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Issue #59

January/February

Letter from the Editor

Dear Readers,

I hope you all had a wonderful Christmas and New Year's! Henry and I spent the day with just the 2 of us not doing much and it was lovely! I will admit that I haven't felt up to doing much lately, as I am excited to announce that I am pregnant! Yep, I am joining the 'mommy club'. Henry has been so wonderful about it all and puts up with having to eat store bought freezer meals for the last few months. God certainly gave me one AMAZING husband! Baby is scheduled to arrive August 1st so please keep us all in your prayers.

On top of a baby on the way, God also gave me a pretty clear sign that I needed to get back to teaching. One of the teachers here unexpectedly was no longer able to finish teaching for this academic year and hence the school was in a predicament to find a replacement mid-year. It just so happened that the classes that needed to be covered were Math and Science, my specialties, and were all in the morning, so only required teaching for half of the day..... so..... after much prayer and consideration, it seemed where God wanted me and so I am back to being a teacher, the best job in the world!

The days fly by now and I spend more than half of them asleep, but I am learning and growing a lot as a person from all of this. If you recall the first adjective I used to describe myself was 'busy' and thus it has been a hard adjustment for me to not be able to be as busy and productive as I am accustomed to. One thing I have learned and keep reminding myself is: "I am exactly where God wants me to be." I know that may seem cliché or super obvious or not at all relatable but as I lay in bed puking for the 3rd time in a day I would get so frustrated and want to be able to go cook, clean, do dishes, go shopping, all of my normal life things that I just couldn't do right now and then I would realize that God gave us this child and the morning sickness that comes with it, so laying in bed or on the couch getting ready to throw up again was exactly what God wants me to do some days. Before you feel too sorry for me, morning sickness is getting better, but my productivity still isn't where it was and I have learned to accept that and find peace in it as I know that I am still doing God's will and that is really what matters, right?

My sister had a quote she liked: 'The only real tragedy in life is to fail to become a saint.' I feel like this is an excellent way to keep things in a proper perspective. Life has a way of bringing in frustrations and challenges and it is a rare time when everything is going the way we want it to. At the end of the day though, no matter how rough your day was, as long as you did your duty of state and offered it all up in the end, your day was a success, you are on the path to becoming a saint. My sister, Beth, passed away at the age of 19 on February 6th nine years ago and I found it fitting that this quote was inscribed on her headstone. Yes, her death was sudden, and hard to accept, and to many it seemed a tragedy, but she was blessed to have had the sacraments before she died and had been in the midst of living her Catholic Faith to the fullest, so I am pretty confident she was on her way to becoming a saint. I do still miss her, her crazy ideas and inability to stay organized and have a to do list she actually completed, but I have my memories of her and those bring a smile to my face and I am looking forward to spending eternity with her one day.

Hopefully this quote will also help some of you get through whatever hardships you are dealing with right now and bring some consolation to you. Thank you once again for being such fantabulous readers and know that I enjoy and appreciate any and all feedback that you send me. It will probably be Lent by the time you receive this, or nearly so, and thus I will end by wishing a holy Lent upon all of you!

In the Immaculate Heart,

Therese Harrity

'The only real tragedy in life is to fail to become a saint.'

If you are in school currently, or teaching, or have family members in school, you know that this is the roughest part of the year. It is that time when things just feel.... bleh.... There is rarely any excitement and often too much cold weather without Christmas to look forward to. So, my challenge to you is to practice and perfect Venerable Teresita's #1 rule in her code of amiability: **To smile until a kindly smile forms readily on one's lips.**

You should know from experience that it is hard to not smile back when someone smiles at you, so let's spread some happy smiles around to lift the spirits during this time of year. Besides, Lent can be rough and everyone always focuses on what to give up and not to do that we forget we can do positive things too as our Lenten resolutions such as smile 😊 And, I bet even if you think you are already a happy person and smile a lot, you can probably smile even more, or smile at those that you take for granted like your teacher, classmates you never talk to, elderly in the parish, your mom, an annoying sibling, etc.

So start now, and put that smile on! Try starting each day by singing that song from ‘Annie’ – “You’re never fully dressed without a smile!” Can’t wait to have you all helping to make this world a happier place 😊

Wings
 After your heart has
 taken flight
 when shrouded from
 the powers of
 hate.

BECAUSE
 IT IS

Take the time
 to nurture
 your relationships.
 You cannot be
 loved by
 yourself.

My Love
 1) Caroline
 2) Anita
 3) Douglas/Alan
 4) Anna
 5) Vanessa

A Marriage is a Partnership
 in which each partner
 has a role to play.

Marriage
 is a partnership in which
 each partner has a role to play.
 It is a commitment to
 each other for life.

Tomorrow is in
 my hands with me
 and what I do.

What you read affects you. Even if you only subconsciously read things. The words you surround yourself with make a HUGE difference. So, what better way to help form yourself into the person you want to be than surrounding yourself with words that lead you in that direction?

Inspirational quote wall:

- 1) Gather a collection of quotes. These can be searched on the internet (I like A-Z quotes website) or gotten from friends and family. They can be on a certain theme or just anything you like.
- 2) Format and print the quotes in beautiful, easy to read fonts.

- 3) Find an appropriate wall space. Preferably somewhere somewhat private but that you will look at every day.
- 4) Tape up the quotes and add some extra stickers or pictures between them
- 5) Enjoy your new inspirational quote wall that will help you too become an inspiration.



Immortal Poets Society

If you have ever lost someone dear to you, this first poem will hopefully hold much meaning for you. It tells of someone who has some good news or a beautiful moment and naturally wishes to share that with the one dear to them only to remember that their dear one is gone....

Surprised by Joy

BY WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

Surprised by joy—impatient as the Wind
I turned to share the transport—Oh! with whom
But Thee, long buried in the silent Tomb,
That spot which no vicissitude can find?
Love, faithful love, recalled thee to my mind—
But how could I forget thee?—Through what power,
Even for the least division of an hour,
Have I been so beguiled as to be blind
To my most grievous loss!—That thought's return
Was the worst pang that sorrow ever bore,
Save one, one only, when I stood forlorn,
Knowing my heart's best treasure was no more;
That neither present time, nor years unborn
Could to my sight that heavenly face restore.



On a lighter note, here are two poems from one of our favorite poets growing up, Shel Silverstein.



HOW NOT TO HAVE TO DRY THE DISHES

If you have to dry the dishes
(Such an awful, boring chore)
If you have to dry the dishes
(‘Stead of going to the store)
If you have to dry the dishes
And you drop one on the floor—
Maybe they won’t let you
Dry the dishes anymore.

SNOWBALL

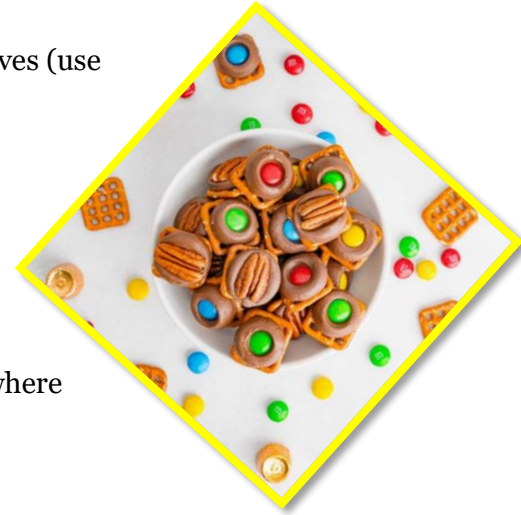
I made myself a snowball
As perfect as could be.
I thought I’d keep it as a pet
And let it sleep with me.
I made it some pajamas
And a pillow for its head.
Then last night it ran away,
But first—it wet the bed.

So... don’t try this tactic to get out of your chores, but I hope these made you smile and perhaps you can share them with others and get those smiles spread all around 😊

Delicious Disasters

I am a Minnesotan AND a pregnant lady, so sweets are an important part of my life ☺ Here is one of my favorite ones to bring to a causal get-together and is super kid-friendly. Grab your siblings, kids, or nieces and nephews and get to work!

- 1) Buy a bag of normal pretzels, about 50 rolo candies, and 50 pecan halves (use M&M's if you don't want nuts).
- 2) Preheat oven to 300 degrees and lay a sheet of parchment paper on a cookie sheet.
- 3) Lay out 50 pretzels on the cookie sheet and place a rolo on top of each.
- 4) Put in the oven for about 4 minutes, until the chocolate and caramel are nice and soft.
- 5) Take out of the oven and turn the oven off.
- 6) IMMEDIATELY press a pecan half (or M&M) onto each rolo (this is where many hands is helpful).
- 7) Cool in the fridge or on the counter.
- 8) Enjoy the home-made turtle candies!



P.S. Try using seasonal colored M&M's for some perfect holiday cheer. Pastel M&M's for Easter, green for St. Patrick's Day, your Mom's favorite color for her birthday, etc.

Tasty Shrimp Kabobs

With Lent right around the corner, here is a great meatless recipe. Super easy and delicious. Just serve with some mashed potatoes and California veggies for a perfect meal.

- 1) Thaw about 1 pound of pre-cooked shrimp.
- 2) Mix 1/2 cup mayonnaise, 1 tablespoon lemon juice, 1 tablespoon garlic, and 1/2 tablespoon salt in a small bowl.
- 3) Put the shrimp on pre-soaked wooden skewers. Make them nice and close to each other.
- 4) Spread the mayo mixture on both sides of the shrimp. Put LOTS on. You will probably have some leftover that can be used as a dipping sauce.
- 5) Place skewers on a pie pan or other pan that will hold the shrimp up off of the surface so that just the wooden ends are on the edge of the pan and the shrimp is 'hanging' in the middle.
- 6) Put oven on BROIL and place pan with shrimp on the top rack.
- 7) Cook for about 5 minutes (watch carefully as some oven broilers are extra intense).
- 8) Turn the skewers so that the other side of the shrimp is exposed and broil an additional 3-5 minutes or until it is turning slightly crispy and brown. (You should smell deliciousness at this point.)
- 9) Take them out and let cool a little before serving. Add a sprinkle of parsley to make it a gorgeous meal.

P.S. You may adjust the sauce to your tastes, adding more or less garlic and salt to it. Additionally, you can add a sprinkle of parmesan cheese after you turn them for some added flavors. Lastly, feel free to do these on the grill, because everyone knows things taste better grilled!



Girls, You're Important

So, this chapter in the book is about boys. Yep, Father knows that at a certain age girls naturally become more interested in boys and instead of just letting them go through that on their own, he is careful to give them some advice on the matter. Maybe boys don't matter to you yet, or maybe you already went through this, but there will always be someone in your life at some point who will be going through this and hopefully these words will help you know how to approach it.

Boys

Although little girls may not yet be interested in boys, teen-age girls usually are. It is quite normal for them to be so interested.

What kind of boy do you like? You admire the manly, masculine type. The more boy he is the better you like him. You do not want or expect him to be girlish. You are displeased with the sissy-type boy. The more manly he is, the more you admire him. Boys are boys, and girls are girls.



In passing you might stop to consider that a boy likes a girlish girl. The more feminine she is the more she appeals to him. He does not care for a girl who is boyish and who acts boyishly. He likes boys straight. And he likes girls straight.

Teen-age is the time when boys and girls like to associate with each other in groups. It is perfectly correct for boys to want to be with girls, and for girls to desire the company of boys. Later on, when both grow old enough to begin to think about marriage they will pair up into closer friendships, fall definitely in love, and marry. The dances and social affairs of teen-agers are by way of preparation for a later, deeper friendship.

A girl should not tie herself down too quickly to any particular boy, nor should she allow herself to be with any one boy too often, as long as she is still quite young. If she clings to one too quickly she may miss the chance of meeting another boy who is even more to her liking. Besides, she may become too attached to a boy with whom she should enter at present merely into a

friendship and companionship rather than a profound love affair.

There is a decided difference between the friendly companionship with a boy with whom you go to places of amusement, and the serious love ties of two who are about to be married. Teen-agers, who are in no position to consider marriage, should keep their friendship from growing too close. This is no more than good, common sense.

A girl can have a very great influence on a boy, for his good. A good, clear-thinking girl will ever be respected by a boy. He will later on appreciate the reserve and good sense with which she guided him. Men are remarkably alike in one thing and very young men are no exception: they need the help of women to keep them on the right track.

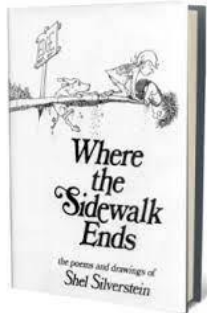
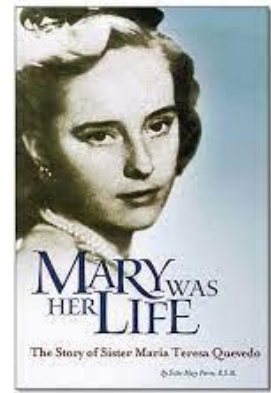
Teen-agers, who are in no position to consider marriage, should keep their friendship from growing too close.

Always look upon your friendship with boys or with any particular boy as something good. If you are attracted by him, the attraction is good and noble. God made you a girl. Normally, you will be attracted by the boy, as he will be attracted by you. Under the kind and watchful eyes of God keep this attraction something beautiful and wholesome. Be the kind of girl that a boy will ever respect. Help him to maintain his own high ideals.

Read It or Rue It

Mary was her Life

This novel follows the short but powerful life of the vivacious Teresita Quevedo. A modern day girl, Teresita was ambitious and alive. She learned to curb her selfish, stubborn will by her devotion to Our Lady. Truly an inspiration, every girl should read her story and follow her simple 'Code of Amiability'. Our girls summer camp has her as the patroness as sports and activity were a huge part of her life and yet at the same time she strove to fulfill her life motto "May all who see me see thee, O Mary."

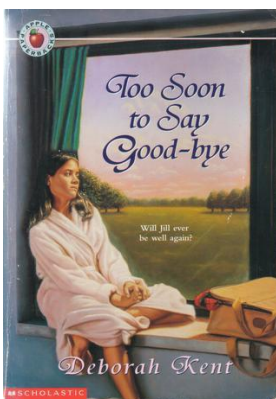
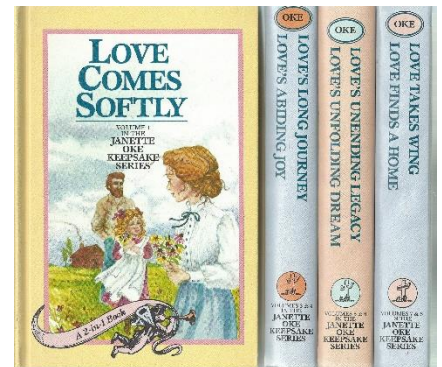


Where the Sidewalk Ends

A collection of whimsical poems that will brighten your face on a rainy day. Don't like poetry? No worries! This book is written for those who aren't in the mood to delve into the beautiful depths of the art of poetry. These poems are for recreational purposes only. They are not meant or intended in any way to be inspirational and profound but simply to be enjoyed and lighten your heart. A great book to add to your family collection!

Love Comes Softly

This series of books by Janet Oke has been made into a movie series which is FAR inferior to the beauty of the actual books. Delve into the world of a true woman who struggles with life and love amidst the everyday trials that came with life as a pioneer here in America. These books are so much more than the mere romance novels that the movies make them seem like, they are a lesson in growth and maturity, in love and forgiveness, in birth and death, in pushing yourself and learning from your mistakes. The author truly knows what it is to be a woman, for she carefully crafts a noble one with her pen and follows her life as well from that of a scared, soon-to-be bride to that of a content grandmother. The series can be hard to find in a library but well worth purchasing. And if you haven't seen the movies, they are good but so much less than the books! If you are a fan of the movies, I promise you will still be enthralled by the books as the story not only is more complete but even has characters that are never seen in the movies.



Too Soon to Say Good-bye

Based on a true story, this heart-warming tale of a young girl's battle with leukemia will both broaden your understanding of the life of a cancer patient as well as bring tears of sympathy and joy to your eyes as this girl faces each challenge. Appropriate for middle schoolers this is an excellent book to help transition young girls to the maturity of womanhood. Not too in-depth or dark, this book shows that life does not always go as we expect and that no matter the hardship and trial we face, we are given the grace and strength to persevere.