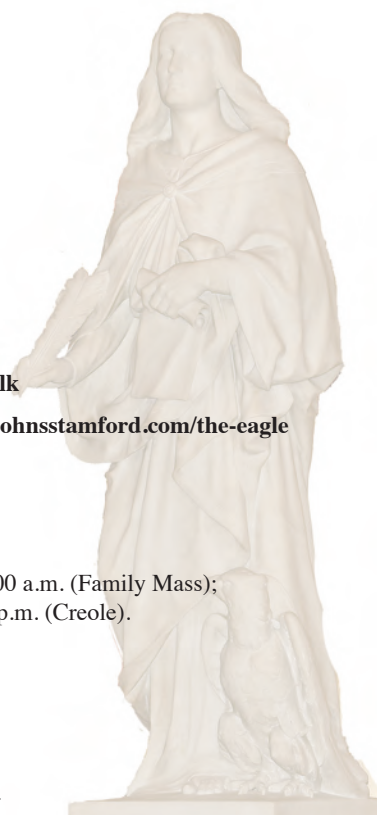
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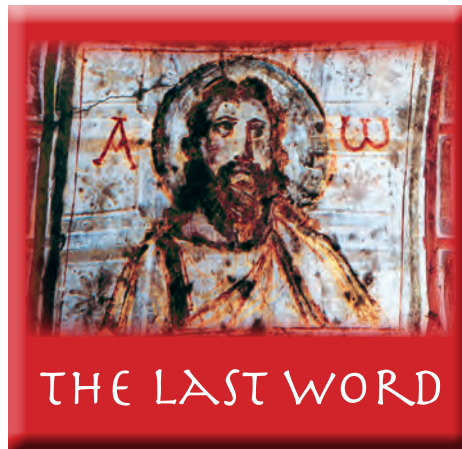
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“The United States is the greatest nation on the planet.” I made that statement last month during a gathering of our Basilica’s Holy Name Society. Some of the parish men present agreed, while some scowled. Both understandable reactions, especially in light of the present government’s positions on certain important issues of life, such as abortion and gay “marriage”, to mention only two.

But my comments were the fruit of real admiration for my “home town” (I was born in Arlington, a few miles from Boston), and for my country, despite the glaring governmental flaws, as the tragedy at the Boston Marathon unfolded before America and the world



and the beginnings of the Cold War in Europe. A sociologist looking at the United States prior to the War may have seen an undisciplined, listless society composed of self-serving individuals, turned in on

respond in a way that no other people ever has. We unite and give our all, truly for the common good. Somewhere in our DNA we all react to threats by terrorists, individuals or governments, who seek to oppress or destroy us. Maybe we mirror the reaction our immigrant ancestors had when similar threats forced them from their homelands in search of Liberty, who lifts her “lamp beside the Golden Door,” as Emma Lazarus wrote.

This country welcomes all, offers to help all, and points all to a good life. But woe to those who trivialize that American generosity by abusing it, as did these two young men from the former Soviet Union. Their families understood with horror the depth of their sons’ perfidy.

We should all have a deep appreciation and awe for the work of America’s law enforcement agencies joining with the



“When the United States is threatened, we respond in a way that no other people ever has. We unite and give our all, truly for the common good.”

on television and the Internet. I was stunned by the fact that the Boston Police, the FBI, and related law enforcement agencies had come together and actually identified the two bombers within a mere few days after the devastating blasts. There, on television, were the faces of two young men, whose heinous actions had destroyed lives, but whose hatred had succeeded in doing the exact opposite of the generally supposed result: uniting the country and the City of Boston in a common goal and action.

The first thoughts that came to mind were about the Second World War

themselves by the Great Depression. That all changed once we were attacked at Pearl Harbor, and all those self-serving, listless young men and women changed the world once united. We won the war, and then we worked to get our former enemies back on their feet, and then returned home.

The Berlin Air lift in 1948-1949 is another example. Following the Soviet Union’s attempt to control all Berlin, they blockaded the city. During the subsequent months, the United States succeeded in flying in more than 1,783,572 tons of food and supplies to the people of Berlin, so they might survive.

When the United States is threatened, we

people of Boston to track down two creeps who in their self-righteous ineptitude succeeded only in joining the ranks of oppressors by their evil actions. For the work of first responders, local health care givers, fire and police personnel, is simply a mirror of what it means to be an American.

My only hope is that, in light of such tragedies, we may come to appreciate the gift God has given to the world in the United States of America, and pray for our nation daily, that it become the perfect and virtuous society we know we can become.

– Msgr. Stephen DiGiovanni, H.E.D.

Msgr. DiGiovanni is Pastor of the Basilica of St. John the Evangelist.

(AP Photo/Michael Dwyer)