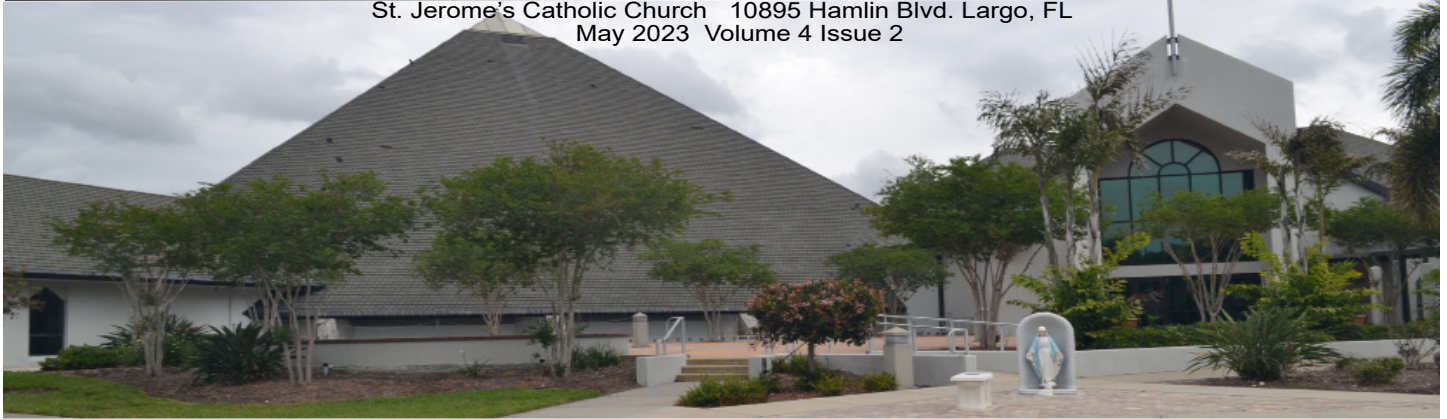


KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS

Divine Mercy of Jesus Council 17249

St. Jerome's Catholic Church 10895 Hamlin Blvd. Largo, FL
May 2023 Volume 4 Issue 2



Mother's Day, May 14, 2023

Mother of Mercy

'Neath the foot of the Cross, She faithfully kept Her watch
Consoled by Saint John e'er so softly,
And from the Cross itself He bent down,
To give us a Mother of Mercy.

It was as if it was not enough to bear the Cross
That sinners wretched He might redeem,
More generous still, He bent down
To endow us with the fairest Queen.

Queen of Heaven, Queen of Angels, and Queen of all men,
Queen of Priests and Holy Souls awaiting,
Mistress to the pleading child in need,
Mother of Mercy: sweet succoring.

O Mother most merciful, Mother of compassion,
Ark of Salvation, Gate of Heaven,
Refuge of sinners and those in despair,
To Thee we fly, unto Thy leaven.

O Mother most sweet, most radiant, O Mother of mothers!
Mother most pure, Mother most dear,
Thee do we entreat sending up our sighs,
As Thou bendest to blot every tear.

O Mother most tender, most mild, O Mother of Mercy!
Masterpiece of God's holy design,
Fount of all graces, Thine to dispense,
To the humble, repentant, uncondign.

'Neath the foot of our crosses, Thou maintains Thy watch,
That Thy servants persevere e'er fast,
'Til from Cherubimed Throne He bends down,
And with Thee, welcomes us home at last.

by Pauly Fongemie



FROM AROUND THE WORLD OF INTEREST TO CATHOLICS

Harrison Butker opens up about his Super Bowl-winning kick — and his prayer routine

Knights of Columbus has a new film on humanitarian crisis in Ukraine

Catholic priest from Ukraine gives Pope Francis cross made out of war rubble

Florida woman charged with murder sues state over wrongful imprisonment of her unborn baby

Mexican bishops respond to data showing increasingly fewer Catholics in their country

Michigan priest sentenced to prison for sexual abuse of second-grader

UK Parliament makes it illegal to pray near abortion facilities

Notre Dame cathedral to open in December 2024

California bishops to visit death row inmates at San Quentin

FROM THE DESK OF THE DEPUTY GRAND KNIGHT



Pete McCabe

Greetings Brother Knights! With Bill and Claudia cruising across the Atlantic Ocean, I have been asked to provide a few words of wisdom. Unfortunately, this will be less wisdom

and more of a plea!

As you all know, Father Tom will be moving on July 1 to be the Rector of the Cathedral in St. Pete. In his place, we are receiving Father Blum as his replacement. Father Blum is coming from St. Timothy's in Lutz. This transition time over the next few months also coincides with our upcoming council elections June 14. I am asking (pleading) with everyone to: (1) be willing to help with requests

to assist Father Tom as he moves out, (2) be willing to help with requests to assist Father Blum as he moves in, (3) be willing to fill a council position (whether elected or appointed), and finally (4) attend the June 14 general meeting to vote for the next slate of officers.

We will be taking nominations right up to the time of the vote. If you are interested in any council elected or appointed position, please reach out to me.

Thank you for everything you do for the council and St. Jerome Parish.



LAUGHTER is the best MEDICINE

If Adam and Eve were Cajuns, they would have eaten the snake instead of the apple and saved us all a lot of trouble.

We celebrated last night with a couple of adult beverages...Metamucil and Ensure.

You know you are getting old when friends with benefits means having someone who can drive at night.

Weight loss goal: To be able to clip my toenails and breathe at the same time.

The biggest joke on mankind is that computers have begun asking humans to prove they aren't a robot.

Some of my friends exercise every day, meanwhile I am watching a show I don't like because the remote fell on the floor.

When a kid says "Daddy, I want Mommy" that's the kid's version of "I'd like to speak to your supervisor."

FROM THE DESK OF OUR PASTOR



Fr. Tom Morgan

Dear Brother Knights:

I want to thank you for the devout spirit that has been present in our council since its inception.

The name of the council will always remind us that Jesus calls us to be instruments of His mercy.

I know that I speak for our parish to what is in the hearts of all on how grateful we all are for our beautiful shrine and for the time especially during COVID. The Knights of our parish stepped up to do whatever was required to bring Jesus to the people of our parish.

I request of you the men of Divine Mercy of Jesus Council 17249 to

continue to be the men of faith that you have given witness to in all that you have done; to seek to deepen your faith as Catholic gentlemen; to support our Grand Knight and honor those who have led us in the past; to support our soon-to-be pastor, Fr. John Blum, and all the priests that Jesus sends us to serve at St. Jerome.

Please pray for me as I will for you.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Fr. Tom Morgan

May the road rise up to meet you.

May the wind be always at your back.

May the sun shine warm upon your face; the rains fall soft upon your fields and until we meet again, may God hold you in the palm of His hand.



The Divine Mercy of Jesus



MAY BIRTHDAYS



Dick Vitale



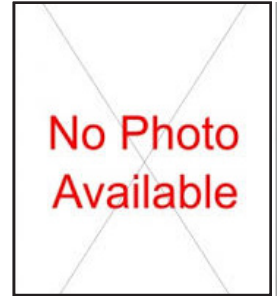
Jim Sander



Greg Musick



Peter McCabe



Chris Jewell



Bill Leary



Dave Unkrich



Bill Spires



Msgr. Muldoon



Joe Campagnola

JOURNEY OF Faith

It's difficult for me to trace my journey of faith throughout the years of my life.

It has had many twists and turns, confusion and satisfaction, listlessness and "Damn the torpedoes; full speed ahead."

It's also almost impossible for me to stamp a date on when my journey of faith came to an abrupt halt and fell into the depths of confusion and hopelessness. The best I can come up with is the early 1970s. First, though, a little background would be helpful.

I was born into a very conservative, fundamental church called The Church of Christ. For some reason, it fit my young life perfectly. The bible was taken literally, which seems odd to me now but made sense as I was growing up in the middle forties to my graduation from high school in 1955. The church's motto was "We speak where the bible speaks, and we're silent where it's silent." For example, in Ephesians 5, verses 18 and 19, it states, "Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to reckless indiscretion. Instead, be filled with the Spirit. Speak to one another with

psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs. Sing and make music in your hearts to the Lord." You'll notice it says, "Sing....." Nothing is said about playing an instrument; thus, pianos and/or organs were not permitted in the Church, even to this day. All singing is done acappello. In fact, I was a song leader for many years. Of course, taking the bible literally is dangerous business and causes conflicts. For example, in Matthew 8, verses 8 and 9, it states, "If your hand or your foot causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. It is better for you to enter life crippled or lame than to have two hands and two feet and be thrown into the eternal fire. And if your eye causes you to sin, gouge it out and throw it away. It is better for you to enter life with one eye than to have two eyes and be thrown into the fire of hell." That's pretty bold stuff and has to be taken metaphorically to make sense. These two verses and many more, too many to quote, eventually took its toll on me. Over time, I began to think, "What's going on here. This church's way of interpreting and doing things doesn't make sense." I am oversimplifying how my journey of faith progressed

over the years. Many, many things happened which caused me to lose my faith and become agnostic thinking, "I give up. God knows my state of mind and good intentions. I'm content to leave things in His hands." This was roughly in the early 1970s. and lasted at least 20 years. In that span of time, I was a high school English teacher, and I remember being jealous of those students who obviously had a Christian faith, thinking that that would never be me again. But I was wrong.

In March of 1997 I visited a new friend who would eventually become my wife. She invited me to go to Mass with her at St. Patrick's Cathedral in NY City. I was overwhelmed by the confessional booths, the garment the priest, deacon, and others wore, by the incense, by the homily, witnessing the sacrament of the Eucharist, etc. When communion was over, people started leaving, and my friend asked me if I wanted to leave. I said no. I was awakening to my new life in Christ. To make a long story short, I enter RCIA at St. Jerome's Parish in 1998 and became a Catholic at the Easter Vigil of 1999. The Prodigal Son had come home.

Council Celebrates One-Year Anniversary of Hosting Bingo



A comprehensive article written by Jim Blackwell will be in the newsletter next month. It will have everything anyone would like to know about bingo. Bingo has been very good to the Knights. We try to use our proceeds for charity purposes. In fact, Jim puts out a weekly newsletter for the players called Sweet Charity. I will try to have a sample of it in next month's newsletter. ~~Jim Hand, Editor

In the Spotlight

Born at St. Anthony's Hospital in St. Pete, Fr. Mike O'Brien is a life-long resident of Florida.

Upon graduation from high school, he considered joining the military, going to college, and even getting married. The Vietnam War was going on then, and he knew he might be drafted. After much thought, Fr. Mike decided to go to college and become a doctor, just like his brother. He went to St. Pete Jr. College and graduated with a AA degree in pre-med in 1973.

In order to keep up with his religious beliefs, he became a CCD teacher, at first with grade 4 and then grade 8. That whetted his appetite to put more energy into continuing on a religious journey and he asked God, "What do you want me to do with my life? I quickly decided to become a diocesan priest in 1973. That is the largest religious order in the world." He then decided it was time to go to a seminary and discern his intentions to become a priest. Today, after graduating from college, a seminarian would be sent to a seminary for 2 years of pre-theology. Then he would enter a major seminary for 5 years of study. "Basically you are looking at 7 years of training. He graduated from St. Vincent de Paul with a BA in

Ed Fr. Mike O'Brien Shares His Life Story

Philosophy and a Masters in Divinity. "Those who want to be a priest right after high school, go into a college seminary, which includes pre-theology, for 4 years, and then there's another 5 years of seminary work, for a total of 9 years," he said. "It's not easy to become a priest. A diocese demands a time for discernment for an individual thinking to be a priest. In religious orders, one can become a brother instead of a priest. I didn't do well in high school because I was bored. But once I graduated from college, I got two advanced degrees: magna cum Laude and the second was Summa cum Laude. Even so," he went on, "you must discern what it is that God wants you to do. Everyone should see themselves as a saint in training."

This year Fr. Mike is celebrating being a priest for 44 years. "I've been a Knight since 1983," he said, "and I've been in many different councils, often as a chaplain. Several years ago, Bishop Lynch changed the mandatory age of retirement from 65 to 70. That's the age I was when I retired. At that time, a priest can do whatever he wants with his life, even choose another vocation; however,

once a priest, always a priest. Some guys play golf until they get tired of it, then they decide to travel a lot. I decided I wanted to live in a rectory, so I came here. It remains to be seen how many years I'll be here," he said. "When I retired, I went on a Sabbatical. My first assignment was on a 30-day retreat, and it was wonderful," he said. "I had to deal with a lot of silence, which was fine with me. It gave me the opportunity to reflect on my many years of being a priest. Then I went on a 3-month study in Jerusalem. I studied Christianity, Judaism, and Islam. I also was able to go to Jordan, my first time. I had been to Israel 8 times. Then I went home to spend time with my family over Christmas. Now I serve Mass every Tuesday and will soon substitute for the other priests here at St. Jerome's as they go on vacation in June and July. I also walk on the beach and write a lot. In fact, I hope to have some of my writings published. I just finished writing a novella, and I'm re-reading it to see how satisfied I am with it." "I love being retired and doing what I want to do to grow both intellectually and spiritually," he concluded.

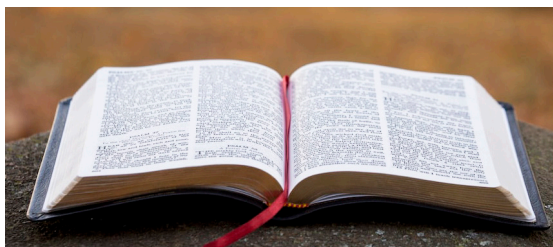


Fr. Mike O'Brien

How to Choose a Bible Translation for Your Needs

The first step in selecting a Bible translation is making sure that you have a Catholic edition. Catholic editions include seven books of the Old Testament (Tobit, Judith, 1 and 2 Maccabees, Wisdom, the Wisdom of Ben Sira, and Baruch) and the additions to two other books (Esther and Daniel) that are not found in many Protestant editions of the Bible. The Church believes these books are part of the canon of Scripture, inspired by the Holy Spirit. In a Catholic Bible, these books are printed as part of the Old Testament.

To be used for teaching or private reading, a Catholic Bible should have an imprimatur or canonical designa-



tion. This official notice is usually printed on the back of the title page. Latin for "let it be printed," the imprimatur indicates that Church authorities have reviewed the text and found that nothing in it is contrary to the doctrine and morals of the Church. You will also want to decide what style of translation you find most useful. A formal equivalent translation will render the text more literally (word for word), keeping as close as possible to the language and structure of the original while remaining readable in the modern language. A dynamic equivalent translation is less literal, conveying the overall meaning of

the original text in the modern language (thought for thought) without necessarily following the language or structure. A paraphrase retells the original text in the writer's own words. This style is used most frequently in Bible story books intended for children.

A Catholic translation will also have notes and annotations to help you understand the text. These notes may provide alternate readings of passages that are unclear in the original, help in understanding plays on words that depend on knowing the original language, and brief explanations of how the Church has interpreted the passage.

A given translation will be identical to others no matter which edition you choose. If you pick your translation first, you'll have a text you can rely on, no matter what other features you seek.

Knights Participate in Kimberly Home's Walk for Life

On Saturday, April 22, Kimberly Home and the Bay Area Pregnancy Center held a Walk for Life at Crest Lake Park in Clearwater. As a council, we were one of the many sponsors (\$1,000) to the event. Kevin Manning, our Life Program Director, has been spearheading our efforts to support these and other pro-life organizations through his Uber for the Unborn initiative. The Walk for Life was a great event and a few Knights participated such as Kevin Manning, Pete McCabe, Dave Unkrich, Pete Nunes, and Charlie Scott. Also representing the St. Jerome parish was Sister Lucia. Hopefully, we can increase our council participation in these types of pro-life events in the upcoming fraternal year. Please send your good program ideas to Kevin Manning at kevinmanning1@mac.com. by Pete McCabe DGK



L - R: Dave Unkrich, Pete Nunes, Kevin Manning, and Pete McCabe



Several Knights Come Together to Fix Broken Flag Pole

On Wednesday, April 26, five Knights came together to repair the flagpole. Many thanks to Joe Ghezzi, Bob Hicks, Rick Hendrickson, Bill Bannon, and Pete McCabe for the hard work. These brave souls dug a much bigger hole, used 18 bags of concrete, and 16 pieces of rebar. This flagpole should remain in the ground for one thousand years - minimum.

~~by Pete McCabe



Bill Bannon takes his turn to mixing cement. All the Knights were worn out after a long day of hard work.



DGK Pete McCabe helps to mix another bag of cement.



L-R Joe Ghezzi, Bob Hicks, and Rick Hendrickson put the finishing touches on the cement.



Several Knights admire their handiwork. In the forefront is a memorial to the Armed Forces, made by a Boy Scout for his Eagle Scout badge.



The Miracle of Maureen Digen



Maureen Digen

Before the age of 15, Maureen Digen enjoyed a normal healthy life as an active teenager. Then suddenly, she was struck down with a slowly progressive

sive but terminal disease called Lymphedema. It is a serious cancer which causes massive swelling of the limbs.

This painful disease is caused by a blockage which prevents fluid from draining and as the fluid builds up, the swelling continues. There's no

cure but it can be controlled with diligent care. Unfortunately, it does not respond to medication and does not go into remission.

During the next ten years, Maureen had about fifty operations and had lengthy confinements in hospital for up to a year at a time. Friends and relations suggested she should pray and put her trust in God. But Maureen could not understand why God had allowed her to get this disease in the first place and had lost her faith completely. Eventually the doctors decided that because of her deteriorating condition, it was necessary to amputate her leg. They then proceeded to set a date for the second operation of the other leg.

But, one evening while Maureen was in hospital, her husband Bob went to see a film called "Divine Mercy - No Escape". After seeing this film on the life of Sr. Faustina, he became convinced of the healing powers through the intercession of a Saint. Bob persuaded Maureen and the doctors that she should go with him to the tomb of Sr. Faustina in Poland.

They arrived in Poland on 23rd March 1981 and Maureen went to confession for the first time since she was a young girl. At the tomb,

then called the Shrine of Sr. Faustina, Maureen remembers saying in her own inimitable style, "O.K. Faustina I came a long way, now do something".

In her heart she heard Sr. Faustina say "If you ask for my help, I will give it to you". Maureen thought she was having a nervous breakdown. All of a sudden, the pain seemed to drain out of her body and her swollen leg which was due to be amputated shortly, went back to its normal size.

When she returned to the U.S.A. she was examined by five independent doctors who came to the conclusion that she was completely healed. They had no medical explanation for the sudden healing of this incurable disease. The accumulated evidence for this miracle was examined in consultation by five doctors appointed by the Sacred Congregation for the Causes of Saints. Having passed this test, it was examined by a team of theologians, and finally by a team of cardinals and bishops.

The cure was accepted by all as a miracle caused by Sr. Faustina's intercession to Divine Mercy. Sr. Faustina was beatified on 18th April 1993 and canonised in April 2000 by Pope John Paul II.

Should Catholics Believe in Bigfoot?



Many have heard of Bigfoot, the Loch Ness Monster, and other mysterious creatures, generically called cryptids, because of reports by those who claim to have spotted them. Most scientists do not accept their existence, as there isn't (quantifiable evidence they exist. Whether or not these creatures exist is a matter for science, not revelation. But some stories in the Bible refer to mysterious creatures, creatures considered cryptids because we have no evidence they ever existed.

A curious story appears in the Book of Daniel. Daniel, a trusted friend of

King Cyrus, refuses to worship the Babylonian god, Bel. A faithful Jew, Daniel worships his own God. When Cyrus asks Daniel why he doesn't believe Bel is a living god, considering that food given to the idol keeps disappearing, Daniel says the idol couldn't eat because "it is only clay inside and bronze outside". He proves that the priests and their families are eating the idol's food. Cyrus, furious, retaliates against the priests.

Daniel is next shown slaying a dragon worshipped by the Babylonians.

He shows that the "god" revered by the Babylonians is just a natural creature. When he feeds the dragon cakes made of pitch and it dies, the furious Babylonians conspire to toss him to the lions. Daniel's adventure with the dragon is considered apocryphal. The text is part of the deuterocanon accepted by Catholics and Orthodox Christians, but it doesn't appear in Jewish or Protestant Bibles. The Jewish Encyclopedia states, "The purpose of the stories of Daniel's exposure of the false idols is to ridicule idol-worship, and to extol the power of God, who preserves His faith-

ful servants in all perils."

Why does the church accept apocryphal stories in its canon of scripture when other ecclesial communities and non-Christians do not? Not to claim that dragons exist, but to acknowledge that stories exist and can pass on divine revelation.

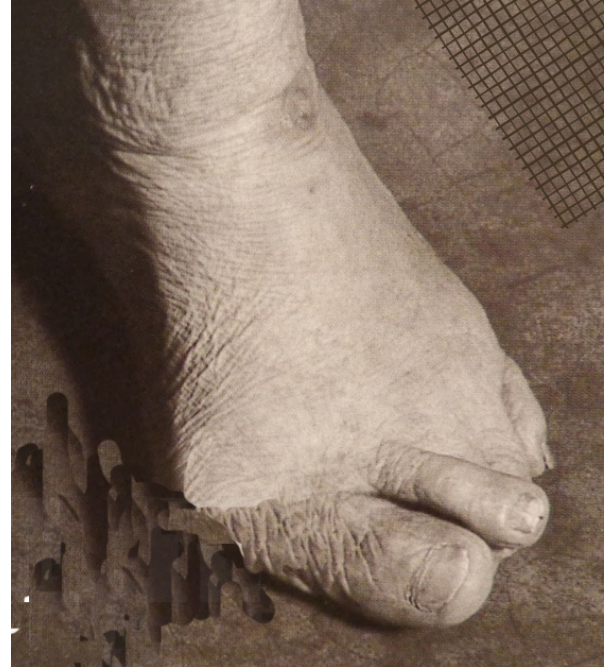
Truth is set forth and expressed differently in texts which are variously historical, prophetic, poetic, or of other forms of discourse. The interpreter must investigate what meaning the sacred writer intended to express and actually expressed in particular circumstances by using contemporary literary forms in accordance with the situation of his own time and culture.

The possibility of mysterious creatures can inspire awe for God's creation. We need to be careful to avoid the dangers of credulity, since unscrupulous people can exploit it for their own profit. But it's also important not to give in to jaded cynicism. "There are more things in heaven and earth," Hamlet tells Horatio, "than are dreamt of in your philosophy." Cryptids may be among the many "wondrous strange" creatures Horatio never dreamt of.

Mother Teresa's Deformed Feet

Shane Claiborne, author and Christian activist, worked alongside Mother Teresa during a 10-week term in Calcutta. During his time with her, he noticed that when Mother Teresa took her shoes off for daily prayer her feet were knobby and deformed. He eventually asked someone what was wrong with Mother Teresa's feet. The person explained that Mother Teresa and her sisters relied on donations for everything, including their shoes. When a load of donated shoes would come in, Mother Teresa consistently chose the worst pair of shoes for herself. As a consequence of wearing substandard shoes, her feet had deteriorated. "Looking at Mother Teresa of Calcutta's feet, I can only imagine the agony she must have endured with long hours on her feet, caring for the poor and dying, wearing shoes that not only did not fit her but also twisted her toes into bizarre conformations," he said. Living as an Ordinary Radical, Mother Teresa was one of those people who sacrificed great privilege because

she encountered such great need. People often ask him what Mother Teresa was like. "Sometimes it's like they wonder if she glowed in the dark or had a halo. She was short, wrinkled, and precious, maybe even a little ornery, like a beautiful wise old granny." "But there is one thing I will never forget—her feet. Her feet were deformed. Each morning in Mass, I would stare at them. I wondered if she had contracted leprosy. But I wasn't going to ask, of course." "One day a sister said to us, 'Have you noticed her feet?' "We nodded, curious. She said, 'Her feet are deformed because we get just enough donated shoes for everyone, and Mother does not want anyone to get stuck with the worst pair, so she digs through and finds them. And years of doing that have deformed her feet.'"



Pope John Paul II Picture Projected onto Building



In response to attacks on Pope St. John Paul II, Polish President Andrzej Duda illuminated the outside walls of the presidential palace with an image of JP2 to express his solidarity with the anti-Communist Pope.

What Is Virtue-Signaling?

The essence of virtue-signaling is not "saying and doing good things," nor is it even "saying and doing good things publicly." Jesus, after all, both said and did good things publicly all the time. The essence of virtue-signaling is, rather, saying and doing good things to be applauded by other people rather than to please God.

Well-intended people may be tempted to silence themselves out of fear they will be seen as show-offs. They may be confused by the charge and wonder if there might be something in it. Yes, there is such a thing as virtue-signaling, and the gospel can be a useful diagnostic in distinguishing when it is happening. Jesus warns against it: "Beware of practicing your piety before men in order to be seen by them; for then you will have no reward from your Father."

If a person says or does a good thing because they believe it is the right thing to say or do, they are not virtue-signaling. And this, according to St. Paul, extends even to those who are not Christian.

Jesus not only commanded us to do good deeds, he delights for them to be seen. Deeds that are done, or words that are said for the glory of God are pleasing to God. God cares far more that we do His will than that He gets the credit for it.

And there are many ways to do the will of God. The gospel counsels caring for orphans and widows, feeding the hungry, giving drink to the thirsty, caring for the sick, clothing the naked, sheltering the homeless, visiting the imprisoned, ransoming the captive, burying the dead, admonishing the sinner, instructing the ignorant, counseling the doubtful, comforting the sorrowful, bearing wrongs patiently, forgiving all injuries, and praying for the living and the dead. As long as these and any other good deed are done to the glory of God or because it is the right thing, and not for applause, this is virtuous—not virtue-signaling.

If you act justly and are accused of virtue-signaling, you should never feel intimidated or ashamed. Nor should

you feel you have to prove your innocence. God is the only judge who matters in such cases. St. Paul tells the Romans to take it easy on each other when it came to the triviality of food preferences. Paul understood that some people had qualms of conscience about eating certain foods they saw as ritually unclean while others ate whatever they pleased. Instead of choosing sides and sitting in judgment of one faction, Paul told all parties concerned to see each other in the light of love: "Those who eat must not despise those who abstain, and those who abstain must not pass judgment on those who eat; for God has welcomed them. Who are you to pass judgment on servants of another?"

To understand what is and is not virtue-signaling—and to act always out of love rather than shame or pride—is to fulfill the will of God and walk in peace before God and with one another. Those who walk in that peace help the work of the kingdom of God and send out ripples across the world.



Shia LaBeouf Stars in 'Padre Pio' film to be Released June 2

A new movie about St. Padre Pio, starring Catholic convert Shia LaBeouf, will be available in theaters beginning June 2.

One of the most popular Catholic saints of the 20th century, Padre Pio was a Capuchin Franciscan friar, priest, and mystic. Padre Pio is mostly known for his deep wisdom about prayer and peace; his stigmata; miraculous reports of his bilocation; being physically attacked by the devil, and mastering the spiritual life.

LaBeouf, who plays the role of Padre Pio, spent four months living with Capuchin friars while preparing for the film.

LaBeouf made headlines in August after he revealed in an 80-minute-long interview with Bishop Robert Barron of the Diocese of Winona-Rochester, Minnesota, and Word on Fire, that his on-screen portrayal of Padre Pio led him to a love of the Catholic faith. LaBeouf, 36, says he was an agnostic before finding God. He now has a devotion to the rosary and the Traditional Latin Mass.

"I started feeling a physical effect from going to Communion. I started feeling a reprieve, and it started feeling, like, regenerative, and I started enjoying it to such a degree I don't want to miss it, ever."



Shia LaBeouf

Man's Ear Miraculously Healed, Thanks to St. Katharine Drexel



Bob Gutherman and Cardinal Anthony Bevilacqua greet Pope St. John Paul II at St. Katharine Drexel's canonization ceremony in 2000

St. Katharine Drexel (1858-1955) is the founder of the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament and is known for founding schools and missions. She was beatified by Pope St. John Paul II in 1988 and canonized in 2000. Bob Gutherman of Bristol Township, Pennsylvania, was present for both ceremonies. Not only is he personally devoted to Mother Katharine, but it was the miraculous healing of his eardrum through her intercession that provided the first of two miracles which led to her being declared a saint.

"I was 14 years old and in the 9th grade in 1974, when I developed a severe ear infection. I had been to a series of different doctors, who were treating it as a normal ear infection. I was in severe pain. It affected my right ear," Bob said.

"Some of my brothers had done work at the motherhouse of the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament in Bensalem, Pennsylvania, where we lived. They

performed maintenance and janitorial work and helped out in the library. They had told the sisters that I was not feeling well," he added.

"One of my sisters spoke to my mother, telling her, 'We believe that Mother Katharine is in heaven. We'll pray to her, and we want you to say this prayer that Bob's pain will either become more tolerable or go away completely.'"

"I grew up in a big Catholic family with 11 children. Daily prayer was a way of life. We had dinner together and said the Rosary afterward. So, when the sisters asked us to pray to Mother Katharine, my mother agreed without any hesitation. The sisters prayed along with us.

Not long after, I went into the hospital for an exploratory operation. The doctor told us that there were three bones in the ear that you needed to be able to hear, and two of mine in the right ear had been destroyed by the infection. He said I'd never hear in my right ear again.

"A few days later, I told my mother that I could hear fine out of both my ears. The doctor gave me a hearing test and confirmed it. I went back for a check-up. The doctor was talking to himself and writing notes. He was saying, 'I don't believe what I'm seeing. Your body is reconstructing its anatomy.'"

"There had been a lot of damage to my ear, and he expected to do reconstructive surgery. But he told us

that if my body continued to heal, he wouldn't have to. He didn't."

"My mother asked him at the time, 'Do you believe in miracles?'" He responded, "When you work with children like I do, you have to."

"She told him that the family had been praying to Katharine, and thought it was a miracle. He responded, 'Well, I have no other explanation for it.'"

"We went knocking on the door of the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament, saying 'We have a story to tell you.'"

"The sister we spoke to listened, and then asked us to write the story down and send it to her. Sometime later, we got a call from our Archdiocese of Philadelphia, wanting us to come in to tell the story again. We were told that an investigation was beginning, looking into my healing as a possible miracle. My doctor testified that those two bones were gone, and then returned."

"The investigation continued for the next 14 years. There was a series of tests and doctors I saw. In Rome, their doctors reviewed the findings. In 1988, it was declared to be a miracle attributed to Katharine's intercession."

"I attended the beatification and canonization of Mother Katharine in Rome. It was an honor to be there, especially to meet Pope John Paul II."

"It's been more than 40 years but thinking about it still gives me the chills. It has given me a clearer understanding of the presence of God. I know that Jesus loves and cares about me, and that he's still working miracles."

~~By Bob Gutherman

10 Things to Know about Catholics

1. The total number of Catholics has increased 1.3% from last year. However, the world's population has increased 1.6%.
2. The total number of priests continues to decrease.
3. The number of seminarians also continues its steady decline.
4. The number of women religious decreased.
5. The number of permanent deacons increased by 1.1%, mainly in the Americas.
6. There is a huge imbalance of priests to lay faithful in the Americas. The average ratio of priests to lay faithful across the world is 3,373 Catholics for every priest. In the Americas, there are 5,534 lay Catholics for every priest. In comparison, the ratio of priests to lay faithful in Europe is 1,784 per priest.
7. The total number of bishops decreased slightly.
8. Brazil has the highest number of Catholics of any nation in the world.
9. The Church is growing quickly in Africa.
10. Africa breaks the trend by showing an increase in seminarians and religious brothers.





On Resurrection Sunday, April 9, the Christ of Peace statue was dedicated in Tabasco county in Zacatecas state, Mexico. The monumental sculpture which sits atop a pedestal measures 108 feet high, which makes it the largest of its kind in the country. The statue stands in the center of the esplanade atop "Faith and Religion Hill."

Present at the dedication were the governor of Zacatecas state, David Monreal Ávila; the president of Tabasco county, Gil Martínez; and the pastor of the Church of the Immaculate Conception in the town of Tabasco, Father Luis Manuel Luévano Díaz.

According to the Christ of Peace Facebook page, the priest blessed

the sculpture and gave a message of faith and hope to the thousands of faithful present.

The governor of Zacatecas said on Facebook that "this sculpture is the largest in Mexico. I invite all of you to visit it and discover the wonders that Zacatecas offers."

In an interview with Reporte Índigo, Miguel Romo, the artist who created the statue, said it took more than two years to be completed. "If you look, the face is very nicely done. The Christ the Redeemer statue in Brazil is very beautiful, but it's a bit geometrical, with its hands, face, and everything. Not me. I tend to be very realistic, and it's very difficult at this scale; small scale is very easy, but on this scale it's very difficult,"

the artist explained.

The image was made with steel and various types of polymers. Inside the sculpture there is a staircase and four landings as well as lookouts for visitors.

The sculpture was named Christ of Peace because after its dedication its promoters want tranquility to come to the inhabitants of Zacatecas, a state plagued by organized crime violence.

Some claim that the Christ of Peace sculpture in Mexico is larger than the Christ the Redeemer in Brazil. However, the image in Rio de Janeiro is 98 feet tall with a 26-foot pedestal, whereas the one dedicated in Zacatecas is 98 feet tall with a 10-foot pedestal.

Most U.S. Catholics Rely Heavily on Their Conscience for Moral Guidance

Despite Pope Francis' overwhelming popularity, only about one-in-ten American Catholics say they turn to the pope "a great deal" for guidance on difficult moral questions,

Roughly three-quarters of U.S. Catholics (73%) say they rely "a great deal" on their own conscience when facing difficult moral problems, compared with 21% who look to the Catholic Church's teachings, 15% who turn to the Bible and 11% who say they rely a great deal on the pope.

Catholics who are highly religious (defined in our survey as those who

say they pray daily and attend religious services at least once a week) are considerably more likely than other Catholics to seek guidance from church teachings, the Bible and the pope. Otherwise, 74% say they rely a great deal on their conscience.

Changes in the Sacrament of Confession You Need to Know

Lent is a time of penance in the Catholic Church. This year, it's a time when priests in the confessional will use a revised translation of the sacrament of penance and reconciliation to forgive the sins of Catholic penitents.

The changes are noticeable in the formula of absolution, when the priest speaks in the person of Jesus Christ to absolve a Catholic from his or her sins. The "essential words" of the priest's absolution formula have not been changed, but there are "two minor modifications to the preliminary part of the prayer," according to the April 2022 newsletter of the Committee on Divine Worship of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops. Here are the new approved text, with changes in bold:

God, the Father of mercies, through the Death and Resurrection of his Son, has reconciled the world to himself and **poured out the Holy**

Spirit for the forgiveness of sins. Through the ministry of the Church may God grant you pardon and peace, and I absolve you from your sins in the name of the Father, and of the Son, [sign of the cross] and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

The changes add "a little bit more richness to the language," according to Monsignor Richard Hilgartner, a former executive director of the Secretariat of Divine Worship who is now pastor of St. Joseph Parish in Cockeysville, Maryland.

The line "poured out the Holy Spirit" previously read "sent the Holy Spirit among us." The phrase "may God grant you pardon and peace" is only a one-word change: It previously read "may God give you pardon and peace."



The new language for the priest's absolution is allowed as of Ash Wednesday, the start of Lent. Priests must use the new language starting on Divine Mercy Sunday, April 16, the first Sunday after Easter 2023.



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