



The Pilgrim Shrine of Our Lady of Martyrs



2007 Calendar

UPCOMING EVENTS:

JUNE

- Thurs., June 28 MiniRetreat, Kateri Chapel, 10am - 2 pm

JULY

- Sun., July 8, 3:30 - 6 pm and Mon., July 9, 6 - 8 pm 2-Day Mission, Talks, Healing Service etc. (Father Severson), Coliseum
- **July 13 - July 15 2nd Annual Saint Isaac Jogues Youth Conference**
- Sun., July 15 12:30 pm Mass Blessed Kateri Tekakwitha's Feast Day Celebration
- Thurs., July 26, 10 am-2 pm Mini-Retreat, Kateri Chapel
- Sat., July 28 Mass, Talk, and Healing Service, 10 am-4 pm (Father Machado, SOLT, Rome, Italy), Coliseum

OUR MISSION STATEMENT

The Shrine of Our Lady Of Martyrs is a place of natural beauty and spiritual renewal. We are dedicated to the memory of the martyred Jesuits and Blessed Indian maiden who sanctified this hallowed place. Through the example of the Missionaries' courageous faith, which provides the bedrock of our devotions here, we strive to strengthen the faith of all who visit us. We will always be guided by our dedicated predecessors and our loving Father, so that these historic grounds may be a place of peace, love, prayer, and reconciliation, where each and every pilgrim may be welcomed with joy, and may leave here with a soul refreshed and renewed.

Shrine News

Since 1884 - The Oldest Continually Printed American Publication!

June 24, 2007 issue
Volume CXIII (113), NO. 9

Insights for the Spiritual Journey: Part One

by Peter J. Murray, S.J.

All of us wonder at times about the meaning of our lives. At natural or unexpected turning points, in moments of crisis, and in times of failure we may well ask if there is a purpose to our own life. Does God have a plan for me? Is there something I should be doing with my Life? These and other troubling questions can easily arise.

Saint Ignatius confronted those questions in his own turbulent life, back in the 16th century. His pathway led him from a raging battlefield to a Spanish castle where he recovered from a serious injury; to the Holy Land, to Paris and on to Rome. During that grace-filled time, he had visions, found God and founded the fledgling Society of Jesus. That order he helped to start became known as "the Jesuits" and was instrumental in staging what has been known as the "Catholic Counter-Reformation."

We come to a point where we want God dramatically to tell us what he wants us to do with our life! The answer God gives is not always "easily heard" nor is it always as clear and powerfully forceful as it was for Ignatius. But God will help us if we pray, and the Bible and lives of the Saints have many examples of those who prayed to the Lord, and meditated, and thereby found a new direction for their ongoing lives.

One of the wonderful principles that Ignatius discovered while meditating on God's vision for life was the realization called "the first principle and foundation." Much of it sounds like "basic Catholic catechism" teaching and so, here is the first part of that realization from St. Ignatius:

"We are created to praise, reverence and serve God. All the other things on the face of the earth are created to help us fulfill this purpose. It follows that we are to use all other things inasmuch as they help us to fulfill our purpose; and we ought to refrain from using these things insofar as they prove a hindrance."

It is good to meditate on that Principle during these weeks of summer. In a later article, I will mention other insights drawn from this Principle, or from other sections from the Spiritual Exercises (these, drawn up by Ignatius, have been used by many religious people over the centuries), insights that have assisted me, and may prove a help to you in your spiritual journey!

What's Inside?

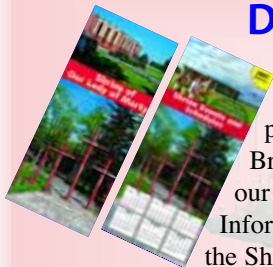
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Stewardship Offerings

Weekend of 6/16 - 6/17 \$3147.00

Thank you for your generosity!

DON'T MISS IT!



Don't forget to pick up our Schedule Brochure with most of our events listed and an Informational Brochure on the Shrine!

Wedding Rosaries can now be special ordered.

See page 4 for more details.

Find it in the Gift Shop at the Visitor's Center

Next Novena

Assumption Novena

August 7 - 15

Intention Envelopes found in the Coliseum and Visitor's Center

Visit Our Website:
www.MartyrShrine.org

Call Us:
(518) 853-3033

Email Us:
Marketing@MartyrShrine.org

SHRINE SEASON:
April 28-Oct 21, 2007

MASSES

- **Sun.:** 9:00 a.m., 10:30 a.m., 12:30 p.m., & 4:00 p.m.
- **Sat. & Daily:** 11:30 a.m., & 4:00 p.m.

CONFESSIONS BEFORE MASSES

- **Sun. & Sat.:** 30 min
- **Daily:** 15 min

DEVOTIONS

- **Adoration:**
Wed.: 5:00 - 7:00 p.m.
(Kateri Chapel)
- **Benediction:**
Sun. & Feasts: 3:30 p.m.
- **Blessing with Relics**
(of the Martyrs and Blessed Kateri):
Mon. - Sat.: 3:45 p.m.
- *Stations of the Cross and Rosary available for private devotion.*

NOVENAS

9 Days of Masses, see front cover for next novena.

VISITOR'S CENTER

and Expanded Gift Shop Hours:

- **Sun. - Fri.:** 10 a.m. - 5 p.m.
- **Sat.:** 10 a.m. - 5:30 p.m.

MARTYRS MEMORIAL

CENTER AND MUSEUM:

Mon. - Fri.: 12 - 5 pm

Sat. - Sun.: 10:30am-5:30 pm

GUIDED TOURS

Call Shrine Office to reserve a time for tours.

MORE INFORMATION?

- www.MartyrShrine.org.
- Fran Ralph, Administrative Coordinator 518-853-3033 x 221

In Praise of Father George

I came to visit this campus not knowing any of its residents, really. I came, open and unencumbered by prejudice of any kind. I came for the love of the peace and tranquility that can rarely be found other than in this place...the site of martyrdom...the site that ever reminds me that to follow Jesus means to be willing to shed a little blood, and sweat, and yes, maybe even tears. And in this place, I found wonderful followers. I met Father Peter Murray, who is director of this Shrine, who tries to help to keep its mission meaningful. I met Brother Ted Bender who strives to keep this place secure. I've become acquainted with Father Bob McGuire whose personal mission is to believe that God's intent, we "are wonderful" and "capable of serving the world."

But now, recently, I have come to meet Father George Restrepo...a relative newcomer to these sacred grounds. In him, there is no pretense, no supposition, no expectation...there is only the NOW to be seized, absorbed, and shared. He is both a student and scholar of the arts. He has studied the production of the human experience, studied the emotion of cinematic art...and, in the end, delivers a candid perspective of the human psyche-exposed in all brokenness, but with the hope of redemption. Complex, and yet so simple and straightforward, our Father George is the man who seeks to touch each of our hearts here and now. He makes an effort to greet the pilgrim groups upon their arrival. He takes their group photo, chats them up, shows them the turf, the lay of the land. And when these lucky groups encounter his simplicity of purpose, they are transformed and blessed by the fulfillment of his mission. Is Father George really that special? No, not really. But we who know him have been graced by his presence. Maybe you should come and see for yourself.

Thoughtful Meanderings

by Fr. Robert McGuire, S.J.

I must admit that this is taken from Ann Coulter's Book "Treason". She does say certain significant things when quoting appropriate authors. "...from the time the pilgrims landed in the New World, Americans have been defined by their belief in God. In "Democracy in America", written in 1835, Alex de Tocqueville an extraordinary and perceptive writer observed that Europeans practiced religion from a "barren traditional faith which seems to vegetate in the soul rather than to live" but Americans "combine the notions of Christianity and liberty so intimately that it is impossible to conceive of one without the other." De Tocqueville says: There are certain populations in Europe whose unbelief is only equaled by their ignorance and debasement, while in America one of the freest and most enlightened nations in the world, the people fulfill with fervor all the outward signs of religion."

De Torqueville pronounced religion "the foremost of the political institutions" in America. He said "There exists no country in the world where the Christian religion retains a greater influence over the souls of men than in America. As a result, "while the law permits the Americans to do what they please, religion prevents them from conceiving, and forbids them to commit, what is rash or unjust". My own comment which is probably controversial is: We are at war within our country not only against the terrorists but against spiritual disorder and our traditions. The greatest gift we can give to the world is the love of Jesus Christ as expressed in the Catholic Church and the other Christian Churches.

A Note About Parish Envelopes

Everyone who comes to this Shrine is special to us. When you come to worship with us, we are genuinely blessed by your presence. When we pray together, we are all doubly blessed. There are many pilgrims who journey long distances to share in the graces bestowed on these hallowed grounds. But many, too, are from local communities. And we are equally happy to host all those from both near and afar.

When worshippers come from local parishes, they often bring their offertory envelopes from their own parish churches. We are happy to collect and mail these envelopes back to their respective parishes about once a month. It is our honest hope, too, that while something for another parish is dropped in the collection at Masses here, that the Shrine is offered something as well.

Unlike a parish community, where parishioners often pledge their support, the Shrine is really at the mercy (and the grace) of whomever stops by and is moved to provide a freewill offering. We do not charge an "admission" or a "parking fee;" we do not require specific compensation for special services or mini-retreats. Yet we need to hire many workers: fields need to be mowed, repairs are always being needed, tours are requested, religious articles need to be blessed, the Pilgrim needs to get published every week in season, etc., etc. We depend on the kindness of friends and strangers alike; and we are ever grateful for their generosity. It is what keeps this Shrine alive!

Youth Retreats

Youth Retreat Coming Soon!

The Shrine is host to the annual St. Isaac Jogues Youth Conference, the premier Summer Youth Conference in the Northeast!

The Conference provides everyone with a wonderful opportunity to become closer to God, friends and community. God invites all youth to spend time with Him here in the beautiful Mohawk Valley each summer. Come learn more about the life and wonders God is offering everyone; He has amazing plans for all of us and the world is in desperate need of your gifts and faith. The 2007 Youth Conference is called "OVERFLOW!" and will be held on July 13th, 14th and 15th. Check our website, www.martyrshrine.org for a link to the Youth conference home page, or call the Shrine office for more information.



Everybody knows that nobody is perfect, right? Wrong! Meet the Perfect Personality at the Shrine.

Catholic Vacation

Bible School ages 12-17

Mon., July 16-Fri., July 20th

See more in the flyers around the grounds.

Are you interested in Subscribing to our 2007 Pilgrim Newsletter?

If you would like to subscribe, please fill out this form and enclose it with \$30.00.

Choose One: New Subscription Renewal **Please Print.**

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State

Zip Code

Phone Number

Email Address

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- **Fr. Peter J. Murray, S.J.**,
Director x 222
- **Thomas F. Ralph**,
Assistant Director x 225
- **Fran Ralph**,
Administrative Coordinator. . x 221
- **Melissa Hansen**,
Treasurer x 226
- **Dorothea Smith**,
Gift Shop & Visitor's
Center Manager x 236
- **Anna Bodoh**,
Marketing & Young Adult
Ministry Coordinator x 224
- **Don Wagoner**, Building &
Grounds Supervisor x 237
- **Fr. Robert McGuire, S.J.** . . . x 233
- **Fr. George Restrepo, S.J.** . . . x 232
- **Br. Ted Bender, S.J.** x 234
- **Marie McClumpha**,
Kateri Office x 227

SHRINE COUNCIL:

- Paul Brady
- Dorothy Domkowski
- Ann Foskett
- Rich Kosiba
- Fr. Robert McGuire, S.J.
- Dorothea Smith
- John Morrone
- Fr. Peter Murray, S.J.
- Anthony Noce
- Fran Ralph
- Tom Ralph
- Fr. George Restrepo, S.J.
- Christine Wagoner
- Don Wagoner
- Barbara Whitney
- Paul Whitney

Lost and Found

Can be found in the the Visitor's Center during their hours of operation or by calling them at (518) 853-3033 x 236.

Globalized World Needs the Gospel, Says Pope

Marks 25th Anniversary of Culture Council

Vatican City, (Zenit.org).- In an age of globalization, it is urgent that the Gospel becomes leaven for culture, says Benedict XVI.

This is the message the Pope issued in a meeting with Cardinal Paul Poupard, president of the Pontifical Council for Culture, and other dicastery officials and members. The council is celebrating the 25th anniversary of its establishment by Pope John Paul II.

The Holy Father stated that the importance of the council has become decisive for the Church, "Thanks to the formidable development of the mass media and the resulting intensification of the social network."

"It has become, therefore, evermore urgent that the Church promote cultural development, valuing the human and spiritual quality of both the message and the content," the Pontiff stated.

Benedict XVI continued: "Culture today is inevitably affected by the process of globalization, which, if not constantly accompanied by vigilant discernment, can rebel against man and impoverish rather than enrich him.

"And, how great the challenges we face in this regard in our evangelization efforts!"

Intertwined

The Pope said that "the history of the Church is inseparably linked to the history of culture and art."

The Holy Father made reference to various works, "such as the Summa Theologiae of St. Thomas Aquinas, the 'Divine Comedy,' the Cathedral of Chartres, the Sistine Chapel and the cantatas of Johannes Sebastian Bach."

"These constitute incomparable syntheses of the Christian life and of human expression," said the Pontiff.

Benedict XVI clarified: "If, indeed, these are, so to speak, pinnacles of the synthesis between faith and culture, their encounter is realized daily in the life and the work of the baptized, in that hidden work of art which is the love story of each individual with the living God and with one's neighbor, in the joy and toil of following Christ in everyday life.

"In the cultural arena, Christianity has to offer everyone its powerful capacity for renewing and lifting up, that is, the love of God that becomes human love."

The Pope continued, quoting from the letter with which John Paul II instituted the Pontifical Council for Culture: "Love is a great hidden force lying in the heart of cultures that encourages them to overcome their unavoidable finality, and opening them to him who is its source and summit, giving them, when they are open to his grace, a fullness and richness."

History of the Wedding Rosary

Down Mexico Way

It wasn't a barrel of water beside a Mexican church's door; it was often a couple getting married! This was the original way of doing things in this then all



Catholic land, with them only entering afterwards to attend Mass. During a Mexican wedding, the couple would also be tied together quite literally by the priest, who, after the exchange of vows, would wrap a very large rosary around them at their shoulders, waists, or wrists in a figure of eight looping. Alternates to a rosary for this purpose could be a string of flowers, ribbons, wooden rings, or gold bands for more wealthy families. Then after the wedding, guns would be fired into the air in true Mexican style, before a wedding feast was held. The first dance at this celebratory banquet was often the romantic tradition of everybody linkings hands and surrounding the newlyweds to form a heart shaped design. At the end of the party, another tradition sometimes observed, was the mock recapture of the bride by her family, who would only allow her back to the groom after he made promises about helping them in the future.

The Lazo (Lasso)-Tradition

The tradition of the Lazo or wedding Rosary is prominent in the Hispanic culture and some asian cultures. This wedding rosary is used to symbolize the unification of the couple thorough prayer. The traditional belief is if the couple prays the rosary together every night their marriage will endure. The wedding rosary is actually two individual and complete rosaries which meet and become one before the crucifix. The rosary is placed over the couple, after they have exchanged vows usually as they kneel to recieve communion. This symbolizes two separate persons tied together in the bonds of marriage with Mary and Jesus as the center of their marriage. (The main medalian of Mary and the Crucifix lands between them.)

Custom Order a Lasso Rosary from the Gift Shop for your Wedding at 518-853-3033 x 236 or stop by!

Daily Reflections

Daily Reflection-Solemnity of the Nativity of St. John the Baptist

by Larry Gillick, S.J.

This Sunday (June 24th) is known as "Little Christmas." It is the birth of the sixth-month older cousin of Jesus. There were some who believed John to be the Christ, but the Gospels make it quite clear that his destiny was to be the forerunner and baptizer of the Christ. There is nothing known or written about any friendship they enjoyed after their womb-to-womb meeting during Mary's visitation to John's mother, Elizabeth. John is pictured as having a light to shine toward and upon Jesus, but as the Evangelist John writes in his first chapter, "He was not the light, but came to bear witness to the light." John 1:8.

We hear the prophet Isaiah speak of a "servant" of God in our First Reading on Sunday. The "servant" could have been a person or the nation Israel. From the beginning God called, fashioned and offered this "servant" an important place in extending the glory and kingship of God. The "servant" hears that he is not to toil merely for the restoration and union of Israel, but to open the way for the light to the "nations" that is beyond the borders of God's chosen people. Salvation is going to come to all the world and this "servant" is going to toil for the coming of that salvation.

The Gospel has to do with the birth of John, but even more, his naming. Elizabeth and Zechariah are advanced in age and so the lack of fertility was seen to be a kind of curse. She is found to be pregnant and when her time for deliverance arrives he is born. All come to marvel and give God praise. The neighbors are from the hill country of Judea. They expect his naming at the circumcision to follow custom. His father, in the previous verses, is struck speechless by God for his questioning. His mother announces his name to be John and his father is given a tablet and writes the same. Upon this writing, his speech returns giving thanks and praise to God. After the naming, John grows up and is the man in waiting for God's time to be fulfilled.

Luke deliberately makes strong parallels between the births of John and Jesus. Being barren and being a virgin allows for a divine intervention. Gabriel appears to Zechariah announcing the "good news" of his being given a son. The annunciation to Mary of her having a son is presented by an angel and both are accompanied by prophetic words about their names and their missions. Both Mary and Zechariah have the same questions about how this was going to be since advanced age and Mary's not being wedded would prevent conception. Mary is given comfort and a kind of proof by her hearing that Elizabeth is with child for now six months and Mary can visit her and see for herself. Zechariah leaves his holy duties in the temple without the power to speak.

Names are given and all the people returned home. The neighbors leave here and the shepherds in Bethlehem, praising, marveling, and wondering at what they have seen and heard. Both Mary and Zechariah are presented as singing out in similar words a blessing to God for all that He has done for Israel and for all the nations.

John is born to be the front-runner, the advance-publicity man for the coming on stage of Jesus. We are the co-runners who have been radiated by His Light and extend that Light to the ends of our neighborhoods, the end of our abilities, and to the end of our time. Zechariah, Elizabeth, Joseph and Mary were all mighty little in their times, but all were born with their little-to-do mighty things in their time, for all time. We are "servants" whom the Lord has known before we were born and in our life's time we give birth to Him according to our individual personalities and history. John was born to make known the coming of Jesus. We are born for the remembering of His life, death, and Resurrection. We are born to announce that He lives and gives new birth and life to all the nations.

*"Through the tender compassion of our God,
the dawn from on high shall break upon us."
— Lk. 1:78*

Movie Nights for Single & Married Young Adults

The next Movie Night is on June 30th. \$5.00 donation is requested. Come join us for an evening of fun, food, and friendships!

"An Unfinished Life" with Robert Redford, Jennifer Lopez, Morgan Freeman, and Josh Lucas.

"This powerful story of risk and redemption, Stoic and heartbroken, Einar Gilkyson quietly lives in the rugged Wyoming ranchlands alongside his only trusted friend, Mitch Bradley. Then, suddenly, the woman he blames for the death of his only son arrives at his door broke, desperate and with a granddaughter he's never known. But even as buried anger and accusations resurface, the way is opened for unexpected connection, adventure, and forgiveness."

3:30 pm **Confessions** @ Coliseum Church

4 pm **Mass** @ Coliseum Church

Gift Shop/Visitors Center open till 5 pm

5 pm - 6:30 pm **Dinner at Karens/Tour**
Arrange this with Anna.

6:30 pm Movie

@ the Kateri Museum & Media Center

**Contact Anna @ 853-3033 x 224 or
Marketing@MartyrShrine.org**

Weekly Readings

Sunday: Is 49:1-6, Ps 139:1-3, 13-15, Acts 13:22-26, Lk 1:57-66, 80

Monday: Gen 12:1-9, Ps 33:12-13, 18-20, 22, Matthew 7:1-5

Tuesday: Genesis 13:2, 5-18, Psalm 15:2-5, Matthew 7:6, 12-14

Wednesday: Genesis 15:1-12, 17-18, Psalm 105:1-4, 6-9, Matthew 7:15-20

Thursday: Gen 16:1-12, 15-16 Psalm 106:1-5, Matthew 7:21-29

Friday: Acts 12:1-11, Ps 34:2-9, 2 Tim 4:6-8, 17-18, Matthew 16:13-19

Saturday: Genesis 18:1-15, Luke 1:46-50, 53-55, Matthew 8:5-17

Remembrances

A Touch of Love

Are you interested in a Remembrance?

If you would like to remember someone, please fill out this form and enclose it with \$10.00 for each week you want your Memorial to run in The Pilgrim. **Please Print.**

Name (please print on this form)

Street Address

City

State Zip Code

Phone Number

Email Address

\$10/week # of weeks _____

Weekend Dates _____

Total: \$ _____

Dedication in Remembrance of...

This section will be dedicated to those who might like to remember their loved ones in a special way. For some, it might be an anniversary or birthday of someone who died around this time of year (In Memoriam) ... but it can also be the celebration of a friend's birthday, or a graduation, or a congratulations for someone who just had a baby!

Each week we will publish the names and occasion for remembrance. The cost for each week is only \$10. which will help to offset the Shrine's cost of printing. We will also request that each of those listed be remembered in prayer by all who read their names. And of course, you (the donor) will also be remembered in our general prayers as we always do ... for our benefactors. So it's a win-win situation as a wonderful way to honor someone living or remember someone deceased.

We hope to print your loved ones names here soon.

Fill out the form and place it in the Donation Envelopes in the back of the Coliseum or in the Visitors Center and or mail it in to us.

Please keep those below mentioned in your prayers!

Prayers for the Donors of the Shrine	Pray for Pope Benedict.		Pray for the men and women on USS DENVER
Prayers for Grandma Pritzl for the repose of her soul.	For health of a friend.	Prayers for a good happy death Al and Jim.	
For the summer newlyweds	Prayers for the repose of the soul of Joanne		Prayers for good health of Bruce.
Congratulations, Sr. Mary Agnes on the happy occasion of your 50th Jubilee!	Congratulations graduates.	For the safe return of our soldiers overseas.	
	St. Joseph-help find work.	Prayers for Keith's family.	Thanksgiving for The Jesuits
For a special intention.	Pray for the safety of U.S. Service Men & Women		Thanksgiving for the Shrine Staff.
For peace in the world.		Prayers for a special friend	Happy Birthday Tom Ralph!
Happy Birthday Greg!		Pray for the Staff during the 2007 Shrine Season	
	Pray for the safe trip of all Pilgrims		Happy Birthday Fran!
Prayers for G.P. for good health.		St. Rita, St. Philomena, St. Joseph, St. Therese-special intention and mission.	Prayers for my family

Find it at the Shrine

Many times over the course of the Shrine season, we are asked about certain statues, altars, historical buildings and structures that are dotted throughout the sacred grounds of the Shrine. Starting with next week's Pilgrim, we will be introducing you to various parts of the Shrine with pictures and information that might help you find and learn about many areas of the Shrine and where they are located on the vast grounds here at Auriesville.

The series will be titled "Find it at the Shrine" and we hope it will give you a better understanding of what is here and what its significance is, if you don't already know. It is being prepared by Dorothy Domkowski, a loyal supporter of the Shrine and a member of the Shrine Council.

We hope you will enjoy the series and find it beneficial on your visits to the Shrine of Our Lady of Martyrs.

ONE SIZE FITS ALL

You may have noticed at the doors of the Coliseum, at the Visitor's Center, and in the Martyrs Memorial Museum, there are new donation envelopes this season.

Whether you would like to have your intentions remembered in a novena, or have Masses said, or plaques inscribed as a remembrance of loved ones, or simply to make an offertory contribution when you attend Mass, you can use those convenient "one-size-fits-all" donation envelopes. The top part is perforated ... so that your name and personal information, as well as your designated intentions are kept private by being enclosed into the envelope itself.

If you would like us to send you an extra one to have on hand for future intentions, please simply call the Shrine office.

Lectors Schedule

When lectoring please arrive 15 minutes before Mass. Please first try to find someone if you cannot make it for you scheduled time. If you cannot find anyone call the Shrine as your last option and speak to Fran or Tom Ralph.

— *Thanks for all you do!*

Saturday, June 23rd
4 p.m. Ambrose H.

Sunday, June 24th
9 a.m. Tony N.
10:30 a.m. Cathy O.
12:30 a.m. Marion S.
4 p.m. Audrey D.

Saturday, June 30th
4 p.m. Ann F.

Sunday, July 1st
9 a.m. Phil V.
10:30 a.m. Anna B.
12:30 a.m. Ann F.
4 p.m. Richard E.

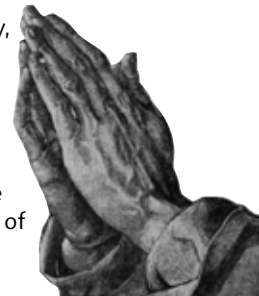


Daily Prayer This Week

Twelfth Week in Ordinary Time:
June 24-30, 2007

Most of us know that having faith is more about confidence and trust in the Lord than it is about theological understanding or assent to truths. The biggest barrier to our more complete following of our Lord in faith is fear. This is a wonderful week to ask our Lord to heal us so that we can not be afraid and just have faith in him as we place our faith in his calming presence. We can begin each day, sitting or standing at the edge of our bed and, in 30 seconds, simply name our desire. "Lord, thank you for this day. Please heal my fears. I want to place my trust in you more completely. Be with me in the tough stuff today." When we are in the shower or while getting dressed, as we are heading to work or doing laundry, when we are walking down a hall to a meeting or even at a store shopping, we can expand on our prayer - again, briefly and in a friend to friend conversation with our Lord. "Dear Lord, I'm going to be facing several things today that are frightening. Don't let me lose sight of your presence with me today. Give me courage and an inner peace to do what you call me to do."

The phrases from Matthew's Gospel can work their way into our week so easily in this context. "Lord, let me know your love and mercy, so that I might treat those I'm now judging with more of the love and mercy you show me. Lord, it feels like you are inviting me to take a narrower path today than the one I usually take, following the way everyone around me goes. Help me choose your way with greater freedom and peace." There is a real and sustaining joy that accompanies this sense of intimacy with our Lord, in the midst of our daily, busy lives. It seems right to take a few moments each night to express our thanks to the Lord for the gifts of the day.



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