

Knights of Columbus
Father Albert Newman
Council 8470



February 2005
Newsletter

MEDITATION

Hebrews 12: 1-4

“ With so many witnesses in a great cloud on every side of us, we too, then, should throw off everything that hinders us, especially the sin that clings so easily, and keep running steadily in the race we have started, Let us not lose the joy which was still in the future. He endured the cross, disregarding the shameful of it and from now on has taken his place at the right of God’s throne. Think of the way he stood such opposition from sinners and then you will not give up for want of courage. In the fight against sin, you have not yet had to keep fighting to the point of death”.

Imagine that you are a budding concert pianist facing your debut performance. You’re terrified. “What if I foul up?” you keep asking yourself. Then, at the last moment, you look out into the audience and see your family and closest friends. They seem to say silently: “Go! Go! You can do it. Play your heart out!” And so you play.

Now what if, instead of just a few people, there were thousands of friends all cheering you on? This is how the author of Hebrews wants us to view our Christian life (Hebrews 12:1). He wants us to know that we are surrounded by a huge crowd of saints – a great “cloud of witnesses.)

Most of us have read about some of the saints in our lifetimes and marveled at how Jesus worked through them. We may even have our favorite saints, people whose stories continue to inspire us and draw us closer to Jesus no matter how many times we’ve read about them. We are encouraged when we think about the work they did. Or maybe we can identify with some of the trials and challenges they faced. Or maybe we just sense that their personality is similar to ours, and that we have found a new friend in heaven.

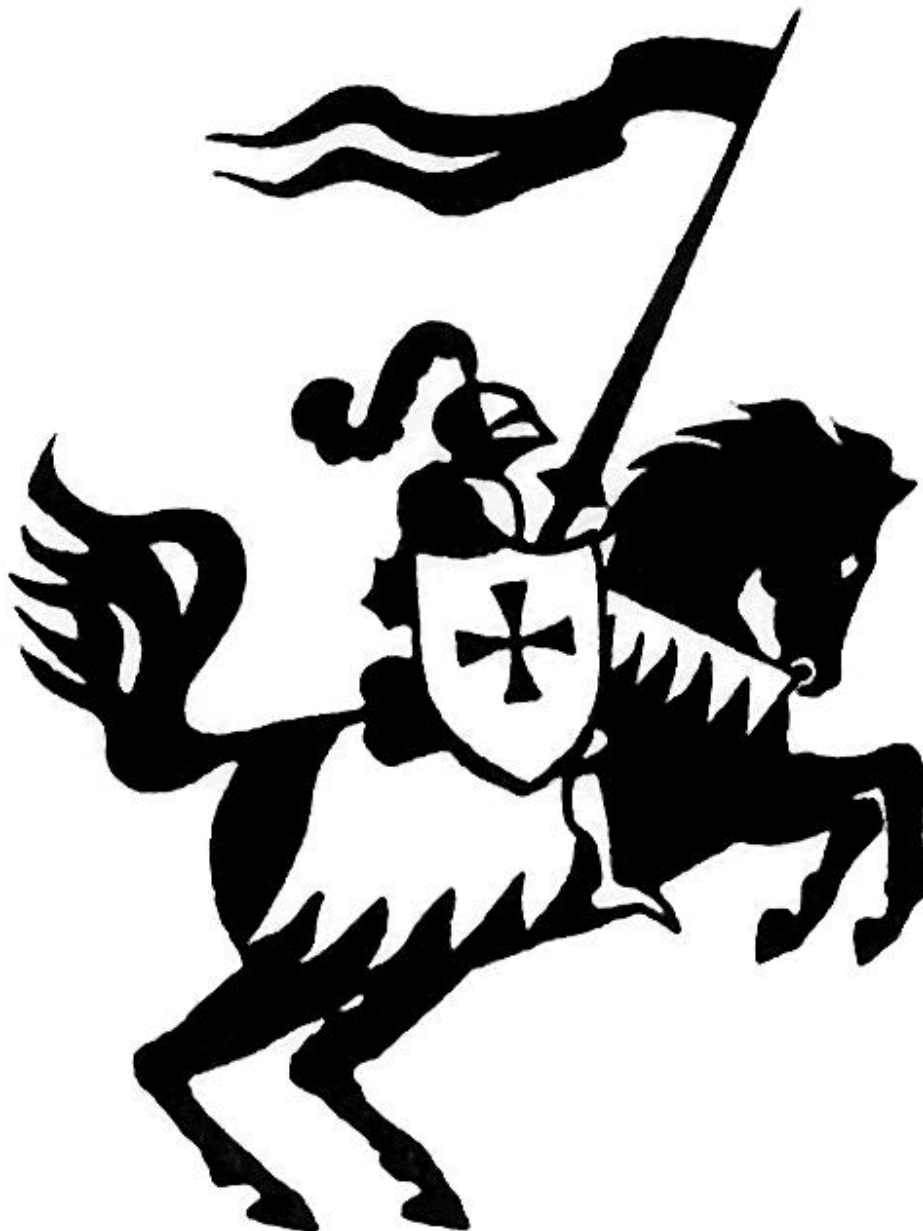
Whatever it is that moves us in these stories, we find one common thread: These great saints were not super humans. They were regular people just like us, people with their own fears and hopes, worries and dreams, sadness and joys. What made them saints was their zealous desire to follow Jesus and serve God’s people with their lives.

The saints are experiencing the eternal life we can only glimpse here on earth. And even that is a source of encouragement. This great cloud of witnesses can inspire us to make our dim reflection of heaven clearer in our lives every day. Through their example, they can show us how to fix our eyes on Jesus and how to overcome trials. They can inspire us to run the race with our whole hearts, full of passion for the Lord.

“Jesus, thank you for giving me so many brothers and sisters in heaven. Praise you, Jesus, for knowing my need for encouragement and inspiration!”

The Word Among Us - www.wordamongus.org

Additional reading: Psalm 22:26-28, 30-32; Mark 5:21-43





Knights of Columbus



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NEWS LETTER

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| Newsletter | Paul Robb - pjrobb@shaw.ca |
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THE LORD'S PRAYER

(Prayer from the Heart)

Through our history, many of the great saints have written about the Lord's Prayer. Early Fathers of the church such as Augustine and Cyprian, and later, great theologians such as Thomas Aquinas and Teresa of Avila, have expressed not only their awe regarding this prayer, but how this simple prayer can give us a new intimacy with God and greater confidence in our relationship with him. In every age, as the faithful seek God's presence, this teaching of Jesus comes to life in their hearts.

A Joy Rediscovered

Through the gift of prayer, we can be filled with the love of God

We've all had times when prayer feels like little more than a chore or an imposition on our busy schedule. This struggle with prayer seems to start, in fact, at an early age. Most parents have had the experience of trying to keep one or more of their children quiet during Mass as they ask, "How soon will Mass be over?" and "When can we leave?" We may find it comforting to know that we are not alone – in fact, we are in good company. Many saints throughout history experienced times when God seemed far away from them.

In this pamphlet (newsletter), we want to discuss how we can come to a deeper experience of the joy of prayer. We want to focus primarily on the abundant grace that flows from God's throne as his children come to worship him. It is during these times of worshipful prayer that the Holy Spirit opens us up to grace and we begin to experience the truth stated in the Catechism that "prayer comes also from the Holy Spirit". (*Catechism of the Catholic Church, 2727*), and doesn't arise solely from our efforts.

Perhaps the most important foundation for prayer is that we understand the one to whom we pray.

There are many aspects to understanding who God is: He is without flaw or fault; He never changes his mind or makes mistakes; He is eternal and full of power; He knows everything and lacks nothing. But above all else, God's greatest attribute is his perfect love.

God's love is eternal; it existed long before we were born; it will never wane. It is a love that brings freedom and joy to his children. It is a love, which moved him to reveal himself to humanity, to invite each individual person into a relationship of love with him. "Knowing" God must include experiencing this immense love as it flows from the heart of the Trinity.

At its most basic and most profound level, prayer is coming into contact with God, who is love. God's heartfelt love can be seen most clearly in the Father's relationship with Jesus, the Son of God. In the New Testament letter to the Colossians, we read that in Christ "all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell" (*Colossians 1:19*). The Father loves the Son so fully that He eternally pours into him his entire being, the fullness of his life.

Out of his love for the Son, the Father brought forth the whole of creation, including man and woman. In Christ, and from all eternity, the Father knows and loves every one of us. When He called Jeremiah, the Lord said, "Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, and before you were born I consecrated you" (*Jeremiah 1:5*). The psalmist also prayed: "You formed my inward parts, you knit me together in my mother's womb.....My fame was not hidden from you, when I was being made in secret.....In your book were written, every one of them, the days that were formed for me, when as yet there was none of them. How precious to me are your thoughts, O God! How vast is the sum of them!" (*Psalms 139:13,15-17*)

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The Lord's Prayer; (Prayer form the Heart)

Jeff Smith – published by The Word Among Us Press – The Word Among Us

www.wordamongus.org

CATHOLIC JOKES

A rabbi, a priest and a minister walk into a bar. The bartender looks up and says, "What is this, a joke?"

A little boy was listening to a long and excessively boring sermon in church. Suddenly the red sanctuary lamp caught his eye. Tugging his father's sleeve, he said, "Daddy, when the light turns green can we go?"

An Irishman moves into a tiny hamlet in County Kerry, walks into the pub and promptly orders three beers.

The bartender raises his eyebrows, but serves the man three beers, which he drinks quietly at a table, alone.

An hour later, the man has finished the three beers and orders three more.

This happens yet again.

The next evening the man again orders and drinks three beers at a time, several times. Soon the entire town is whispering about the Man Who Orders Three Beers.

Finally, a week later, the bartender broaches the subject on behalf of the town. "I don't mean to pry, but folks around here are wondering why you always order three beers?"

"Tis odd, isn't it?" the man replies, "You see, I have two brothers, and one went to America, and the other to Australia. We promised each other that we would always order an extra two beers whenever we drank as a way of keeping up the family bond."

The bartender and the whole town was pleased with this answer, and soon the Man Who Orders Three Beers became a local celebrity and source of pride to the hamlet,

even to the extent that out-of-towners would come to watch him drink.

Then, one day, the man comes in and orders only two beers. The bartender pours them with a heavy heart. This continues for the rest of the evening - he orders only two beers. The word flies around town. Prayers are offered for the soul of one of the brothers.

The next day, the bartender says to the man, "Folks around here, me first of all, want to offer condolences to you for the death of your brother. You know-the two beers and all..."

The man ponders this for a moment, then replies, "You'll be happy to hear that my two brothers are alive and well... It's just that I, myself, have decided to give up drinking for Lent."



LESSONS IN LIFE

I am a mother of three (ages 14, 12, 3) and have recently completed my college degree. The last class I had to take was Sociology. The teacher was absolutely inspiring with the qualities that I wish every human being had been graced with. Her last project of the term was called "Smile." The class was asked to go out and smile at three people and document their reactions.

I am a very friendly person and always smile at everyone and say hello anyway, so, I thought this would be a piece of cake, literally. Soon after we were assigned the project, my husband, youngest son, and I went out to McDonald's one crisp March morning. It was just our way of sharing special playtime with our son. We were standing in line, waiting to be served, when all of a sudden everyone around us began to back away, and then even my husband did. I did not move an inch... an overwhelming feeling of panic welled up inside of me as I turned to see why they had moved.

As I turned around I smelled a horrible "dirty body" smell, and there standing

behind me were two poor homeless men. As I looked down at the short gentleman, close to me, he was "smiling". His beautiful sky blue eyes were full of God's Light as he searched for acceptance. He said, "Good day" as he counted the few coins he had been clutching.

The second man fumbled with his hands as he stood behind his friend. I realized the second man was mentally challenged and the blue-eyed gentleman was his salvation. I held my tears as I stood there with them.

The young lady at the counter asked him what they wanted. He said, "Coffee is all Miss" because that was all they could afford. (If they wanted to sit in the restaurant and warm up, they had to buy something. He just wanted to be warm). Then I really felt it - the compulsion was so great I almost reached out and embraced the little man with the blue eyes. That is when I noticed all eyes in the restaurant were set on me, judging my every action...

I smiled and asked the young lady behind the counter to give me two more breakfast meals on a separate tray. I then walked around the corner to the table that the men had chosen as a resting spot I put the tray on the table and laid my hand on the blue-eyed gentleman's cold hand. He looked up at me, with tears in his eyes, and said, "Thank you."

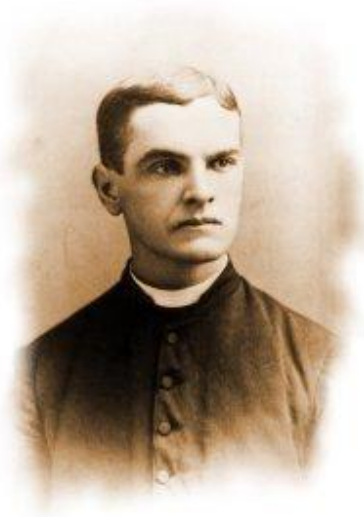
I leaned over, began to pat his hand and said, "I did not do this for you. God is here working through me to give you hope." I started to cry as I walked away to join my husband and son. When I sat down my husband smiled at me and said, "That is why God gave you to me, Honey, to give me hope."

We held hands for a moment and at that time, we knew that only because of the Grace that we had been given were we able to give. that day showed me the pure Light of God's sweet love. I returned to college, on the last evening of class, with this story in hand. I turned in "my project" and the instructor read it. Then she looked up at me and said, "Can I share this?" I slowly nodded as she got the attention of the class. She began to read and that is when I knew that we as human beings and being part of God share this need to heal people and to be healed. In my own way I had touched the people at McDonald's, my husband, son, instructor, and every soul that shared the classroom on the last night I spent as a college student.

I graduated with one of the biggest lessons I would ever learn:
UNCONDITIONAL ACCEPTANCE! Much love and compassion is sent to each and every person who may read this and learn how to **LOVE PEOPLE AND USE THINGS - NOT LOVE THINGS AND USE PEOPLE.**

Many people will walk in and out of your life, but only true friends will leave footprints in your heart. To handle yourself, use your head. To handle others, use your heart. God gives every bird it's food, but He does not throw it into its nest.

The Life and Legacy of Father Michael J McGivney



Roots

Father Michael McGivney was born in Waterbury on August 12, 1852. His parents, Patrick and Mary (Lynch) McGivney, had arrived in the great 19th century wave of Irish immigration. Patrick McGivney became a molder in the heat and noxious fumes of a Waterbury brass mill. Mary McGivney gave birth to 13 children, six of whom died in infancy or childhood. So the first child, Michael, with four living sisters and two brothers, learned early about sorrow and the harsh grip of poverty. He also learned about the powers of love and faith, and family fortitude.

He went to the small district schools of Waterbury's working-class neighborhoods. A good child, he was admired by his school principal for "excellent deportment and proficiency in his studies." Then, after the Civil War, when Connecticut's metals industry was booming, he left school at age 13 to go to work. His job in the spoon-making department of a brass factory provided a few more dollars for family survival.

When Michael reached the age of 16 in 1868, he left the factory. With the priesthood clearly in mind, he traveled with his Waterbury pastor to Quebec, Canada. There he registered at the French-run College of St. Hyacinthe. He worked hard on subjects, which would prepare him to apply for seminary admission.

Two academic years followed at Our Lady of Angels Seminary, attached to Niagara University in Niagara Falls, New York. Young McGivney moved next to Montreal to attend seminary classes at the Jesuit-run St. Mary's College. He was there when his father died in June of 1873.

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