



1ST SATURDAY DEVOTION NEWSLETTER

www.spiritualarmyofgod.org

February 2013

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THE EDITORS OF THE SPIRITUAL ARMY OF GOD THE FATHER'S 1ST SATURDAY NEWSLETTER ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR MAINTAINING THE CONSISTENT QUALITY AND ACCURACY OF THE SPIRITUAL ARMY OF GOD THE FATHER'S 1ST SATURDAY NEWSLETTER AND AS SUCH RESERVE THE RIGHT TO REJECT OR EDIT THE CONTENT OF ALL SUBMISSIONS FOR PUBLICATION. EDITING MAY INCLUDE, BUT IS NOT LIMITED TO, CHANGES TO GRAMMAR, SYNTAX AND STYLES, REMOVAL OF OFFENSIVE CONTENT AND REMOVAL OF PERSONAL NON-PUBLIC INFORMATION. SUBMISSION OF YOUR ARTICLE SIGNIFIES YOUR AGREEMENT TO THE TERMS AFOREMENTIONED.

WHY ASHES?

www.romancatholicomilies

Did you ever notice how little children always ask, "WHY?" A friend of mine with a four-year old son, asked her one day, "Mommy, why don't we have a butler?" I learned very quickly not to ask my father, "Why?" because my father's standard answer to the question "Why?" was "because Y is a crooked letter."

Today we begin the season of Lent. It is a season of repentance. So WHY do we receive ashes on our forehead? Originally, in the Old Testament, the ashes were those of the animals sacrificed in the Temple for the remission of sins. The Book of Numbers recounts how these ashes were mixed with water to be sprinkled on the people, places, and things as a sign of purification. The Book of Jonah tells us that the King of Nineveh repented of his sins and sat in the ashes. One of the earliest references to Catholic liturgical use of ashes to mark the beginning of Lent dates from about 1000 AD. Since Lent is the period of repentance and purification, the Old Testament sign of ashes was used to mark the beginning of this penitential period.



Why do we receive them on our forehead and walk around all day with this dirty face when the Gospel tells us to wash our face? Some prayers are meant to be a private relationship between you and God, others are meant to be an outward show for others to see. Our deep intimate love, we keep in private, but if children never saw their parents kiss or hug one another how would they know that their parents love each other.

We receive ashes, not so much for ourselves but for others. By wearing ashes, we are calling the world to repentance. So why do we need to repent? The Greek word, for repentance, is "metanoia" and it means to "think differently" or to make 180 degree turn in our life. Where is our life going? We can only be going in one of two directions. We can either be moving toward God or away from God. If you feel distant from God or that God is not a big part of your life, guess who moved?

Archbishop Fulton Sheen, may he soon be beatified, said that heaven and hell begin in this life. If we choose to separate ourselves from God, if God is distant from our lives, then when we die there will be a seamless transition into hell. If, however, God is at the center of our life and everything we do, everything we say, everything we choose, is centered on God, then when we die there will be a seamless transition into heaven, with a possible pit stop in purgatory. It has been said that most people are dying to live. Jesus was living to die. Fulton Sheen would say that Jesus was the only person born with the express purpose to die. As followers of Christ, we are called

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OVERVIEW FOR THE MONTH

www.catholicculture.org

Though the shortest month of the year, February is rich in Liturgical activity, for it typically begins in one Liturgical Season (Ordinary Time), ends in another (Lent), and contains a feast (Presentation of our Lord) that bridges two other seasons (Christmas and Easter)! In addition, the faithful may receive in February three of the four major public sacramentals that the Church confers during the liturgical year: blessed candles, the blessing of throats and blessed ashes.

The Solemnity of the Presentation of the Lord on February 2nd harkens back to the Christmas mystery of Light except that now, Christ, the helpless babe, is "the Light of Revelation to the Gentiles who will save his people from their sins." Candles, symbolizing Christ our Light, will be carried in procession this day, as will be the Paschal candle during the Easter Vigil Liturgy.

"The Light of Revelation" shines more brightly with each successive Sunday of Ordinary Time, until its

magnificence – exposing our sinfulness and need for conversion – propels us into the penitential Season of Lent. We accept the cross of blessed ashes on Ash Wednesday (February 22) and plunge ourselves into the major exercises of Lent – fasting, prayer, almsgiving – laying our thoughts and prayers on the heart of our Mother Mary. She, who offered her Son in the temple and on the Cross, will teach us how to deny ourselves, take up our cross daily, and follow after her Son.

Ideally, the members of the domestic church should try to have the candles for their home altar blessed on Candlemas Day (February 2); and the next morning, on the Feast of St. Blaise, all might receive the blessing of the throats. Always a solicitous Mother, the Church offers this sacramental during the wintry month of February, and also sets aside the World Day of Prayer for the Sick on February 11, the feast of Our Lady of Lourdes.

FEASTS FOR FEBRUARY

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

- 2 Presentation of the Lord, Feast
- 5 Agatha, Memorial
- 6 Paul Miki and Companions, Memorial
- 8 Jerome Emiliani; Josephine Bakhita, Opt. Mem.
- 11 Our Lady of Lourdes, Opt. Mem.
- 14 Cyril and Methodius, Memorial
- 21 Peter Damian, Opt. Mem.
- 22 Chair of St. Peter, Feast
- 23 Polycarp of Smyrna, Memorial

The feast of St. Blaise (February 3), St. Scholastica (February 10) and the Seven Founders of the Orders of Servites (February 17), will not be celebrated this year because they are superseded by Sunday. ☐

OUR CENACLE CORNER

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

TEMPTATION

- Matthew 18:7
- James 1:13-15

SLANDER AND GOSSIP

- Proverbs 11:13
- Matthew 5:11-12

HELP FROM GOD

- Micah 7:7-8
- 2 Thessalonians 3:3

HIGHLIGHT OF THE MONTH

PRESENTATION OF OUR LORD FEAST DAY - FEBRUARY 2

By Basil Shereghy

www.stjosaphat.ab.ca

Forty days after Christmas, the Church celebrates the feast of the Presentation of our Lord. The event which the Church commemorates on this feast is described in its Gospel: "And when the days of her purification were fulfilled according to the Law of Moses, they took Him up to Jerusalem to present Him to the Lord, as it is written in the Law of the Lord: Every male that opens the womb shall be called holy to the Lord, and to offer a sacrifice according to what is said in the Law of the Lord, a pair of



turtle doves or two young pigeons. And behold, there was in Jerusalem a man named Simeon, and this man was just and devout, looking for the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was upon him. And it had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit, that he should not see death before he had seen the Christ of the Lord. And he came by inspiration of the Holy Spirit into the Temple. And when his parents brought in the Child Jesus, to do for Him according to the custom of the Law, he also received Him into his arms and blessed God ..." (Lk. 2:22-28).

From the words of the Gospel and from the Liturgical texts for the feast, it is evident that it has a threefold character: the purification of Mary, the redemption of Jesus as first-born Son, and the meeting of Jesus with the aged Simeon and the prophetess Anna.

According to the Mosaic Law, a mother who had given birth to a boy was considered unclean for seven days, then for 33 days was excluded from public worship. When the appointed forty days were past, she was expected to offer a sacrifice for her purification – "a lamb for a holocaust and a pigeon for a turtle dove for a sin offering." In case of poverty, however, two young pigeons or turtle doves would suffice. The priest then prayed for her, "purifying" her and restoring her to her former status. Sacred Scripture tells us that the Mother of God fulfilled this law despite the fact that, considering the spirit of this legal enactment, she was not bound to it. Mary was the chaste Spouse of the Holy Spirit, virgin in conceiving and virgin in giving birth to her Son. Yet the Holy Spirit inspired her to comply with this law and she fulfilled the will of God, embracing it with her whole heart. The second aspect of this feast is the presentation of

Jesus in the temple. By another ordinance of the Mosaic Law, every first-born was considered as belonging to God and had to be brought back by an offering. The Mother of God fulfilled this also. She brought Jesus to the Temple to present Him according to the command of the Lord "Every male opening the womb shall be called holy to the Lord."

According to the Gospels, on the same occasion as the presentation of the Child Jesus, another significant encounter took place. There was then living in Jerusalem an old man,

Simeon by name, whose heart longed unceasingly for the Messiah. The Holy Spirit revealed to him that he should not die without first seeing the Lord's Anointed. Led by the Spirit, Simeon went to the Temple at the time Mary and Joseph were bringing in the Child Jesus. Mary, guided by the same Holy Spirit, welcomed the saintly man and placed her divine Son in his trembling hands.

Besides Simeon, the prophetess Anna, Phanael's daughter, was there to meet the child Jesus. The holy Anna was noted for her piety and was venerated by the people because of her great age. Simeon and Anna are thus representatives of the Old Testament, gathered to celebrate the happy coming of the Child who was to renew the face of the earth.

The solemn presentation of Christ in the house of God was celebrated in early times. Several learned writers, among them Pope Benedict XIV, are of the opinion that the feast, was instituted by the apostles themselves; there is no doubt that the event itself was solemnly commemorated in the Church of Jerusalem by the end of the fourth century. But the feast at that time had no proper name; it was simply called the fortieth day after the Nativity. From Jerusalem the observance of the feast spread throughout the entire Church and celebrated on February 14. When the feast of the Nativity was transferred from January 6 to December 25, the Presentation was also transferred to February 2.

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KNOWING OUR SAINTS

ST. PAUL MIKI, SJ [1564? – 1597]

FEAST DAY – FEBRUARY 6

By Bert Ghezzi

An Excerpt from Voices of the Saints

Christianity spread like wildfire in sixteenth-century Japan. By the 1580s, less than forty years after Francis Xavier introduced the faith, the church counted two hundred thousand converts. The growth had proceeded despite the opposition of Buddhist priests and many petty rulers. However, in 1587, Emperor Hideyoshi ordered the banishment of all Catholics, forcing the Jesuit missionaries to operate from hiding.



But outright persecution did not break out until late 1596, when Hideyoshi rounded up twenty-six Jesuits, Franciscans, and laypeople and prepared to martyr them.

Among the victims was St. Paul Miki, a Jesuit novice who had just

completed eleven years of training. Paul's noble family was converted when he was a child and at age five he was baptized. Educated by Jesuits, the gifted youth joined their novitiate at age twenty-two. He had studied intensively the teachings of the Buddhists so as to be able to debate their priests. He welcomed his chance at martyrdom, but may have wished just a little that it would be delayed long enough for him to be ordained a priest.

Hideyoshi had the left ears of the twenty-six martyrs severed as a sign of disrespect and paraded them through Kyoto. Dressed in his simple black cassock, Paul stood out among them. Most onlookers realized that this noble young man could have worn the samurai's costume with two swords on his belt. The whole display had the unexpected effect of evoking compassion from the crowd, some of whom later became converts.

The martyrs were then taken to Nagasaki. They were tied to crosses with their necks held in place by iron rings. Beside each was an executioner with his spear ready to strike. An eyewitness gave this account:

When the crosses were set up it was a wonderful thing to see the constancy of all of them. Our brother Paul Miki, seeing himself raised to the most honorable position that he had ever occupied, openly proclaimed that he was Japanese and a member of the Society of Jesus. And that he was being put to death for having preached the gospel. He gave thanks to God for such a precious favor.

He then added these words: "Having arrived at this moment of my existence, I believe that no one of you thinks I want to hide the truth. That is why I declare to you that there is no other way of salvation than the one followed by Christians. Since this way teaches me to forgive my enemies and all who have offended me, I willingly forgive the king and all those who have desired my death. And I pray that they will obtain the desire of Christian baptism."

At this point, he turned his eyes toward his companions and began to encourage them in their final struggle. The faces of them all shone with great gladness. Another

Christian shouted to him that he would soon be in paradise. "Like my Master," murmured Paul, "I shall die upon the cross. Like him, a lance will pierce my heart so that my blood and my love can flow out upon the land and sanctify it to his name."

As they awaited death the entire group sang the canticle of Zachary (see Luke 1:67-79). The executioners stood by respectfully until they had intoned the last verse. Then at a given signal they thrust their spears into the victims' sides. On that day, February 5, 1597, the church of Japan welcomed its first martyrs. □



MEDITATION AND COMMENTARY

DIVINE PARTNERSHIP

www.heartlight.org

After Herod died, an angel of the Lord came to Joseph in a dream. This happened while Joseph was in Egypt. The angel said, "Get up! Take the baby and his mother and go to Israel. The people that were trying to kill the baby are now dead." So Joseph took the baby and the baby's mother and went to Israel. But Joseph heard that Archelaus was now king in Judea. Archelaus became king when his father Herod died. So Joseph was afraid to go there. Joseph was warned in a dream. So Joseph left there and went to the area of Galilee. Joseph went to a town called Nazareth and lived there. And so the thing happened that God said through the prophets. God said that {the Christ} would be called a Nazarene. — Matthew 2:19-23 (ERV)

Key Thought

In this passage, we see Joseph caught in a wonderful and mysterious dance with God. God revealed his protective guidance in dreams, through angels, and in visions. Joseph, however, still had to discern the meaning of God's help and had to choose to obey his direction. So often we want everything spelled out, "just like they did in the Bible." We forget that Joseph and Mary were living a mystery that was too big to wrap their minds around; at times it was frightening and at other times it was just bewildering. The human guidance, advice, and training they received to prepare them for what lay ahead of them are remarkably similar to our own -- little or none. This, of course, made them rely more on God each day for his direction and protection. Interestingly, after the initial burst of divine revelation, Joseph and Mary appear to have been faced with the same kind of child raising issues that most of us face, with one exception: they were raising God's Messiah. They had to rely on God to lead them through this mystery. So must we!

Prayer

Ever-present Father, I am comforted to see your protection of your Son when he was so vulnerable. I am thankful that there is never a place or time that your presence is not with him. Please inspire my confidence in your presence in my life, too. I long for you to make yourself known in my life each day as I seek to live for you. In Jesus' name I pray. Amen. ☐

.... "I am your Mother Mary. The prayers you say today will shower relief to the souls in purgatory if your heart is open and sincere. Every word that comes from your lips will come with the true meaning of each of your petition. When this happens God is more concerned on words that your heart does not speak out my children.

I am happy that you come as one and leave as one, and the time you give for my presence. Take my hand my children and stay with me all as one."

*- Mary, Your Lady of the Rosary
011313*

".... I am your Mother Mary. Offer all your prayers to souls whose love for material things is so strong that they consider them (material things) their god and the only important aspect for their existence. These souls are considered heartless and would always invoke their love for these material things .

Open your hearts to souls who come to you emotionally broken. Their love to be with others and their desire to be accepted are strong. Remember they are also children of God and equally created with the same spirit that God has provided to every human creation.

*My beads of rosary, I ask you to pray daily with all sincerity of heart.
I love you my children."*

*- Mary, Your Lady of the Rosary
010513*

GOD TOUCHED ME

A JOURNEY OF SPIRITUAL CLEANSING

By JJ Ramos

*"For I, the LORD your God, hold your right hand;
it is I who say to you, "Fear not, I am the one who helps and guides you."*

- Isaiah 41:13

Throughout my life, God has shown His power and mercy in many different ways. First, I was born a breech baby (feet first) and my mom was in labor for 20 hours (as this was done with technology from 40 years ago, the chances of something going wrong were very high but through God's will and grace we both made it). Then 28 years later, I was involved in a roll-over accident where my SUV was spun 180 degrees, hit the freeway embankment, then flipped over three to five times before the roof of the SUV crashed into the five-foot thick Freeway Column with the ceiling and windshield two inches away from my head. Again with God's grace, I walked away from another near death event with just a few scratches. Just two days later I went to the junkyard to pick up my personal belongings that I left in my car and the attendant just stared at me in disbelief when I told him I was the one driving the car during the accident and I extracted myself from the wreckage.

Fast forward from the car crash 11 years later, I was living the "American Dream" – good job, married to a beautiful wife, two beautiful children, living in a big house with two and a-half baths and two cars in the garage. We went on vacations, went out to dinner twice a week, and went to Church every Sunday. Why, nothing could have been better! Everything in our lives seems to be smooth sailing and "blessed" in all angles of family life. Then our world came crashing down as my wife, Rowena, was diagnosed with incurable and inoperable liver cancer. The vigor and vitality that preoccupied our lives before were now taken over by grief, anguish and anxiety that came rippling through our spines. All the questions, of course, came out, "HOW did this happen? WHY did this happen? WHO can we turn to fix this?" Although it took quite some time to realize these, the answers to all of these questions were always in front of me.

After several days of dwelling and living in self-pity, my wife and I reached out to a friend who was very spiritual and who recently faced her own major challenges in her life. That friend said that she would pray for us and ask her devotional group to pray for us also. We ended up meeting with her devotional group for several occasions and after several weekends of attending, we connected with their Spiritual Advisor. We privately discussed the challenges in our current chapter in life and with the Spiritual Advisor, learned how our journey was in fact a journey of Spiritual Cleansing. We realized that although we felt we had everything, did we really have God as a part of our life? We both had our sacraments of baptism, communion, confirmation, and marriage. Yes, we at least

went to church every Sunday and during Holy Days of obligation. Yes we could recite all the prayers at church with the other parishioners but the question is: Was it truly praying with deep thought and deep meaning and conviction? Or was it just saying the Sunday church mantra while thinking what was going to be for brunch after Mass. Unfortunately, more times than naught it was the latter.

It was in the meetings with the Spiritual Advisor that we were able to open our eyes and basically realize that my priorities were all backwards as we were exuberantly reminded GOD COMES FIRST, FAMILY COMES SECOND, and then WORK COMES THIRD. In the pursuit of chasing and claiming the American dream, I was working 60-80 hours a week, coming home exhausted every day, then sleeping in on Saturday just to spend a couple of hours with the family the rest of the weekend. Sunday Mass was just an interruption to my sleep as I was giving to God and to Church what was left not what was due. I did not realize that without GOD, your work can be taken away. Without GOD, your family can be taken away. Without GOD, you can be taken away. WE ALL MUST MAKE TIME FOR GOD! NO EXCUSES!!!

I was listening to the radio driving home the other day and the radio host was interviewing an author who wrote a book on breaking down the three types of prayer and why we as human beings pray:

Praying for want – we pray when we want something from God, whether it be for good weather, for health, for fortune, etc.

Praying for thanks – we pray thanking God for the good weather, health, fortune, etc.

Praying in awe – we pray in awe in God's work whether it be the Grand Canyon, the miracle of life, earthquakes, etc.

In my case, I think it's a case of all three at the same time. If not for this current challenge in our lives, we never would have met and joined this devotional group. In turn, we would never have been given the opportunity to learn the prayers shared with us (different daily prayers to pray first thing in the morning, afternoon, and evening) all with their own meanings and reflections. When I pray for others, I thank God for the gifts I have, and pray in awe of His power, might, and graces that I see every day.

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SPIRITUAL ARMY NEWS DISPATCH

THE INFANT JESUS FIESTA

The devotees of the Infant Jesus in California celebrated its 7th year Sinulog on January 19, 2013. The organizers and sponsors of this year's Fiesta, the 2000 Hail Mary Prayer Group of Sacramento and Monterey, welcomed all devotees from near and far, with great honor and fervor, as this is the first time ever that a Liturgical celebration in honor of the Santo Nino is being held at the Carmel Mission Basilica.



The Fiesta started with a procession of the Infant Jesus in His specially

engineered carousel bedecked with baby red roses, from the Carmel Mission Basilica courtyard to the Main Altar where devotees offered their prayers and petitions and many more red roses to the Infant King. Cameras clicking away captured misty-eyed devotees as they felt and heard the love and praises for the Infant Jesus in the worship songs, "How Great Thou Art" and "You Deserve the Glory".



Fr. Edwin Limpiado, Director of the Youth Ministry of the Diocese of Monterey, and Fr. Fredy Calvario, Associate Pastor of Carmel Mission Basilica concelebrated the Mass. In his homily, Fr. Edwin encouraged all devotees present to open their hearts and minds to the virtues of the Holy Infant Jesus – His humility, His charity, His gentleness, and His simplicity.



The celebration carried on at the Filipino Community Organization Center of Monterey Peninsula where

a sumptuous lunch reception was waiting. The devotees were also treated to a short but entertaining dance and musical performances both from young ones and the young once. The highlight of the program was the "Sinulog" – a dance which consists of two steps forward and one step backward, done to the sound of the drums. It was a delight to watch the revelers dance the Sinulog hoisting their own Infant Jesus images, chanting "Pit Senor", which means a call to the Lord.



Congratulations and well-wishes are in order to all the members, friends and benefactors of the 2000 Hail Mary Prayer Group of Sacramento and Monterey for a grand fiesta fit for our King – the Holy Infant Jesus! Viva Pit Senor!!! • □

UPCOMING EVENTS

**SECRET CUPID
TOY DRIVE
FOR CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL**
FEBRUARY 2, 2013
CONVENT OF THE SISTER DISCIPLES
OF THE DIVINE MASTER

FEAST OF THE DIVINE MERCY
APRIL 7, 2013
THE MONASTERY OF THE ANGELS
1977 CARMEN AVENUE
LOS ANGELES, CA 90068
AND
ST. BRIDGET CATHOLIC CHURCH
220 N. 14TH STREET
LAS VEGAS, NV 89101

START SAVING UP FOR
**PILGRIMAGE TO
MOTHER MARY'S
APPARITION SHRINES**
PORTUGAL | SPAIN | FRANCE
INCLUDING A TOUR IN
SANTIAGO DE COMPOSTELA
DECEMBER 2014

AN ENCOUNTER WITH ABBÉ JOEL, A SEMINARIAN FROM THE INSTITUTE OF CHRIST THE KING SOVEREIGN PRIEST

By MB

It was New Year's eve and I had to pick up the pre-ordered dish for our *media noche*. A man in "full gear" religious habit was in queue at the cashier's area of an Asian market. How many times does one encounter a seminarian inside a store?

The night before this encounter, I presented to God the Father a list of The Spiritual Army of God the Father's projects for 2013. I requested God to present to us His priority of approval from the list in which supporting religious vocations is one of the projects envisioned. My encounter with Abbé Joel, the very next day, is God's way of signifying His Divine choice!

Abbe Joel's religious order, The Institute of Christ the King Sovereign Priest, is a society of apostolic life whose goal is the honor of God the Father and the sanctification of priests in the service of the Church and souls. Its specific aim is missionary: to spread the reign of our Lord Jesus Christ in all spheres of human life. Its work is carried out under the patronage of the Immaculate Conception, to whom the Institute is consecrated. The integral part of the Institute's charism is the use of the traditional Latin Rite of 1962 for the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass and the other sacraments.

If you wish to donate towards the support of Abbe' Joel in his studies as a seminarian, please contact Tessie Almero at talmero@yahoo.com or tessie.almero@spiritualarmyofgod.org. □

THE SPIRITUAL ARMY SHARES BLESSINGS

The Spiritual Army of God the Father devotees have contributed to the Convent of the Sister Disciples of the Divine Master a total of \$8,325 for 2012 in the form of monthly pledges and donations both for 1st Saturday and 2000 Hail Mary devotions. The Sister Disciples of the Divine Master have graciously provided a "home" for our devotions in the last six years!



The 1st Saturday Devotion contribution comprises 65% or \$5,386 of the total contribution and the rest (35% or \$2,950) was

donated to the Convent for the Ministry's devotion to the 2000 Hail Marys. Quite notably, a single devotee who contributed practically 10% of the total contribution for the 2000 Hail Mary devotion for 2012 was Alice Ng.

As we look forward to 2013, The Spiritual Army of God the Father hopes to mirror or exceed last year's efforts to assist the Sisters of the of Divine Master in their financial endeavors and works, as well as to finance the projects the Ministry has lined up for this year. □

PROJECTS FOR 2013

With a lot of prayers for guidance and direction, below is a list of the projects The Spiritual Army of God the Father has envisioned for the Year 2013.

1. Toy drive for Children's hospital(s). We will be purchasing toys for children under medical care. Studies show that toys have therapeutic effects especially for children. This will be ongoing especially during Christmas holidays.
2. Feeding of the homeless in conjunction with one of the Catholic charities or charitable institutions. Details will be announced early 2013.
3. Blankets and socks distribution for homeless before or during winter months.
4. Extend financial support/help to indigent families or communities devastated by natural calamities or economic dislocation.
5. Financial assistance for individuals who would like to enter religious life.
6. Visits to senior citizen centers to promote love, affection and care to our elderly brethren.
7. Other spiritual and/or financial assistance that is in consonance with the ministry's mission and objectives.

When you donate, you will be helping the sick children, the homeless and devastated people, and the elderly have access to life's basic needs and/or emotional needs; and help a seminarian achieve priesthood to add to our dwindling number of priests. Remember, without priests, we will no longer have the sacraments, especially the Sacraments of Reconciliation and Eucharist.

Please contact Victor Araneta at (213) 385-7798 and/or at victor.a@spiritualarmyofgod.org if you wish to sponsor a particular project. In Las Vegas, NV, please contact Evelyn Pua at (702) 495-4818 or at eablp@aol.com.

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] 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**.
- Ask your parish priest to bless the candles [on February 2, Candlemas Day] that you will be using on your home altar this year.
- On February 11, the World Day of Prayer for the Sick, you may want to give extra care to the sick in your community — cook dinner for a sick mother's family, bring your children to the local nursing home (the elderly love to see children), send flowers to a member of your parish community who is ill. ☐

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.

From Kristen

*Scan on Monday, January 14 is good,
no new lesions or growths!*

Thank you for your continued prayers.



From JJ

Wena's radiation treatment on the right side of her liver went very well and she is scheduled to have a second radiation treatment to treat her left side in about four weeks. She is currently off chemotherapy awaiting her next radiation treatment. She is in high spirits and continues to thank God for His blessings of hope, faith and love!



On behalf of the family of the late Ziegfred Wagas, his sister-in-law, Leticia Marquez, thanks The Spiritual Army of God the Father for the prayers that helped extend Ziegfred's life to almost three years. Now they are requesting prayers for the eternal repose of his soul.

2000 HAIL MARY DEVOTION

The Spiritual Army of God the Father acknowledge with thanks our generous February 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

Vic Batu

Los Angeles, California

Frank & Beth Lim | Ben & Vincie Ong
Dads & Estela Morales | Celia Tiguelo
Aida Tuason | Nancy Wagas

The Spiritual Army of God the Father (Las Vegas Chapter)
extends its sympathy and prayers
to Joyce Ulmer and her family
for the demise of her mother,

Nema Frances Rickwartz,
who passed away on January 18, 2013.

Why Ashes?

make that same sacrifice of our life to God. Sacrifice comes from two Latin words, "sacrum" and "facere." "Sacrum" means "holy" and "facere" means "to make." Therefore, "sacrum facere," sacrifice, means to make holy.

During Lent we are called to make little sacrifices for the Lord. We may give up candy, or soda, or alcohol, and the bishops tell us that we must give up meat on Fridays, but to be a true sacrifice we must give up something good. We cannot make a sacrifice to give up cigarettes, because smoking is bad for your health and we should not be doing it anyway. You have to sacrifice something that is good.

WHY do we have to have to give up something? Why can't we do something positive? There is an old saying that "to say goodbye is to die a little." Fasting and abstinence, (giving up some good worldly pleasure), helps us to say goodbye to this world and helps us prepare for the good things in the life to come. This is why we can never "fast" from prayer or the Sacraments. "To say goodbye is to die a little" makes us realize that giving up some good pleasure prepares us for the ultimate transition, that doorway, known as death. Death is not a state of being but a doorway to eternal life. That door opens either to heaven or to hell, depending on how we have lived in this life. Fasting and abstinence also reminds us of our death because when we fast, we become hungry and that reminds us that one day we will all die. Fulton Sheen also said that "the reason most people fear death is because they have not died yet." However, if this Lent, we truly repent, if we truly make that 180 degree turn in our thoughts and actions, if we say goodbye not only to our sins but also to some of our good pleasures then we will be preparing ourselves for entering into that great doorway of death and eternal life with the Lord Jesus. We have to LIVE remembering that we will all DIE. This is why the traditional pray for the imposition of ashes is "Remember that you are dust and unto dust you will return." ☐

Presentation of Our Lord

It seems probable that, in Constantinople and the Byzantine Empire, the feast was introduced by Emperor Justinian I. A great earthquake and the plague which followed, caused frightful mortality among the inhabitants of Constantinople. As soon as the disaster had passed, the Emperor, as a token of thanksgiving, ordered the feast of the Presentation to be observed for the first time in 542 A.D. as is recorded by the chronicler, Theophanes. Special devotions were instituted in honor of the Mother of God and the feast of

the Presentation was established as a reminder of Mary's protection.

On this day candles are blessed. Liturgists disagree about the origin of this ceremony. Some would connect it with a pagan ceremony, the Lupercalia, which was celebrated in Rome in early February. During the ceremony, lighted torches were carried through the streets of the city. Although this opinion seems reasonable, the Church having always sought to draw her faithful from pagan celebrations by filling them with Christian meanings, there is still no reliable evidence that this was the origin. Processions, with or without lights, were common among both Christians and heathens in early times and no historical connection can be safely inferred between the Lupercalia and the feast of the Presentation. Besides, the blessings of candles did not become common before the eleventh century.

The Feast is known under two names: the Presentation of our Lord and the Meeting, referring to the encounter of the Child Jesus with Simeon and Anna. In the Roman rite, the feast is called the Purification and is counted as a feast of the Blessed Virgin. The Byzantine rite reckons this feast among those of our Lord, calling it the Presentation of our Lord in honor of our Savior who this day was brought to the temple.☐

God Touched Me

I actually find some peace and tranquility as I pray these prayers while I am concentrating and listening to all the words and their true meaning. At work, I now close the door to my office and take out my rosary and spend just ten minutes to focus and spend time with God. Before I come home I eagerly anticipate the time when we pray the rosary as a family with each of the kids leading a decade.

Our lives are forever changed because of this journey of Spiritual Cleansing. My wife is now a Eucharistic Minister and we are both volunteers in our parish's Marriage Enrichment ministry. Our children are now singing in the children's choir. We have friends that have just learned to pray the rosary; and family that after years of not going to church are now there every Sunday. This challenge and spiritual awakening in our life has brought us all closer together as friends, family, and even more importantly as a loving couple. We pray always - in the hope of ridding our lives of useless worry and putting our trust and faith in God as He guides us through the pathway of His divine plan. ☐

DEVOTION SCHEDULE



THE SPIRITUAL ARMY OF GOD THE FATHER

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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. | 1st 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 1st 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 – February 16, 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.