



1ST SATURDAY DEVOTION NEWSLETTER

October 2014

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LET'S GET REAL ABOUT PRAYER AM I GIVING MORE TIME TO FACEBOOK THAN TO GOD'S BOOK?

By: Mark Hart

Why are we so shocked when our lives get filled with stress? Why are so many Christians still so often without joy? Why are anxiety and worry more prevalent than peace in many modern believers? I'll throw out one possible answer: We don't pray enough.

Prayer is the hinge pin that holds everything else together and keeps us moving forward. Without prayer, everything falls apart. Without prayer, we're not living, we're breathing. Prayer is the most primal, most basic, and most important thing we can do as Christians. Prayer is also the very first thing we should do when we get busy.

When we don't take time to pray, we may as well be saying that it's not as high a priority as other the things in our lives that we do take time for. We often need to admit that we don't make enough time to pray.

I don't make enough time to pray, but I do make excuses. Maybe other things are pulling at me (sometimes children, literally). Maybe my prayer is interrupted, cut short, or unfocused because of reality -- the demands of the world around me.

Jesus had people pulling at him. Jesus had people wanting things from him 24/7. Jesus had plenty to do. He made the time. Throughout the Scriptures we see instances when Jesus removed himself from the busyness and took time to pray. We need to be more like Jesus.

If you drew a pie chart of your week that broke down where all of your time goes, what would it look like? When I broke down my 168-hour week, it hit me pretty hard that not enough of my time is dedicated to prayer on a daily or weekly basis. How about yours? There's probably a lot of time in there for work or school. There's definitely time in there for travel, meals, and sleep (but probably not as much as you'd like). I'll even bet that there's time for exercise or hanging out, reading, or spending time with family and friends (again, probably not as much as you'd like). None of those things is bad; each of them is good. We need relationships, activities, and rest. But God is moving right now. If we don't perceive it, we need to slow down.

Perhaps, like me, you've experienced the Spirit moving in your heart from time to time, prodding you to do some things differently. If so, that's great, but let's remember: intentions accomplish nothing if we lack resolve.

Part of resolve is the commitment to improve and the willingness to be practical. How about making a personal inventory to shed light on some areas or offer some ideas on how you might do that?

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OVERVIEW FOR THE MONTH

The month of October is dedicated to the Holy Rosary. The Memorial of Our Lady of the Rosary is celebrated on October 7. October falls during the liturgical season known as Ordinary Time, which is represented by the liturgical color green.

During October, as in all of Ordinary Time (formerly known as Time After Pentecost), the Liturgy does not focus on one particular mystery of Christ, but views the mystery of Christ in all its aspects. We follow the life of Christ through the Gospels, and focus on the teachings and parables of Jesus and what it means for each of us to be a follower of Christ. During Ordinary Time we can concentrate more on the saints and imitate their holiness as Christ's followers. □

FEASTS FOR OCTOBER

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

- 1 Therese of the Child Jesus, Memorial
- 2 Guardian Angels, Memorial
- 4 Francis of Assisi, Memorial
- 5 Twenty-Seventh Sunday in Ordinary Time, Sunday
- 6 Bruno; Bl. Marie Rose Durocher (USA), Opt. Mem.
- 7 Our Lady of the Rosary, Memorial
- 11 St. John XXIII, Opt. Mem.
- 12 Twenty-Eighth Sunday in Ordinary Time, Sunday
- 14 Callistus I, Opt. Mem.
- 15 Teresa of Jesus, Memorial
- 16 Hedwig; Margaret Mary Alacoque, Opt. Mem.
- 17 Ignatius of Antioch, Memorial
- 18 Luke, Feast
- 19 Twenty-Ninth Sunday in Ordinary Time, Sunday
- 20 Paul of the Cross, Opt. Mem.
- 22 John Paul II, Opt. Mem.
- 23 John of Capistrano, Opt. Mem.
- 24 Anthony Claret, Opt. Mem.
- 26 Thirtieth Sunday in Ordinary Time, Sunday
- 28 Simon and Jude, Feast

The feasts of St. Faustina (October 5), and St. Isaac Jogues, St. John de Brébeuf and Companions (October 19) are superseded by the Sunday liturgy. □

OUR CENACLE CORNER

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

Our Relationship with God Who do you think I am to you?

Leviticus 19:3
Jeremiah 29:11
Luke 9:18-22
Matthew 7:7-9
2 Corinthians 5:17-18

"I am your Mother Mary

My first Saturday be a renewal of your love for God. The first renewal be your own self offering . The sincerity of heart that you must offer to God through honesty, love and service to others . The renewal of words that only reflect prayers and praises for God continuing in the days ahead. The renewal of actions. These will be the acts that hurt the Sacred Heart of my son Jesus that one must discard. Any call of the flesh that separates you from God through love of power, love for money and fame must be discarded and thrown back to the evil one. I tell you my children your acts of renewal will best serve your purpose if they are lasting and genuine offering to God Almighty.

Pray unceasingly for cleansing of humanity through this crisis as more people realizing the hands of God as correction to man's behavior towards others and to Him.

Pray my children that peace be always at the midst of humanity and the love for God will always prevail in each and everyone's heart. Pray daily my beads of rosary my children . Your daily devotion to my beads is your instrument of peace that once again calm the waters of human trials and tribulations.

I will always be with you and intercede before the throne of the Most High. I thank you for adhering to this call.

I love you my children".

*Mary, Your Lady of Peace and the Rosary
090614*

I am your Mother Mary.

As you offer all petitions before my image, open your hearts before God that everyone will be cleared out of envy, anger and misgivings about others. Many think that the best way to establish strong relationship with God is prayers through the lips. Your heart my children brings you closer and closer to God Almighty. Pure and contrite heart, will not be rejected.

This place and son helper will soon be reunited in thoughts, words and works to glorify the MOST HIGH!

Be one and be honest to one self as you offer these prayers before me. Be one my children, be one.

*Mary, Your Lady of Fatima
091214*

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE MONTH

SERMON ON THE HOLY GUARDIAN ANGELS

By St. Bernard of Clairvaux

"He hath given his angels charge over thee." O wonderful bounty and truly great love of charity! Who? For whom? Wherefore? What has He commanded? Let us study closely, brethren, and let us diligently commit to our memory this great mandate. Who is it that commands? Whose angels are they? Whose mandates do they fulfill? Whose will do they obey? In answer, "He hath given his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways." And they do not hesitate even to life thee up in their hands.

So the Supreme Majesty has given charge to the angels. Yes, He has given charge to His own angels. Think of it! To those sublime beings, who cling to Him so joyfully and intimately, to His very own He has given charge over you! Who are you?

"What is man that thou art mindful of him? or the son of man that thou visitest him?" As if man were not rottenness, and the son of man a worm! Now why, do you think, he Has given them charge over thee? -- To guard thee!

With what great reverence should you treat this word! What devotion should you proffer it; what great confidence should you place in it. Reverence because of their presence; devotion because of their benevolence; confidence because of their solicitude. Walk carefully, in all thy ways, as one with whom the angels are

present as He has given them charge. In every lodging, at every corner, have reverence for thy Angel. Do not dare to do in his presence what you would not dare to do if I were there. Or do you doubt that he is present whom you do not behold? What if you should hear him? What if

you should touch him? What if you should scent him? Remember that the presence of something is not proved only by the sight of things.

In this, therefore, brethren, let us affectionately love His angels as one day our future coheirs; meanwhile, however, as counselors and defenders appointed by the Father and placed over us. Why should we fear under such guardians? Those who keep us in all our

ways can neither be overcome nor be deceived, much less deceive. They are faithful; they are prudent; they are powerful; why do we tremble? Let us only follow them, let us remain close to them, and in the protection of the God of heaven let us abide. As often, therefore, as a most serious temptation is perceived to weigh upon you and an excessive trial is threatening, call to your guard, your leader, your helper in your needs, in your tribulation; cry to him and say: "Lord, save us; we perish!" □



MEDITATING WITH MARY TWO REASONS FOR PRAYING THE SCRIPTURAL ROSARY

By: Fr. Mitch Pacwa, SJ

Most Catholics are very familiar with the Rosary, but many are surprised when they discover the level of depth that is possible while "telling the beads." An essential component of the Rosary is the association of one of the mysteries of Christ's life with each decade.

Most Catholics are very familiar with the Rosary, but many are surprised when they discover the level of depth that is possible while "telling the beads." An essential component of the Rosary is the association of one of the mysteries of Christ's life with each decade. The importance of these mysteries was well expressed by Pope Paul VI, who called them the "soul" of the Rosary (*Marialis cultus*, 47) because it is precisely in these meditations that we come to know the various aspects of Jesus Christ's work to save the world from sin and separation from God.

The first set of five mysteries are called Joyful and meditate on Jesus' birth, infancy, and childhood, especially as recorded in St. Luke's Gospel. The Luminous Mysteries consider key events from Christ's public ministry. The Sorrowful Mysteries consider his suffering and death, and the Glorious Mysteries consider his resurrection and its aftermath.

There are a number of reasons to meditate on these mysteries while praying the ten Hail Mary's of each decade. First, we learn to approach each mystery from the perspective of the Blessed Virgin Mary. Recall that Our Lady was present at many of these events, not only in the events surrounding Jesus' birth, but also at the wedding feast of Cana and while Jesus carried his cross and was crucified. She was with the apostles in the upper room at Pentecost, so we can also safely assume that she saw the risen Lord Jesus and perhaps his ascension. Of course, she experienced her own assumption and crowning in heaven.

By repeating the Hail Mary, we address Our Lady with those greetings of St. Gabriel and St. Elizabeth, and then we ask for her prayers as we consider the mysteries. In this process, it is as if we were trying to look at each

mystery of salvation from her maternal perspective, seeking to love Jesus Christ, the center of each mystery, as she does. I assume that the Virgin Mary had a more personal and a more highly motivated love of Jesus than we sinners do! As much as we may love Christ, the Virgin Mary can always lead us to a deeper love and a more uplifting perspective of faith in him.

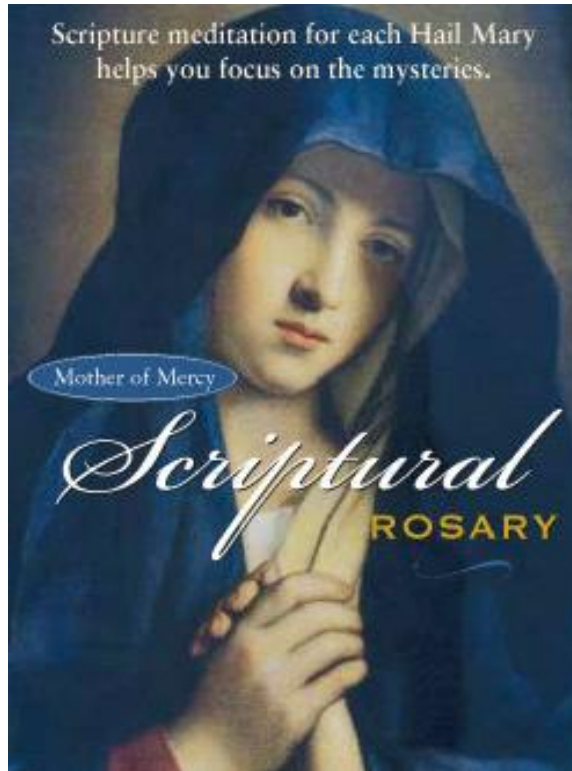
Another reason to keep returning to these mysteries is to integrate the cycle of all twenty mysteries into the rhythm of our lives. At times the temptation may be to focus on the mysteries we like -- perhaps the warmth of the nativity or the glory of the resurrection or the power of Pentecost. While it is permissible to feel drawn to emphasize a certain aspect of the mystery of salvation, as do many of the religious orders - - the Passionists or the Resurrectionists, for example -- the Christian faith encompasses all aspects of salvation. Praying through the cycle of the twenty mysteries will remind us to balance our meditation on all the key mysteries of salvation.

A variety of aids to meditating on the mysteries are available, including books or pamphlets called "Scriptural Rosaries," which provide one verse of Scripture for each Hail Mary in every decade, or those with short reflections on each mystery. A person might do well to

look up the mysteries in the Bible and read a small part of that passage, either at the beginning of each decade or in small sections between each Hail Mary. Other people simply focus on their own imaginative sense of each mystery, while still others concentrate on the words of the Hail Mary, the Our Father, or the Glory Be.

Everyone is free to approach the Rosary according to one's own preference. However, the more open in heart and mind we are to the prayers and the mysteries, the greater will be the depth of prayer we experience. □

Biblical scholar Fr. Mitch Pacwa is a popular speaker, writer, and TV host. This is adapted from his book *How to Listen When God Is Speaking*. To purchase this book, as well as Fr. Pacwa's more recent *Winning the Battle Against Sin*, or to read excerpts, please visit our bookstore.



KNOWING OUR SAINTS

THE LIFE OF ST. GREGORY THE GREAT

FEAST DAY: SEPTEMBER 3

PART 2 OF 2

*Excerpted from the post by Sr. Catherine Goddard Clark, M.I.C.M.
on July 11, 2005 in Articles, Lives of the Saints
www.catholicism.org*

More Interesting Facts About St. Gregory the Great

5. For the story is told that as Saint Gregory was passing over the bridge of Saint Peter's, a heavenly vision consoled the long line of the faithful. The Archangel Saint Michael was seen over the tomb of the Emperor Hadrian, sheathing his flaming sword in token that the pestilence was over. And at the same moment, Saint Gregory heard angelic voices singing the antiphon, "Queen of Heaven, rejoice!" The great monk made answer, "Pray for us to the Lord, alleluia." To this day, the tomb of Hadrian in Rome is called the Castle of Sant' Angelo, in memory of the visitation of Saint Michael and his angelic choristers, and of the miraculous deliverance of the city from plague. A marble angel was placed on the tomb and remained there for centuries until Pope Benedict XIV replaced it with a bronze one.

6. The custom of saying "God bless you" when someone has sneezed, and the making of the Sign of the Cross on the mouths of those who yawn, goes back to the days of Saint Gregory and the Roman plague. The dread disease always ended in a spasm of sneezing or yawning, and the holy Pontiff ordered that "God bless you" should be said to those who sneeze, and the blessing of the Sign of the Cross should be put on the mouths of those who yawned. The post was very slow in those days, and the confirmation of the Emperor Maurice did not reach Rome until six months after Saint Gregory's election. But arrive it did, and when the news was brought to Gregory, he fled! The city gates were guarded, but he persuaded some merchants to cover him up in a wicker basket and thus carry him, along with their various wares, unnoticed out of the city. Once outside the city limits, he hid himself in the woods, and so made his way into the mountains. For three days his people fasted and prayed, that he might be discovered and again brought back to them. And at the end of the third day, the searchers found him. This time he came back never to leave again; on the third of September, in 590, after he had first been ordained a priest, Saint Gregory was consecrated Pope and Bishop of Rome, in Saint Peter's Basilica. He was almost fifty years old. He was wan and tired and ill, but for fourteen years, in sheer love of God and conformity to His Holy Will, he

was to do the work of ten strong men; and this in spite of continual indigestion, slow fevers and frequent attacks of gout. The problems of the world, as he had been given so thoroughly to know them, pressed upon him in all their gravity as he set out upon his pontificate. The heresy of Nestorius still persisted in the East, Monophysitism still tore at the heart of the Church in Egypt, Arianism still remained to be given the death blow in Spain, and the Lombards forever threatened Rome.

7. Saint Gregory thought that the end of the world was coming, and, "so thinking and so saying, he founded Western Christendom." He called himself not ecumenical bishop, as did the proud Patriarch of Constantinople, John "the Faster," but "servant of the servants of God." Saint Gregory had years before, in the East, seen through John's affectation of shabby clothes and advertised charities and fasts, and he had said of him, "Would it not be better for him to eat meat than to soil his lips with falsehood? Of what use is it to fast, if one is puffed up with pride; or to dress shabbily, if one is clothed in vanity; or to appear like a lamb, if one really has the teeth of a wolf?"

Gregory called himself the "servant of the servants of God," "For I am the servant of all bishops so long as they live like bishops. But whoever, through vainglory and contrary to the statutes of the Fathers lifts his neck against Almighty God, I trust in Almighty God that he will not bend me even with the sword." Every Pope who came after him took for his own and affixed to his title Gregory's beautiful "servant of the servants of God," that while each of them maintained that, in straight line from Peter, he was: the "Bishop of Rome, Vicar of Jesus Christ, Successor of the Prince of the Apostles, Supreme Pontiff of the Universal Church, Archbishop and Metropolitan of the Roman Province and (since 1929) Sovereign of the State of the City of the Vatican."

Saint Gregory was the first monk to become Pope. He had feared, with characteristic humility, that in the life of the papal court his monastic spirit might be lost. But he need not have worried. Years before, in Constantinople he had acquired the holy art of doing two things at once, of giving his mind to the work at hand and of keeping his heart at the same time fixed upon his Lord. And so it transpired that it was rather the sweet odor of monastic

sanctity which pervaded the halls where diplomatic concourse held sway, and where the business of a temporal as well as a spiritual kingdom must be the order of the day. For Saint Gregory was not only faced with the saving of Rome, he was obliged to "create her anew." The ancient city would have ceased to exist but for the "imperishable life which did not come from her but was stored up in her." Under the guarding and administering hand of Gregory, the Rome of the Popes rose up from the ruins of the Rome of the Emperors. Because of the sheer inability of the rulers of the Eastern Empire to assert any civil authority over Italy, and because there was no longer any military authority left in Rome, Pope Gregory was compelled to assume both offices, along with his own universal spiritual responsibilities. And assume them he did. His letters give the best realization of the almost overwhelming situation.

8. "At one time," he wrote, "I have to consider the affairs of churches and monasteries, often taking into account the lives and actions of individuals. At another time I have to represent my fellow citizens in their affairs. Again I have to groan over the swords of the barbarians advancing to storm us, and to dread the wolves which lie in wait for a flock huddled together in fear. Then, again, I must charge myself with the care of public affairs, to provide means even for those to whom the maintenance of order is entrusted, or I must patiently endure certain depredators, or take precautions against them, that tranquility be not disturbed. . . . If you love me, weep for me, since so many temporal businesses press on me that I seem as if this dignity had almost excluded me from the love of God. He surrounded himself with the holiest and most learned of his monks, whose advice he could trust, and he set himself to organize again the seven districts of Rome with their deacons, and to administer food, clothing and shelter for the multitudes of homeless, starving, "displaced" families who had flocked to Rome to seek his protection against the Lombards. The almsgivers whom he organized went up and down the streets every day, bringing food and medicine to the hungry and the sick.

On the first of each month, and on the holydays in between, the Pope would assist and oversee the distribution of meat, fish, vegetables, wheat, corn, oil, cheese, wine and clothing. He forced from the vast papal lands — acquired over the centuries by the donations of the faithful — every morsel of food and every bit of wood which could possibly be gathered together to provide for the needs of his impoverished people. He raised up a great army of workers whom he called "soldiers of Saint Peter," whose main duty, along with administering the papal land, was to assist the poor and place homeless families on farms, which were leased to them for three generations.

9. Saint Gregory admonished his rectors that the papal patrimonies were the goods of the poor, that the thing most to be sought after was not gold, but eternal justice, and that the treasure of the Church was not to be used

for selfish ends. By his boundless charities and the extraordinary burden put upon them, he finally emptied his treasury. But this he thought was only as it should be. Every day, he fed at his own table twelve poor pilgrims, whom he insisted on serving himself. We are told that one day when he entered the dining room he saw not twelve men, but thirteen. He inquired of his steward why there was an extra guest, but the astonished steward maintained that they had only the usual number.

"I am sure I see thirteen!" the Pope insisted.

As the meal progressed, Saint Gregory noticed that the countenance of one of his guests kept changing from time to time. Now he would find himself looking into the face of a handsome young man, and again his gaze would fix itself on the same face become suddenly old and venerable. When he could stand the mystery no longer, Pope Gregory drew the strange man aside.

"What is your name?" he asked him.

"Do you not remember," his guest replied, "the merchant who came to you one day at Saint Andrew's Monastery and told you that he had lost all his possessions in a shipwreck, and whom you gave twelve pieces of money and the silver dish which was your treasured remembrance of your beloved mother? I am the merchant to whom you gave your mother's dish. Rather, I am the angel whom God sent to you to prove your charity. Now, do not fear," he added, seeing Saint Gregory's trembling amazement, "it is for the alms of that silver dish that God has given you the Chair of Saint Peter. And behold, God has sent me to be your guardian as long as you remain in this world. Whatever you ask will be granted you through me."

"If," said the Pope in humble and happy wonderment, "for my little alms God has made me Supreme Pastor of His holy Church, and has sent me an angel to help me, what will He not grant me if I set to work to perform with my whole strength whatever He wishes of me!"

His burdens seemed to bear less heavily upon Saint Gregory after that. And he accomplished even more extraordinary things. He dispensed the goods of the estates of the Church throughout southern Italy, Sicily, Africa, France and Illyricum with such wisdom, bounty and command that historians trace to Gregory the Great the beginning of that temporal sovereignty which lasted down to the nineteenth century, until, under Pope Pius IX, the enemies of Christianity at last succeeded in wrenching from the Popes the lands which in their hands had been used for the succoring and saving of Christendom many, many times down the ages.

10. Pope Gregory's constant care was for his bishops and priests. Early in his pontificate, he published his Pastoral Rule, on the duties of a bishop. This celebrated book, which for centuries remained the textbook of the clerical life, he divided into four parts. The first part treats of the fact that only one who already is skilled as a physician of the soul is fitted to undertake the supreme task of bishop.

The second part describes the ordering of a bishop's life to the end that he might be a good pastor. The third part sets down rules for the teaching and admonishing by the bishop of those under him. And the fourth part tells the bishop that, in spite of the good works he may have done, he must ever bear in mind his own weakness, since the better his work the greater his danger of falling through self-confidence.

It is said of the Pastoral Rule that by its influence Saint Gregory's ideal of the perfect bishop molded the whole character of the episcopacy, and spread into every land the heavenly stimulus of his own sublime spirit.

11. In 593, Saint Gregory wrote the four books of Dialogues, which, together with the Pastoral Rule, were the two works most universally read and prized throughout the Middle Ages. The Dialogues provide an excellent history of the times. The second of its books is given over entirely to a wonderful life of Saint Benedict, while the other three books contain, in many cases, the only accounts we have of the virtuous lives and the deeds of extraordinary holiness of the courageous and suffering Catholics of those days.

12. The secret of Saint Gregory's power to lift the mind of his reader above the earth into the celestial air of Heaven, and to leave him with an ecstatic hunger for heavenly things, is revealed in a story told by Peter the Deacon, one of his biographers. It seems that when the Pope was dictating his homilies on Ezechiel, a curtain was drawn between him and his secretary. When, one morning, a good deal of time had passed and the secretary had heard no word from the Pope, he made a hole in the curtain and peeked through. He beheld Saint Gregory sitting in rapt attention, as if listening to someone. A dove hovered before his face, its beak inserted between his lips. When at last the bird withdrew its beak, the Pope spoke, and the secretary, full of wonder, took down the words. And when once again the Pope became silent, and once more the secretary peered through the hole in the curtain, he saw that the dove had replaced its beak between the lips of the Pontiff, and was engaging him anew, in sacred colloquy. And eagerly and in awe, after that, he awaited each fresh outcome of the heavenly conversation. This exquisite evidence of the divine help of the Holy Spirit accounts for the great number and the miraculous nature of the extraordinary works and writings of Pope Saint Gregory the Great, the effects of which are, as one would expect, beyond counting.

13. Through Saint Leander and his brother, Saint Isidore of Seville, as well as the martyr Saint Hermenegild, Saint Gregory recovered Spain from the Arians. Through Queen Theodelinda, the wife of the Lombard King Agilulf, he was able to begin the conversion of the Lombard nation and the tempering of their ferocious and cruel natures. He won France back from the sorry spiritual state into which the country had fallen in the years which followed the death of King Clovis. For five years, he fought Emperor

Maurice's attempt to enforce an edict forbidding any official or soldier of the Empire from entering either the priesthood or the religious life, and in the end, the Pope triumphed.

14. Saint Gregory persuaded Queen Brunhilde of Austrasia to assist in the work of reforming the French clergy. His trust and praise of Brunhilde for centuries confounded historians, who professed to know her only as cruel, ambitious, murderous, scheming and wholly without virtue. Recent researchers, however, not content simply to copy facts which historians before them had copied from historians before them — and making use of the Vatican archives which Pope Leo XIII opened for just such study — portray Brunhilde in a new light. They reveal her as a noble ruler and above reproach in her private life, and this clearly was the Queen Brunhilde whom Saint Gregory knew.

It would seem as if Divine Providence had disposed the queens of Europe for the holy use of Pope Gregory in the conversion of the barbarian nations and the founding of Western civilization. For it was another queen, the Catholic Queen Bertha, who gave the impetus, under Saint Augustine of Canterbury, to the conversion of her husband, the English King Ethelbert of Kent. Ethelbert, in his turn, brought with him into the safe harbor of the Faith a host of his subjects. The chief concern of the great Pontiff, throughout the fourteen years of his pontificate, was that not only should his people receive the Faith, but that they should progress in it. He demanded that his priests be learned as well as holy. "If you require such learning of priests," a bishop once wrote him, "we shall never find any candidates!" But the Pope would not be deterred. He not only made learning a requirement, he himself set the example. It came to be said of him that "he possessed doctrine, learning and eloquence superior to those of the time in which he lived. . . He had not a single servant who had not received a good education, and whose words were not worthy to be heard around the ancient throne of the Latin language. . . ."

15. The beloved Saint Ildefonsus of Spain, Archbishop of Toledo — who defended the perpetual virginity of the Blessed Virgin Mary against the Helvidians, and to whom Our Blessed Lady appeared and gave a chasuble — said of Pope Saint Gregory the Great that "he excelled Anthony in holiness, and Augustine in knowledge." The Anthony to whom Saint Ildefonsus refers is, of course, Saint Anthony of the Desert, for Saint Anthony of Padua would not be born for almost another six hundred years. Saint Ildefonsus himself was not born until three years after Saint Gregory's death, but he knew and loved Pope Gregory through Saint Isidore of Seville, his teacher, and he had made a careful and loving study of his life and writings.

Saint Gregory was, above all else, a vigilant guardian of the Church's doctrine, always the mark of a holy Pope. He ordained, early in his pontificate that the first four

Ecumenical Councils of the Church should be treated with the respect given to the four Gospels. He worked unceasingly to stamp out heresy. He ordered that at the beginning of Lent the blessed ashes should be placed on the foreheads of the faithful, instead of upon only the head of the Pope — as had been the custom up to that time — and that the priest should repeat to each one, "Remember, man, that dust thou art, and unto dust thou shalt return."

16. Saint Gregory was the first Pope to use the phrase, "to speak ex cathedra." He reorganized the "stations," still mentioned in the Roman Missal, especially in the Lenten Masses. It was then the custom for a part of the clergy to walk with the people in procession to whatever church was the "station" for the day, and there together they would hear Mass. The Pope would preside at the Mass, and, on most occasions, he would preach. Saint Gregory preached as often as his failing voice would let him. Somehow, in the midst of his weighty burdens and his constant ill-health, Saint Gregory managed to compile a volume of the prayers, or collects, said in the Mass, and this he called the Sacramentary. He instituted, at Rome, a school of chanters, the famous schola cantorum, about which we hear so much today. For the schola cantorum, he built two houses, one near the Basilica of Saint Peter and the other near the Church of Saint John Lateran. John the Deacon gives us an interesting sidelight on the healthy educational methods of a saint when he tells us, in his narration of the two houses which sheltered the schola cantorum, that in them "we find preserved, with proper veneration, the authentic Antiphonary, the couch on which he used to chant, and the rod with which he disciplined the boys."

There has been a revival also in our day of the beautifully reverent "Gregorian Chant," named in honor of Saint Gregory's patient labor in restoring the ancient chant of the Church and in setting down the rules to be followed so that Church music might more perfectly fulfill its function. Pope Gregory held that the place of Church music was a subordinate one. It should never provide, he said, anything more than a background for the sacred reenactment of Calvary. It should never draw attention to itself, and away from the Holy sacrifice of the Mass. It should, while disposing the minds of the faithful to profound reverence of God, and making more ardent the love of their hearts for Him, never become an end in itself.

And so the amazing Holy Father found time to perfect the chant of the Church and to train his school of chanters. And when his lessons were forgotten over the ages, and the incongruity of operatic music had long plagued and distracted the faithful during Mass, a Pope after Saint Gregory's own heart, Pope Saint Pius X, would have but to turn back from the twentieth century to the sixth, to find the inspiration and confirmation for his Motu Proprio on sacred music. And both Gregorian chant and the

schola cantorum would become part of the education, once again, of Catholic children.

17. Saint Gregory the Great died on the twelfth of March, 604, at the age of sixty-four. He was canonized immediately after his death, by the unanimous acclaim of his people. Later, because of the volume, the extraordinary insight and the profundity of his writings, the depth and extent of his learning, and the heroic holiness of his life, the Church gratefully placed him beside Jerome and Ambrose and Augustine. Saint Gregory the Great became the fourth of the Church's four great Doctors of the West. Since the words we would most like to leave with our reader are Saint Gregory's own, maybe we will be forgiven for choosing those which he wrote to Theodelinda, the Christian Queen of the Lombards. They are words singularly precious to the Slaves of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, who, by God's grace, have been given the sweet privilege of keeping fresh in the hearts and minds of their fellow Catholics in the twentieth century what all the Popes have taught in every century and what Pope Saint Gregory the Great so beautifully and courageously told the Queen whose husband held in his cruel keeping the life and death of the people of Italy.

The Pope wrote Theodelinda, "since, then, by my own public profession you know the entireness of our belief, it is fitting that you have no further scruple concerning the Church of Saint Peter, Prince of the Apostles. But persist in the true Faith, and ground your life on the rock of the Church, that is, in his confession: lest your many tears and your good works avail nothing, if they be separated from the true Faith. For as branches wither without a root, so works, however good they seem, are nothing if separated from the solidity of the Faith."

St. Gregory the Great is patron of educators/teachers, students/scholars, musicians, masons/stonecutters, West Indies, and he is an intercessor against gout (which he suffered), and fever and plagues (he held possessions and chants to hold back a great plague in Rome. We celebrate his Feast Day on September 3. □

GOD TOUCHED ME

WALKING WITH GOD

"Being with me brings hope and love". --- Jeremiah 29:11

By GC

There is an old pilgrim tradition in Santiago de Compostela. Upon one's arrival in the Cathedral, one goes behind the altar to hug the statue of St. James, to give him thanks for a safe arrival, and to ask him to help you return to Santiago. When I made my first pilgrimage to Santiago in May 2012, I queued up to hug St. James about a dozen times. "Please, St. James, help me come back!" I had prayed. I had fallen in love with the Camino and Santiago de Compostela.

Why did I love the Camino so much? I loved the rhythm and solitude of walking when I was alone, the company and conversation of my fellow pilgrims when I felt like being social, and the fact that cappuccinos in Spain only cost 1.50 Euro. I made some good friends on my first Camino whom I still keep in touch with. Most of all, I love the Camino because it led me home. The Camino brought me back to my spiritual home, the Catholic Church. After more than ten years of neglecting my faith and leaving my soul to wither and starve to the point of dying, I started going back to Mass after I got back from my first Camino. At first, it was only on Sundays. After a few months, I started going on one or two weekday mornings as well. Now I go as often as I can, five or six times a week. My son asked me once, "Why do you go to Mass so often? It is like you are addicted." I told him that, for the previous few years, when I was at my unhappiest, I was like a man dying of thirst in a desert. And when a man dying of thirst finally finds the spring with clear, fresh, life-giving water, he does not take polite dainty sips only on Sundays. When he finally finds that spring, he will drink himself drunk on that life-giving water. He will take handful after handful to his lips. He will splash it on his head, all over his body. He will immerse himself into that spring, so that he can drink of life with every inch of his

being. His heart will be full of rejoicing and thanksgiving because he has been rescued. I explained to him that I was that man dying of thirst, and the Mass was my spring. "I'm sorry, Mom, but you sound a little crazy," he had said. I gave him a hug.



Shadow of a leaf on a tree trunk, or the silhouette of an angel with a halo and flowing robes?

The Camino also led us to our physical home. We had been looking for a house all over Canton Zürich for almost three years, to no avail. The Camino also goes through Switzerland, where it is called the St. Jakobsweg. One day, I thought, I would love to live near the St. Jakobsweg. It turns out that the area where the St. Jakobsweg goes through Canton Zürich was very attractive in terms of house prices and commute times. The home we live in now was only the second property we viewed with the Camino criteria. (I don't know why, but we hadn't thought of looking in this area before.) According to Google Maps, we are only three km. away, as the crow flies, from the St. Jakobsweg. Thus, literally and figuratively, the Camino led me home. Thank you, St. James!

In any case, two years after that first pilgrimage, all that queuing up to hug St. James seemed to have paid off. God and my mom are good and

generous. After two years of hearing me sing praises of the Camino, my mom invited me to accompany her on her Camino pilgrimage. In May 2014, I was once again starting off from Sarria in northern Galicia with my hiking boots, walking sticks, and sunhat, to walk the last 100 km of the French Way to Santiago de Compostela. Along with my mom were a friend of hers from her primary school days, and my mom's two cousins. We joined a larger guided walking group organized by a Dublin-based company called Follow the Camino. Aside from the five of us from the Philippines, there were four other ladies from Australia, Scotland, and Ireland, and our guide from the UK.

Though I had already walked this part of the Camino before, walking with my mom and my titas (aunties) was a completely new and different experience. My mom and my titas are in their sixties and seventies. While they are healthy and fit (puera usog), trying to keep up with the others was simply not an option. We marveled in particular at the two very tall and sporty Australians. They had legs up to our eyebrows, and each step of theirs seemed about five of ours. Within five minutes of starting off on our first day, the other ladies were out of sight. They zoomed off at an almost-running pace that they kept up until they reached the hotel in Portomarin, some 22 km away, where we were spending the night. My mom, my titas, and I walked at a gentle pace of 2-3 km per hour.

What a gift it turned out to be, to be small and slow! We savored the Galician countryside. We stopped and admired the flowers, houses, cows, sheep, chickens, and churches. Every topic under the sun was discussed in length and at leisure while we walked -- raising families, careers, fitness routines, the 17-day diet, the 5:2 intermittent fasting diet, the South Beach diet, the cultural offerings of New York, the merits of Hugh Jackman, and the various characters and eccentrics in the family. Walking slowly meant that we missed the early morning rush of pilgrims trying to secure a place at the next albergue. (Pilgrims who were backpacking typically did not have advance reservations at their next hostel, where beds were available on first-come, first-served basis. They had valid reasons to be rushing!) We always found a free table when we stopped at coffee bars, and we almost never had to queue to use the toilets. Most of the time, since everyone had already overtaken us, we had the whole Camino to ourselves. I remember one long and lonely stretch where we could see no one else on the road. I kept thinking I could hear someone behind us. Whenever I turned, there was no one, just the empty Camino. I am convinced it was our guardian angels. There were times when we were walking through forests when I felt I could see silhouettes of Our Lady of Grace, angels, and saints everywhere I looked. I took picture after picture.

That is not to say that our pilgrimage was without challenges. We had a total of six walking days, where the distances we had to cover to the next hotel ranged from

13 to 24 km. The price of our gentle pace was that, while most other pilgrims had already reached their destination for the day, we had hours of walking yet ahead of us in the mid-afternoons, the hottest part of the day. When faced with a steep uphill climb under the blazing Spanish sun, we kept our spirits up with the Rosary ("when going gets tough, the tough say the Rosary!"), followed by the Divine Mercy chaplet. To get our minds off from the many kilometers we still had to go, we sometimes resorted to twirling about in the fields imagining we were Julie Andrews in the Sound of Music, or humming the Chariots of Fire theme as we walked. We started walking most days at 8 a.m., and would arrive at the next hotel just before dinner, at 6 or 7 p.m. My mom's friend and our guide would often walk kilometers in the wrong direction, i.e., away from Santiago, to find us and give us moral support for the last stretch. Our other group mates, who usually arrived a little bit after lunch, would be there waiting outside for us, all showered and rested. They would start clapping and cheering when they saw us approaching.

Many a time, when I saw my mom and my titas struggling, I wondered whether it would have been more responsible for me to force them to take a taxi. However, my mom and titas taught me a lesson about the power of the human will. Walking the last 100 km to Santiago de Compostela on foot would qualify us for the Compostela certificate issued by the Pilgrim Office and a plenary indulgence forgiving half of our sins. They were the first in their home parishes who were making this pilgrimage, and their friends back home were eagerly

awaiting news of how it went. They were determined to get that Compostela certificate. To them it meant a successfully completed pilgrimage. No matter how tired they were, and no matter how many times I suggested it to them, they did not want to take a taxi and forfeit that certificate. They taught me my take-home message from this pilgrimage, that the human will is amazing and powerful thing. One cannot touch or taste or smell it, or point a finger to where it resides, and yet, whatever it is, it is a force stronger than age, heat, exhaustion, aching bones, and blistered feet. No wonder the human will is precious to God, and He is so pleased when we surrender our individual wills unto His!



There were times when we walked through forests where I thought I could see the silhouette of Our Lady of Grace, angels, and saints wherever I looked. I took lots of close-up photos of shadows on tree trunks, which I imagine looked rather odd to anyone who was watching me. When reviewing the photos, I found what seems like God the Father looking somewhat stern on this tree trunk (about 1/4 of the way down, from the top edge).

In the end, because Sarria, the town we started from was, 111 km away from Santiago de Compostela, we had a surplus of 11 km. We (me, my mom, and my titas) used this "credit" on the last day and took a taxi to give us an 11 km head start from the rest of our group, the goal being that we would approach the Cathedral together as a group while still fulfilling the requirements for the Compostela certificate. (Without this arrangement, we probably would have arrived at the Cathedral about five hours later than the others.) The only time I saw my mom and titas slightly agitated and hurrying was when we realized that we had somehow squandered our headstart and the rest of the group was only half an hour behind us. All of a sudden, I found myself with three Speedy Gonzaleses. Everyone got their Compostela certificates, half their sins forgiven, as well as an extra certificate commemorating the 800-year anniversary of St. Francis of Assisi's pilgrimage to Santiago. I flew back to Zürich, thankful for the wonderful week I spent with my mom and titas and the new friends we made. My mom and my titas spend another week with each other in Madrid, bonding over tapas, churros con chocolate, and shoes and bags. I have yet to sort through the 1300 photos I took. ☐

***If you have any personal articles
or God's miracle in your life
you want to share with the devotees,
we may be reached at
the following e-mail addresses
and phone numbers:***

evelyn.pua@spiritualarmyofgod.org

alice.a@spiritualarmyofgod.org

(702) 274-4315 and/or (213) 385-7798

Let's Get Real About Prayer

When was the last time you got up thirty minutes early to have a cup of coffee with God in the morning?

When was the last time you got ready for bed early, fell on your knees beside it, and really prayed before falling asleep?

When was the last time you were able to be totally focused while praying a Rosary?

When was the last time you fasted?

When was the last time you read the upcoming Sunday readings a few days in advance?

When was the last time you turned off the radio, shut off your cell phone, and invited Jesus to ride shotgun with you in your car?

When was the last time you invited your significant other to pray with you?

When was the last time grace before your meal took more than fifteen seconds?

When was the last time you just opened up the Catechism of the Catholic Church and read a few pages?

When was the last time you went to confession? What's keeping you from going regularly?

When was the last time you did a spontaneous act of service for another person?

These are the questions I have begun to ask myself each week. Some weeks I'm doing great, and other weeks I fail miserably. The effort is a form of prayer, though, and demonstrates resolve. The reality is that I can always improve—and you can too. Prayer isn't about words or feelings. Prayer is about time. Prayer is about presence. Prayer is about resolve. ☐

"Resolve" is the last "R" in Mark Hart's *The "R" Father: 14 Ways to Respond to the Lord's Prayer*, from which this excerpt is taken. Mark is executive vice president of Life Teen International.

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**.
- This month of the Holy Rosary, try to make a more concerted effort to pray the Rosary together as a family. Understand the beauty of this devotion more deeply, and pray the Luminous mysteries.
- Pray the Guardian Angel prayer after the Angelus. ☐

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 re-creation, 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.

We thank God, Mother Mary and all the angels and saints for a smooth trip from Las Vegas, NV to Los Angeles, CA and back. All the items on our checklist were accomplished.

Guada & Evelyn

Thank you, God, for our wonderful and enjoyable trip and for allowing us to take this much needed vacation. Each day was an experience that we treasure in our hearts and minds. We also thank you, Lord, for this past weekend to be with our friends and with You.

R & E

The prayers and petitions of Karen and Jerome have been granted. Praise and thanksgiving to God!

Evelyn gives honor and glory to God for her successful open heart surgery and quick recovery. She thanks everyone for their love, prayers and support!

April thanks God for His continuous guidance in her career and for Mother Mary's unceasing intercession!

2000 HAIL MARY DEVOTION

The Spiritual Army of God the Father acknowledges with thanks our generous October 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

Ron & Fe Muego

Los Angeles, California

Jessica Daley | Lorma & Frank Batino
Florita Gajito | Lucy Ginete
Sulay Leon-Pilcher | Carolina A. Pineda

SPIRITUAL ARMY NEWS DISPATCH

THE PILGRIMAGE COUNTDOWN

Our pilgrimage preparation is now in full swing. As our feet get nearer to the doors of Mother Mary's Apparition sites, let us all join in prayers that this journey may be truly the search for God's path through the miracles of Mother Mary's apparition in each of the pilgrims' hearts.

The preparation will start with ourselves, our genuine desire to seek spirituality and the love to be with the Blessed Mother as we walk her ways in the apparition sites.

We will be meditating on thoughts for the day, our appeals and desires, as we raise our prayers before God through the Blessed Mother.

Join **Spiritual Army of God the Father** on a Pilgrimage to
**LISBON, FATIMA, SPAIN,
LOURDES & PARIS**

Lisbon - Santarem - Fatima - Salamanca - Alba de Tormes - Avila - Burgos - San Sebastian - de Garabandal - Santo Toribio de Liebana Monastery - Logola - Lourdes - Montserrat - Manresa or Barcelona - Avignon - Grenoble/Gap - La Salette - Ars - Paray Le Monial - Nevers - Paris - Lisieux

December 4 - 21, 2014
\$4,950 from Los Angeles
18 Days / 18 Nights
www.pilgrimages.com/spiritualarmyofgodthefather

206 TOURS

Learn More
Scan this code with your smartphone reader app to learn more about this pilgrimage!

We will be with you constantly to provide spiritual and physical information as the countdown gets nearer. Please read the 2014 Pilgrimage Travel Updates which are electronically communicated [via snail mail for those who do not have computer access] to the pilgrims from time to time prior to our departure. □

UPCOMING EVENTS

TOY DRIVE FOR THE CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL
[ONGOING]

MARRIAGE ENRICHMENT WEEKEND

OCTOBER 17, 2014 | 6:30 TO 10:00 PM
OCTOBER 18, 2014 | 7:30 AM TO 9:00 PM
OCTOBER 19, 2014 | 7:30 AM TO 4:00 PM

ST. PAUL THE APOSTLE CHURCH
14085 PEYTON DRIVE
CHINO HILLS, CA 91707
FOR MORE INFORMATION

CONTACT:
REGISTRATIONTEAM@SPTAME.ORG
OR CALL (909) 643-5506

1ST SATURDAY DEVOTION FOR DECEMBER 2014 AND BLESSING FOR PILGRIMS
NOVEMBER 22, 2014
MASS AT 8:30 AM | POTLUCK
BREAKFAST | DEVOTIONAL PRAYERS
CONVENT OF THE SISTER DISCIPLES OF THE DIVINE MASTER ON BEAUDRY & SUNSET

1ST SUNDAY DEVOTION FOR DECEMBER 2014
NOVEMBER 24, 2014
DEVOTIONAL PRAYERS AT 12:30 PM
MASS AT 1:15 PM

PILGRIMAGE TO MOTHER MARY'S APPARITION SHRINES PORTUGAL | SPAIN | FRANCE
DECEMBER 4-21, 2014
DAILY ACTIVITIES AND OTHER INFORMATION ARE AVAILABLE AT
WWW.SPIRITUALARMYOFGOD.ORG

DEVOTION SCHEDULE



THE SPIRITUAL ARMY OF GOD THE FATHER

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 – October 18, 2014

at the Convent of the Sister Disciples of the Divine Master| starting at 8:30 a.m.

Please call Victor at (213) 385-7798 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 PM
Cenacle will be at 10:00 AM 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 from 2:00 to 3:30 P.M.

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

2000 Hail Mary Devotion – October 18, 2014

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 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