



# 1<sup>ST</sup> SATURDAY DEVOTION NEWSLETTER

[www.spiritualarmyofgod.org](http://www.spiritualarmyofgod.org)

January 2013

## In this Issue

|   |    |
|---|----|
| The God of the Covenant<br>Exploring His Everlasting<br>Love for Us | 1  |
| Overview of the Month<br>Feasts for January<br>Our Cenacle Corner   | 2  |
| Highlights of the Month   | 3  |
| Knowing Our Saints  | 6  |
| Meditation and<br>Commentary  | 7  |
| God Touched Me  | 8  |
| Spiritual Army<br>News Dispatch                                     | 9  |
| Spiritual Enrichment<br>Recommended<br>Thank You                    | 10 |
| Devotion Schedule   |    |

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### THE GOD OF THE COVENANT EXPLORING HIS EVERLASTING LOVE FOR US

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***Father, You formed man in Your own image  
and entrusted the whole world to his care. . . .***

***And when through disobedience he had lost Your friendship,  
You did not abandon him. . . .***

***Time and again you offered them covenants  
and . . . taught them to look forward to salvation.***

What a testament to our Father's unfailing love and commitment to us! These words, taken from the Fourth Eucharistic Prayer, tell us that from the very beginning God has been at work forming us into his own special people. They tell us that God wants to draw us close to him and teach us how to receive His life, His grace, and His love. And they tell us that one of the primary ways He does all this is by making a covenant with us.

As we begin this new year, and as we continue in this special Year of Faith, let's take some time to explore this covenant love that God has for us. Rather than focusing on our obligation to keep every letter of God's covenant, let's focus instead on how God's covenants have shown -- and continue to show -- how deeply He loves us.

**Time and Again** ... We don't tend to think about our faith in terms of a covenant. Nor do we tend to read the Bible as the story of God's covenant with his people. But Fr. Yves Congar, one of the great theologians of Vatican II, taught that this one word, covenant, sums up the whole of Scripture. The entire story, from creation to the Second Coming, is the story of a God who reaches out to his people, seeking to lift us up to his presence. Beginning with Adam and weaving through the stories of Abraham, Moses, and David, the Bible shows us a God who always takes the first step and invites us to come to him. It also shows us a people who, once they have been touched by God's covenant love, are changed and transformed by His grace.

From its very first pages, the Bible tells the story of a covenant. It begins with God creating man and woman in His own image and likeness, blessing them, and telling them, "Be fertile and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it" (Genesis 1:28). Here is the very first covenant: we were to act as God's ambassadors on the earth, while He showered us with His blessings.

*Continued on Page 4*

# OVERVIEW FOR THE MONTH

[www.catholicculture.org](http://www.catholicculture.org)

The month of January is dedicated to the Holy Name of Jesus, which is celebrated on January 3. The first nine days of January fall during the liturgical season known as Christmas which is represented by the liturgical color white. The remaining days of January are the beginning of Ordinary Time. The liturgical color changes to green -- a symbol of the hope of reaping the eternal harvest of heaven, especially the hope of a glorious resurrection.

The Church dedicates New Year to Mary on the January 1st Solemnity honoring her as Mother of God; and on January 6, the Solemnity of Epiphany, we rejoice with her, as her Son is adored by the three Wise Men.

Herald John, who ushered in the Advent season, is present once again to close Christmastide on the feast of the Baptism of Our Lord (The First Luminous Mystery), and to open the Season of Ordinary Time. He points to

Jesus, the Lamb of God who unites time and eternity in the Eucharistic Sacrifice, and even January's diminishing darkness seems to echo St. John's prayer: "He must increase and I must decrease."

In this liturgical season the Church eagerly follows Our Lord as He gathers His apostles and announces His mission. At Cana's wedding feast (The Second Luminous Mystery) He performs His first public miracle at the request of His Mother, and His disciples saw His glory and believed in Him.

We, His present-day disciples, pray for a like faith as we contemplate the eternal wedding feast of the Lamb and the unique role of the Blessed Mother in the plan of salvation. May we wholeheartedly obey her words of counsel: "Do whatever he tells you."

## FEASTS FOR JANUARY

The feasts on the General Roman Calendar celebrated during the month of January are:

- 1 Mary, Mother of God, Solemnity
- 2 Basil the Great; Gregory Nazianzen, Memorial
- 3 Most Holy Name of Jesus, Opt. Mem.
- 4 Elizabeth Ann Seton (USA and CAN), Memorial
- 5 John Neumann, Memorial
- 6 Epiphany of the Lord, Solemnity
- 7 Raymond of Penafort, Opt. Mem.
- 13 Baptism of the Lord, Feast
- 17 Anthony, Memorial
- 21 Agnes, Memorial
- 22 Day of Prayer for Unborn, Opt. Mem.
- 23 Vincent of Saragossa, Opt. Mem.
- 24 Francis de Sales; Our Lady of Peace, Memorial
- 25 Conversion of St. Paul the Apostle, Feast
- 26 Timothy and Titus, Memorial
- 28 Thomas Aquinas, Memorial
- 31 John Bosco, Memorial

The feast of Saints Fabian & Sebastian (January 20) and St. Angela Merici (January 27) are superseded by the Sunday liturgy. □

### OUR CENACLE CORNER

*Seeking a deeper relationship with God through meditation of passages from Holy Scriptures*

#### TRoubled Times

- Psalm 71:20
- Lamentations 3:31-33
- 2 Corinthians 4:17

#### TRUSTING GOD AND BELIEVING IN ONESELF THROUGH SPIRITUAL EMPOWERMENT

- Psalm 84:12
- Lamentations 5:19
- Philippians 4:13

# HIGHLIGHTS OF THE MONTH

## ST. BERNARDINO FOSTERS HOLY NAME DEVOTION

By Nora Hamerman  
© Arlington Catholic Herald

A recently acquired rare engraving of St. Bernardino of Siena (1370-1444), on display at the National Gallery of Art in Washington, affords a good occasion to reflect on the Holy Name of Jesus. The engraving, the best surviving example of the first realistic portrait in print form, shows the saint holding the monogram of Christ as he often did during his popular sermons.

St. Bernardino would hold up for veneration the monogram of Christ's Name — the letters "IHS" — surrounded by rays. This ancient monogram is a Latin form of the Greek monograms for Iesous Christos, "IH XP" and "IC XC." It became even more popular after St. Bernardino



persuaded a playing card maker in Bologna whose business had been ruined because of the saint's preaching against gambling — to make holy cards depicting it instead of making his usual fare.

The engraving based on Bernardino's death mask was made in Germany by an anonymous artist shortly after 1450 when the saint was canonized. It shows a large crucifix (mandated by Pope Martin V when he approved Bernardino's use of the monogram disk) and a dove flying toward the saint's mouth, presumably indicating the Holy Spirit inspiring him. The child at his feet might be a soul, while the tiaras symbolize the approval of three popes.

An engraving is produced by incising lines with a tool called a burin into a copper plate. The plate is then inked and wiped so that the ink only remains in the incised lines. When the inked plate is put through a press, every impression that results is an original work of art. The process, requiring great skill, made it possible for people of modest means to own original art.

*Continued on Page 4*

## WHICH WAY TO JESUS

*Homily for the Epiphany of the Lord - based on the Gospel  
Isaiah 60: 1-6 Ephesians 3:2-3,5-6 Matthew 2:1-12*

*Fr. Munachi E. Ezeogu*

On a cold harmattan morning three palm fruit farmers were warming themselves by the fireside. Soon two of them were engaged in a heated debate comparing their religions to decide which one was the true religion. Okoro, the oldest among them, sat quietly listening to the debate. Suddenly the two turned to him and asked, "Decide for us, Okoro. Which religions is the right one?" Okoro rubbed his white beards and said thoughtfully, "Well, you know there are three ways to get from here to the oil mill. You can go right over the hill. That is shorter but it is a steep climb. You can go around the hill on the right side. That is not too far, but the road is rough and full of potholes. Or you can go around the hill on the left side. That is the longest way, but it is also the easiest." He paused and then added, "But you know, when you get there, the mill man doesn't ask you how you came. All he asks is, 'Man, how good is your fruit?'"

In the stories of Jesus' birth, two special groups of people came to visit the new-born babe: the shepherds and the magi. The church has no special feast to commemorate the visit of the shepherds but we have this special feast of Epiphany today to celebrate the visit of the magi. Why is that? It is because the visit of the magi is an eye-opener. The shepherds learnt of the birth of Jesus through a direct revelation from angels appearing in the midnight sky. This is direct and supernatural revelation. Many of us have no problem with that. The magi, on the other hand, learnt of the birth of Jesus by observing a star. The star did not say anything to them. They had to interpret this natural sign of the star to know what it meant and where it led. If we remember that the magi or the three wise men were nature worshippers, people who divined God's will by reading the movements of the stars and other heavenly bodies, then we can see how the visit of the magi challenges some of our popular beliefs.

Like the palm fruit farmers, religious people of all persuasions tend to think that their religious tradition is the only way to God. This is what some of us hear when we hear such words of Jesus as: "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me" (John 14:6). We hastily conclude that the way of God equals the way of our religious tradition. Yet the word of God cautions us against such a narrow interpretation. "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways my ways, says the Lord" (Isaiah 55:8). That is why we are fascinated with the story of the visit of the magi. It is a unique story that opens our eyes to the fact that God is not limited to any one religious tradition.

Notice how people of different religious traditions came to know that the Son of God was born. The shepherds who were regarded as unclean and could not take part in Temple worship without undergoing purification came to know through a direct vision of angels. The magi knew through a reading of the stars. And King Herod's scribes came to know through searching the scriptures. Visions, stars, scriptures -- different ways of arriving at the same truth. Of course this does not mean that any religious tradition is just as good as the other. Notice how Matthew indicates that when the guiding star got to Jerusalem its light failed and the magi had to consult the scriptures to direct them to Bethlehem. Over and above the natural light of the star the magi still needed the supernatural light of scripture to finally get to Jesus.

Yet the crucial question in the story remains: Who actually got to find Jesus? Herod and his scribes who had the scriptures failed to find Jesus but the magi who followed the natural light of the stars were able to find him. Why? Because the Jewish authorities, even though they possessed the shining truth of revealed scriptures, did not follow it. They did not walk in the light of the scriptures. The magi, on the other hand, who enjoyed only a star light followed its guidance. It is not the possession of the truth that matters, it is how prepared we are to walk in the light of the truth that we possess. It is better to have the dim light of the stars and follow it than to have the bright light of the holy scriptures and neglect it.

As Christian we believe that our religion possesses the fullness of truth. But what does that benefit us if we do not walk in the truth? Nature worshippers or non-believers who are sincerely committed to following the dim light of natural reason may arrive at Jesus before Christians who have the exalted truths revealed by God but who do not walk the walk of faith. This is the challenging truth we celebrate today in the story of the pagan wise men who seek and find the Lord. □

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## The Holy Name of Jesus

*Continued from Page 3*

**The Holy Name of Jesus.** January is traditionally the month of the Holy Name of Jesus, and January 3 has been restored by Pope John Paul II as the feast of the Holy Name. This feast, still celebrated by the Franciscan order on January 14, commemorates the circumcision of Christ, where he received the name Jesus, in Aramaic Yeshua, that was given by the angel Gabriel from God (Lk 1:31). It means the one who saves. When a Jewish child was circumcised, he was accepted as a son of Abraham and a full member of his family. The Christian practice of infant baptism was adapted from this Hebrew ritual.

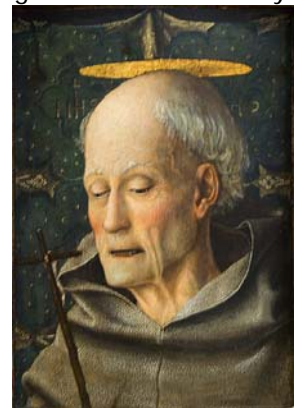
We honor the Holy Name because of the command of Christ: that we should pray in His name. "Holy Father, protect them in Your Name that You have given Me"

(Jn 17:11-12). As St. Paul wrote to the Philippians: "at the name of Jesus every knee should bend of those in heaven, on earth, and under the earth (Phil 2:10). By means of this devotion, we also make amends for improper use of the Holy Name. Honor to the Holy Name is the reason that devout Catholics bow their heads at the sound of "Jesus both inside and outside the liturgy.

One Catholic Web site, beautifully describing the Holy Name, observes that "As the name of each individual person embraces the totality of the person, the most Holy Name of Jesus also embraces the totality of the divinity. When we think of a person, we remember the name, and we visualize their image. Equally, when we think of Jesus, we remember His-name and we visualize the image of God in Jesus. 'For in Jesus the whole fullness of deity dwelled bodily' (Col 1:19, 2:9)."

**St. Bernardino's Lasting Fame.** By promoting the Holy Name devotion, St. Bernardino of Siena made people more aware of the individual personality. Although he refused all worldly honors, this charismatic Franciscan preacher is the very first canonized saint for whom we not only have an extensive record of his ideas, but we also know exactly what he looked like.

Bald and toothless, Bernardino is depicted wearing the beige Franciscan habit. In Washington's National Gallery of Art, his popularity is attested to by several beautiful paintings of the Italian Renaissance period that were once in churches. One early panel (c. 1460) pairing Bernardino holding the monogram disk with St. Anthony Abbot, is painted by Jacopo Bellini, the pioneering Venetian artist. In another panel, Vincenzo Foppa, a painter active in Milan before 1500, portrays the Franciscan friar holding an open book inscribed *Pater manifestavi nomen* (Father, I have manifested [Thy] name) from John 17:5,6, words recited by St. Bernardino while he was dying. On the book's facing page is the monogram IHS. □



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## The God of the Covenant Exploring His Everlasting Love for Us

*Continued from Page 1*

But we all know what happened in that garden. Our first parents sinned and separated themselves from God. They broke the covenant.

What did God do in response? He didn't reject them. He didn't wipe them from the earth. He knew they had to live with the consequences of their sin, but he also promised them a future deliverance. He stayed with them and continued to guide them. He kept his part of the covenant! His love prevailed as He paved the way for



another covenant with their descendants. And another one. And another one.

For all the various differences between these covenants, one theme remained constant. Every covenant was initiated by God, who reached out to His people and rescued them from a sinful or threatening situation.

So let's take a look at a few of them to see the different ways God has rescued His people.

**A History of Covenants.** In the story of the Great Flood, God commanded Noah to separate himself from the sinful world. God was about to cleanse the earth of its sin, and He wanted to preserve the righteous Noah so that He could make a new covenant and a fresh start with him (Genesis 6:17-18). When the flood waters receded, God established that covenant. He again called His people to exercise dominion over the earth, but this time He also promised never again to bring such destruction upon the world (9:1-17).

When the story turns to Abraham, we find Him living in a pagan land, surrounded by a people who did not know God. Most likely, Abraham didn't know God either. But God reached out to him and invited him to go to a new land where he would be richly blessed (Genesis 12:1-4). In a sense, Abraham was lost, but God found him. Once Abraham settled in the Promised Land, God made this covenant with him: "You are to become the father of a host of nations" (17:4). For his part, Abraham had to remain faithful to God, obeying him so that their bond would remain firm.

In a similar way, God reached out to Moses and called him to lead the Israelites out of slavery and into a land of freedom. Through Moses, God made a covenant with all the Israelites. He called them to follow the Ten Commandments even as He promised to form them into a great nation and to be their God for all time. (Exodus 20:1-17; 24:3-8).

When David became king over Israel, He replaced Saul, a king who had failed. In his covenant with David, God promised that his descendants would remain on the throne of Israel forever. Even if a descendant broke God's commands, God would forgive him and renew His covenant with him (2 Samuel 7:10-17).

Again and again, God reached out to his people, rescuing them from danger and filling them with his blessings. Each of these covenants -- and all the others -- shows that He truly is "merciful and gracious ... slow to anger and rich in kindness and fidelity" (Exodus 34:6).

**A New and Everlasting Covenant.** As wonderful as these covenants are, they all foreshadow something even more magnificent. For nothing can compare with the last and greatest covenant God made with us: the "new covenant" that was sealed in the blood of His Son, Jesus.

In many ways, this new covenant is distinctly different from all of the previous ones. But in one way it is just like them. Like all the others, God reached out to us and

rescued us. Only this time, He not only forgave our sins. He also set us free from sin once and for all. He not only dealt with us according to His grace and mercy, He brought us into a whole new life of grace, giving us divine power to live out the covenant.

**A Two-Sided Covenant.** While we have focused our attention so far on God's part in these covenants, it's important to see that each covenant imposes obligations on us as well. In the covenant with Abraham, for instance, God vowed to make Abraham the father of many nations. For his part, Abraham vowed to walk in God's presence, be "blameless," and to practice circumcision -- an act that marked him and his descendants as belonging to the Lord. Speaking to Moses on Mount Sinai, God promised to bring his people into the land of Canaan, and the people promised to obey his commandments.

The same holds true with this new covenant in Christ. On His side, our heavenly Father promises salvation, and on our part we vow to live a life of faith and surrender to His Spirit. Like so many of the earlier covenants, this one also shows how generous and kind our Father is. He promises so much to us, and all we have to do is trust Him and try our best to follow His commands. And even when we fall and break our side of the covenant, He is ready to forgive us and restore us to himself!

But this new covenant is not just a call to live a holy life with the hope of salvation at the end of our lives. Every step along the way, God promises us His grace and power to help us fulfill our obligations. The prophet Ezekiel hinted at this long ago when he spoke in God's name, saying, "I will put my spirit within you so that you walk in my statutes, observe my ordinances, and keep them" (Ezekiel 36:27). This is precisely what happened on the day of Pentecost -- and what happens to each person in the Sacrament of Baptism.

The Holy Spirit is now available to every single person! He lives in our hearts. He is constantly moving in us, offering to help us live out our new covenant and to help build the Church. Miracles, spiritual gifts, healing, unity, love: all this and more is ours because we have been reconciled to God and filled with His Spirit.

This, brothers and sisters, is the great blessing of our covenant in Christ. It is a covenant sealed in the blood of the eternal Son. It is a covenant that can never be revoked or improved upon. Heaven is open, and we can live a new life!

**From Age to Age ...** So as this Year of Faith unfolds, let's put our faith in the One who has made a new covenant with us. If we look at our covenant with God as nothing more than a series of commandments and a call to surrender, the call to holiness can seem intimidating. But our God wants us to know that He is with us and always ready to help us. He has covenanted Himself to us, and nothing can come between us! ☐

# KNOWING OUR SAINTS

## SAINTS TIMOTHY AND TITUS FEAST DAY – JANUARY 26

*www.americancatholic.org*

**Timothy** (d. 97 [?]): What we know from the New Testament of Timothy's life makes it sound like that of a modern harried bishop. He had the honor of being a fellow apostle with Paul, both sharing the privilege of preaching the gospel and suffering for it.

Timothy had a Greek father and a Jewish mother named Eunice. Being the product of a "mixed" marriage, he was considered illegitimate by the Jews. It was his grandmother, Lois, who first became Christian. Timothy was a convert of Paul around the year 47 and later joined him in his apostolic work. He was with Paul at the founding of the Church in Corinth. During the 15 years he



worked with Paul, he became one of his most faithful and trusted friends. He was sent on difficult missions by Paul -- often in the face of great disturbance in local churches which Paul had founded.

Timothy was with Paul in Rome during the latter's house arrest. At some period Timothy himself was in prison

(Hebrews 13:23). Paul installed him as his representative at the Church of Ephesus.

Timothy was comparatively young for the work he was doing. ("Let no one have contempt for your youth," Paul writes in 1 Timothy 4:12a.) Several references seem to indicate that he was timid. And one of Paul's most frequently quoted lines was addressed to him: "Stop drinking only water, but have a little wine for the sake of your stomach and your frequent illnesses" (1 Timothy 5:23).

**Titus** (d. 94 [?]): Titus has the distinction of being a close friend and disciple of Paul as well as a fellow missionary. He was Greek, apparently from Antioch. Even though Titus was a Gentile, Paul would not let him be forced to undergo circumcision at Jerusalem. Titus is seen as a peacemaker, administrator, great friend. Paul's second letter to Corinth affords an insight into the depth

of his friendship with Titus, and the great fellowship they had in preaching the gospel: "When I went to Troas ... I had no relief in my spirit because I did not find my brother Titus. So I took leave of them and went on to Macedonia .... For even when we came into Macedonia, our flesh had no rest, but we were afflicted in every way -- external conflicts, internal fears. But God, who encourages the downcast, encouraged us by the arrival of Titus ..." (2 Corinthians 2:12a, 13; 7:5-6).



When Paul was having trouble with the community at Corinth, Titus was the bearer of Paul's severe letter and was successful in smoothing things out. Paul writes he was strengthened not only by the arrival of Titus but also "by the encouragement with which he was encouraged in regard to you, as he told us of your yearning, your lament, your zeal for me, so that I rejoiced even more .... And his heart goes out to you all the more, as he remembers the obedience of all of you, when you received him with fear and trembling" (2 Corinthians 7:7a, 15).

The Letter to Titus addresses him as the administrator of the Christian community on the island of Crete, charged with organizing it, correcting abuses and appointing presbyter-bishops.

In Titus we get another glimpse of life in the early Church: great zeal in the apostolate, great communion in Christ, great friendship. Yet always there is the problem of human nature and the unglamorous details of daily life: the need for charity and patience in "quarrels with others, fears within myself," as Paul says. Through it all, the love of Christ sustained them. At the end of the Letter to Titus, Paul says that when the temporary substitute comes, "hurry to me." □

Patron Saint of: Stomach disorders

# MEDITATION AND COMMENTARY

## WHAT ARE YOU LOOKING FOR?

John 1:38

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Here we are at the beginning of a new year -- a great time to prioritize our lives and set new goals. Maybe we've already made some ambitious New Year's resolutions. But we might feel overwhelmed; there are so many resolutions to follow through on, so many things we have committed to for the coming year.

Jesus' question to these two would-be disciples can help us be more concrete. So many projects and priorities compete for our time and attention; what do you place at the top of the list? What are you seeking? Are they spiritual resolutions? Priorities that have some kind of eternal significance? Or are they other concerns, which may be valid but may not be central to the calling God has given you?

Of all the goals and resolutions that are options for us to choose, which ones are more important? We know that what the world runs after -- success, status, and the approval of others -- don't really satisfy. So they're easy to put aside. We may next recognize that we need freedom from a pattern of sin that keeps us in bondage, or perhaps a physical healing, or a healing in a relationship.

These are clearly worth pursuing. But even above these goals, perhaps we should place the goal of finding Jesus more fully. Isn't that ultimately what we are all looking for?

The two disciples standing with John were also looking for something, and the time they spent with Jesus convinced them that he was that something! They began to understand that what God had in store for them was so much more than what they had been seeking.

As we make the resolution to abide with Christ this year -- especially by immersing ourselves in His word -- He will reveal Himself to us. And in that revelation, so many other aspects of our lives will make more and more sense. Sin will diminish. Peace will overcome anxiety. Joy will replace frustration. We'll have a clearer vision for our lives. In short, we will find not just the things we thought we were looking for, but what we really needed and wanted all along!

***“Jesus, help me to understand the cry of my own heart. Give me the desire to spend time with you in your word. You are the answer I've been looking for!”*** □

*"... I am your Mother Mary. On this day of my 2000 beads, many souls perish because of natural causes and by force and they are unprepared. Their desire to live has been snatched and intact and their lives incomplete.*

*Offer your prayers that their choice to move to the spiritual realm will be opened. The longer they stay in this world creates a situation where some of these souls are claimed to be unclean.*

*The world has claimed more children and unborn and God listens to this injustice. I ask you my children to continue to pray intently that this horrible disregard to human life will stop as the hands of God's justice become stronger. Remember my children wars, disasters are being sent as corrective justice for sins of humankind. More and more of this corrective justice will come and new disturbance will soon happen. I have asked for complete preparation on your part. I have asked for your continued prayers before the throne of God and my son Jesus' passion you must invoke through the merciful heart of God.*

*I intercede before the throne of God Almighty and with my son Jesus. Your words of atonement become louder if these are done with penance and sacrifice. The way to make this happen is through prayers with good deeds, I ask my children."*

*- Mary, Your Lady of the Rosary and The Immaculate Heart*

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# GOD TOUCHED ME

"IN THE END, WHAT GOD WANTS FROM YOU IS THE PURITY OF YOUR HEART."

- St. Luigi Guanella

By JGS

I had a great dream about Mom approximately a week ago; it felt like a gift from beyond the veil. You'll probably think it's goofy, but I was grinning all day afterwards, so thought I'd share it with you. When I told it to Emma, she said if anyone would find a way to communicate about the journey after death, it would be G'ma.

There were two story lines going on in the dream, but I'll stick to the Mom line. In the dream I was with her in a quiet building - the setting was sort of like Cevenol - a rural campus on the top of an old mountain, with buildings that seemed alpine - dark aged wood. It was homey. Mom was very old; she was lying in bed, actively dying. I was sitting beside her holding her hand. We were alone, quiet, tender, peaceful.

When she died the scene changed. We were in an old stone church in the village below, and Mom's spirit was a beautiful young girl; she looked like herself at about ten, with that dark glossy hair in a page-boy haircut, but she was fully herself, with 91 years of earthly experiences and memories, and she was very much my mother, not a child. Only her physical manifestation was as a young girl. She was so slim and straight and perfect, and she was learning how to fly, soaring around the church - light, playful and experimental. The church reminded me of a church in Cornwall, where the ceiling was almost an inversion of a ship's keel, with huge curved carved rafters. Mom was taking short flights through the interior, up by the rafters, swooping and soaring, and then she'd land back beside me and we'd talk. We were so excited, brimming with joy and amazement. Everything about the dream was so beautiful that I find it impossible to express. When I was trying to describe it to Donald I kept crying and saying "it was so beautiful, it was so beautiful." The other thing that I wish I could describe was her dress, because it is so interesting, a smooth fluid creamy-white dress, not made by human hands. There were no seams or stitches or ornamentation. It was lovely - as if it were a part of her body, sleeveless, close fitting, but not tight, from shoulders to waist and hips and then flaring slightly as it went down to her ankles. There was no extraneous fabric or details. As she flew it flowed

with her, never tangling. In this life, Mom would have loved that dress, it was quite lovely.

Twice she flew and came back to me, and then on her third flight she landed on a wide stone window-ledge to my left - a gothic stained-glass window, like a doorway for her body. I could see the moonlight shining through the colored panes, and we both knew it was time for her to be outside and fly into the sky. She was standing facing the window, and she said to me "I don't think I can do this."

I said, "You just step through - you can just step through."

She reached her hands up so they rested on the glass a little above her shoulders, with her forearms resting on the glass, and she said "I don't think so; I can feel the glass."

We were talking softly; everything was holy and expectant. I said again "You can just step through."

Then she leaned forward and the glass melted away at her leaning, and her arms and head reached through, and in one fluid motion she sprang and soared into the starlit sky. Then I was outside, watching her. The moon was over my left shoulder; Mom's dress was gleaming in the moonlight and she was flying towards the constellations. When she was very small and far away she turned back and swooped down, practically in free fall like an osprey. She was coming so fast I was afraid she might crash, but she swooped by me and soared back into the sky.

Then I was back at the campus and the other story line picked up where we had left off and it was also magical.

I love remembering Mom going through that window. On earth the physical world seems solid and substantial, but in the dream it's the spirit that is true and substantial, while physical reality gives way. In movies when someone moves through a wall it's always the person who becomes wispy and mist-like; the wall stands firm while the person reorganizes on the other side. In the dream it was the window that melted away, while Mom was herself always, intact. □



# SPIRITUAL ARMY NEWS DISPATCH

## THE SPIRITUAL ARMY OF GOD THE FATHER IS NON-PROFIT RELIGIOUS CORPORATION

The Spiritual Army of God the Father is now a non-profit corporation in California. The organization operates as a community of believers proclaiming the good news of God the Father's love, practicing sharing and charity through prayers, doing charity through worship and outreach ministries, missions and spiritual devotions, as a support to the missions of the Roman Catholic Church.

To support the ministry's mission, the world wide website has been constructed through the kindness of one of its generous devotees. The site can now be accessed at [www.spiritualarmyofgod.org](http://www.spiritualarmyofgod.org). This will explain the ministry's mission and would easily be a good resource for the newsletter, devotional prayers and prayer requests. In order to support the organization's devotional endeavors, donations through various financial instruments will be accepted in the future.

Meanwhile, connect with God's Words and spiritual paths in His own worldwide web.

### CELEBRATING CHRISTMAS AT THE AUCTION

The Spiritual Army of God the Father's Christmas party was held on December 15, 2012 at the Quiet Cannon Banquet Hall, in Montebello, California. With many devotees lending their time, talent and treasure, it is no surprise that the party was a huge success! Everyone was in a great Christmas spirit as they decorated the hall and greeted each other. The group was honored by the presence of our beloved Pious Disciples of the Divine Master Sisters Fede Tanno and Joanna Mendez.

The website [[www.spiritualarmyofgod.org](http://www.spiritualarmyofgod.org)] of The Spiritual Army of God the Father was launched and projected on the bigger screen, followed by a live, as well as a silent auction. Victor, the auctioneer, armed with his gavel (actually, a meat tenderizer!) and his booming voice announced the bids and declared each item sold; with Nory acting as auction lady, as she showed off each priceless item being auctioned. Devotees were bidding competitively as they tried to outbid each other while the captive audience wide eyed and mouth open in amazement, some jumping off their seats or gasping, as the price went higher and higher. Not a dull moment, I tell you. All the items were sold and the proceeds placed in the non-profit organization's funds for future charitable projects.

There were two groups of carolers singing Spanish and English Christmas carols. There was a photo booth with a festive back drop and the devotees having fun using the hats and props brought by the photographer. The "Right Family Christmas Story" gift exchange added fun with the devotees being confused distinguishing their right

against their left sides. The food was sumptuous and filling, starting with a table full of hors d'ouvres followed by a three-course sit down lunch.

The highlight of the party was the time when the lights in the banquet hall were turned off and the spotlight was on the Holy Infant Jesus lying in a



## UPCOMING EVENTS

**SECRET SANTA  
TOY DRIVE  
FOR CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL**  
JANUARY 5, 2013  
CONVENT OF THE SISTER DISCIPLES  
OF THE DIVINE MASTER

**EXCURSION TO CARMEL, CA**  
JANUARY 18-21, 2013



**INFANT JESUS FEAST DAY**  
SATURDAY, JANUARY 19, 2013  
CARMEL MISSION BASILICA  
3080 RIO ROAD, CARMEL, CA 93923

manger surrounded by pine branches and poinsettias, being wheeled in by two cute little angels, Alexa and Reece. We could sense sniffing and wiping of eyes as the devotees were touched by the wonderful and blessed scene. The party ended with our dear DJ Sam, assisted by Paul, playing fun music and everyone dancing, including one of the devotees (who could not walk without the aid of a cane) dancing the afternoon away without the aid of her cane; while Sister Joanna was holding the said cane up in the air. What a great Christmas miracle!

Thank you to the organizers and to all the "angels" who helped make this party one to remember!

## SPIRITUAL ENRICHMENT RECOMMENDED

- You are enjoined to practice Eucharistic Adoration at least an hour a week. Let us render God adoration, thanksgiving, reparation and petition. Kindly check with your respective parishes for schedules. Some churches are open 24-hours for Eucharistic Adoration.
- Pray at least one rosary of the Blessed Virgin Mary daily.
- Pray the Chaplet of the Divine Mercy at 3:00 PM and at 9:00 PM daily.
- Pray the Angelus at 6:00 PM daily.
- Pray the Pro-Life Scriptural Rosary [[www.rosaryoftheunborn.com](http://www.rosaryoftheunborn.com)] to make reparation for the crime of abortion.
- Think of ways to make reparation to Mary for the sins committed against Jesus and Mary. A very good one is to join the **First Saturday devotion**; another is the **2000 Hail Mary devotion**.
- On January 22, the anniversary of the U.S. Supreme Court's Roe v. Wade decision that legalized abortion, offer prayers and/or attend Mass in observance of a "Day of Prayer for the Legal Protection of Unborn Children." □

## THANK YOU

*... a small and simple phrase that comes from a grateful heart!*

*Psalm 106:2*

### FOR PRAYERS HEARD AND PETITIONS GRANTED

Thank you, Eternal Father, for Your Will that transformed our sorrow into joy, our tears of anguish into tears of thanksgiving. Our physical and spiritual recreation, through Your Healing Hands, kept us enclosed and revived in our hope for renewed lives as we look up to the heavens praising You, in Jesus' most Holy Name, through the intercession of Mary, our Blessed Mother, and of the angels and saints.

*Estela is now not just gainfully employed,  
but also welcoming the learning experience  
of managing an apartment complex!*

*Husband Dads also received  
pay grade advancement  
effective December 30, 2012!*



*I thank you God  
for guiding me in every turning point in my life.*

*Thank you, O God, for all the gifts  
you have blessed me with -  
the gift of life, gift of joy, gift of sight,  
gift of hearing, gift of health.*



### 2000 HAIL MARY DEVOTION

The Spiritual Army of God the Father acknowledge with thanks our generous January sponsors of the 2000 Hail Mary Devotion. We are grateful that we have merited their partnership and support in providing a venue of spirituality and fellowship for the devotees of our Blessed Mother. The devotion continues to be a constant success.

Las Vegas, Nevada

The Family of Ronald & Fe Muego

# DEVOTION SCHEDULE



## THE SPIRITUAL ARMY OF GOD THE FATHER

[WWW.SPIRITUALARMYOFGOD.ORG](http://WWW.SPIRITUALARMYOFGOD.ORG)

cordially invites you to the following devotions:

### In Los Angeles:

#### 1st Saturday Devotion

The Convent of the Sister Disciples of the Divine Master | 501 N. Beaudry Avenue | (213) 250-7962  
Holy Mass starts at 8:30 A.M. | 1<sup>st</sup> Saturday Devotional Prayers follow.

#### Devotion to God the Father

Every 1st Sunday of the Month

The Monastery of the Angels | 1977 Carmen Avenue on Gower | (323) 466-2186  
11:20 A.M. - Rosary to the Father | 11:50 A.M. - Holy Mass  
1:00 P.M. - Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament  
Confession ongoing from 11:20 A.M. to 11:45 P.M.

#### 2000 Hail Mary Devotion – February 16, 2013

at the Convent of the Sister Disciples of the Divine Master | starting at 8:30 a.m.  
*Please see Victor if you wish to become a Sponsor of the 2000 Hail Mary Devotion.*

### In Las Vegas:

#### 1st Saturday Devotion

at The Cenacle House in The Enclave, 8455 West Sahara Avenue #172, Las Vegas, NV 89117 at 1:00 P.M.  
Cenacle will be at 10:00 A.M. before the devotional prayers  
Please call Evelyn at (702)274-4315 for entry to The Enclave or for more information.

#### Devotion to God the Father

Every 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of the month at 2:00-3:30 P.M.

at The Cenacle House in The Enclave, 8455 West Sahara Avenue #172, Las Vegas, NV 89117

#### 2000 Hail Mary Devotion – January 12, 2013

*Please call (702) 255-9616 or (702) 274-4315 for  
dates and venues for the coming months or for more information or if you wish to Sponsor the Devotion.*

### In Laughlin, Nevada:

#### 1st Saturday Devotion

St. John the Baptist Catholic Church | 3055 El Mirage Way  
Holy Mass starts at 8:00 A.M. Devotional prayers follow.

### In Northern California:

#### 1st Saturday Devotion

#### 2000 Hail Mary Devotion

*Please call (650) 766-2071 for dates and venues for information.  
For Sacramento, please call Precy Rieta (916) 564-3733; Caring Sturgill (916) 897-3194;  
Maria Rosario (916) 230-7756.*

### In San Diego

#### Rosary to the Father

Monday – Saturday after the 8:00 A.M. Mass [Look for Iris Haj]  
St. Mary's Church | 1160 S. Broadway | Escondido, CA 92025

### In the Philippines

#### 2000 Hail Mary Devotion - Metro Manila Area

Letty Rollan has organized the 2000 Hail Mary Devotion in various areas of Metro Manila through the members of the "Mother Butler." Please call her U.S. Vonage phone (510) 779-6652, text her at Manila #916-384-9300, and/or call her Manila landline 939-4677. Mention Mila Lumba's name to be recognized.