

# Reflections

Volume 57

## International Catholic Family Newsletter

May 2020

### Unforgiveness-A Gateway for the Devil

#### Rosary Miracles

#### A Troubled Veteran's Eye-Opening Encounter

#### Blessings to All:

By: Richard Pickard

Peace be with you.

We all know the Our Father prayer that Jesus taught us to say. When saying this prayer, a key sentence that Jesus brings to mind is about *unforgiveness*. In Matthew chapter 6, Jesus teaches the crowds how to pray the Our Father. Asking Our Heavenly Father for the necessities of life and wrapping this prayer around the need to forgive others.

In the ending of His speech to those listening, He says ***"If you forgive others their transgressions, your heavenly Father will forgive you. But if you do not forgive others, neither will your Father forgive your transgressions."***

This is the essence of the gospel message. Forgive others and you will be forgiven. So, what happens if you don't forgive others? The eternal answer to that question, is between you and Jesus upon your death.



I don't think Jesus is talking about someone you had an argument with, and you believe you were right, and they were wrong. We are all sinners, but God forgives us for all of our sins, through the Passion, Death, and Resurrection of His son, Jesus Christ. ***We in turn must forgive others.***



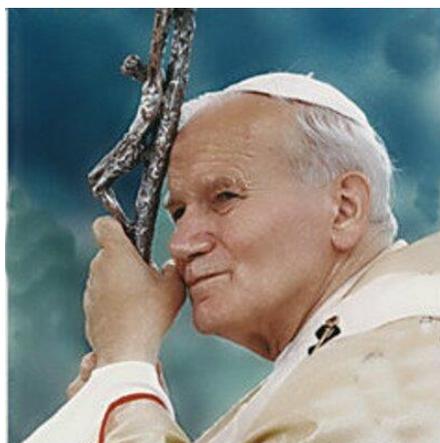
There is a price to pay after death if we hold unforgiveness in our hearts. Being mad at someone for an injury either a spiritual injury or a physical injury, is just being human. We can still be upset with others, but we need to remove the bitterness that could be brewing within us by *forgiving* them of the offense. If we don't, we give a doorway through which the devil will enter.

In Romans 12:19 we see a clear statement about how to conduct oneself when others inflict evil upon us. *"Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God, for it is written, "Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord."*

We see a continuation in these words in Colossians 3:13 *"...bearing with one another and forgiving one another, if one has a grievance against another; as the Lord has forgiven you, so must you also do."*

HOLDING A  
GRUDGE  
IS LIKE LETTING  
SOMEONE LIVE  
RENT-FREE IN  
YOUR HEAD.

You may know people who carry their anger and the burden of unforgiveness in their lives. I have also seen this, and how it has entered many aspects of their lives. It changes people and, in some cases, they carry around this unforgiveness like a badge of courage. They fall back on whatever happened to them and justify their reasons for not forgiving others. This is dangerous to the soul. When darkness overcomes the soul, it not only damages the light of grace, but also negatively impacts family and friends.



Pope John Paul II wrote a statement on forgiveness which to me is an honest assessment of the human spirit. **"Certainly, forgiveness does not come spontaneously or naturally to people. Forgiving from the Heart can sometimes be heroic. . . . Thanks to the healing power of love, even the most wounded heart can experience the liberating encounter with forgiveness. We all need to be forgiven by others, so we must all be ready to forgive. Asking and granting forgiveness is something profoundly worthy of every one of us."**



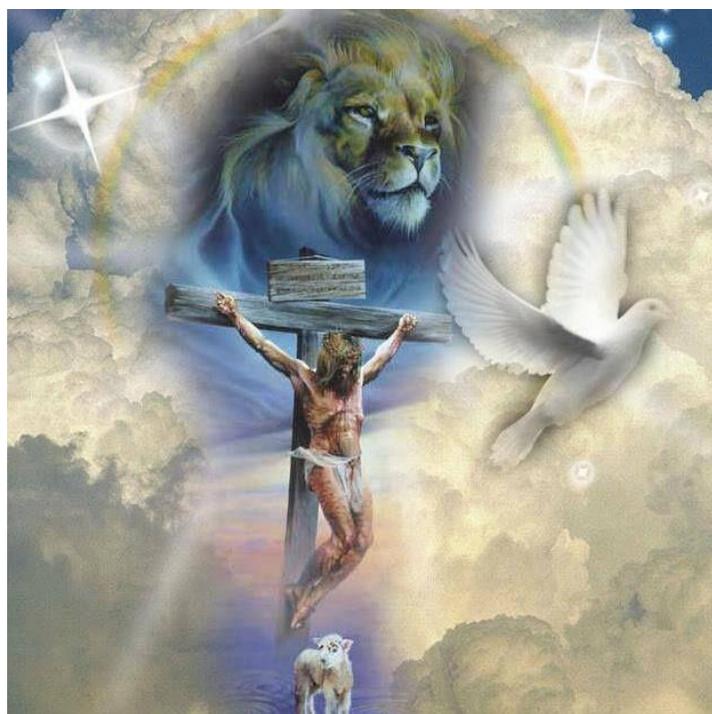
If any of you reading this Newsletter have a deep hurt, that prevents you from forgiving someone...now is the time to lay this at the feet of Jesus. He will take this burden off you.

All you need to say is '**Jesus, I can't forgive as I should, please help me with your love and provide me with graces sufficient to relieve this burden I carry in my soul.**'

## **Prayer to Forgive Yourself and to Forgive Others**

### **Say This Prayer. Jesus is Listening**

*Jesus, I am replaying my past sins within my mind. I can't seem to let go of what has happened, it hurts my heart, each and every time.*



*My thoughts of unforgiveness are consuming me daily and the unbearable pain lingers on. I don't see any way out of this situation. But, Lord, I trust You will make a way. Please help me. I want to do the right thing in my life and to live according to Your will.*

*I trust you Jesus. You took all my sins and pains and unforgiveness that I carry unto the cross with You. Help me be set free from all of the thoughts of my many failures and to forgive those that I need to forgive. Jesus you know my pains and worries that come from these thoughts and the wounds inflicted upon me and my family by others. I give them to You. Amen.*

# Rosary Miracles

## Freedom for Brazil against Communism

The message of Our Lady of Fatima also played a huge role in another miracle associated with the Rosary. In the early 1960s, Brazil's president, Joao Goulart, was preparing to spread Communism throughout the country. It seemed inevitable that Communist rule would soon take over the country, as had happened to Cuba. But not everyone was willing to lose their freedom and succumb to likely defeat. Cardinal de Barros Camara told the people of Brazil that they could overthrow the threat by heeding the instructions of Our Lady of Fatima to pray and do penance.



Shortly after, Dona Amelia Bastos, a 59-year-old former schoolteacher and wife of a retired army doctor, gathered about 30 female friends and neighbors to form the first chapter of CAMDE (Campaign of Women for Democracy), a group that spread its message of peacefully

fighting a Communist takeover to hundreds of thousands of women throughout the country. Many of them took part in Rosary rallies. One Sao Paulo rally was called the "March of the Family with God Toward Freedom." It included more than 600,000 women carrying prayer books and rosaries as they marched with anti-communist banners, and it and other Rosary rallies played a central role in eventually overthrowing President Goulart and thwarting a Communist takeover with amazingly little military action needed.

In gratitude to God, the women of Brazil held an even larger march the day after they had succeeded in preserving their freedom. The march, which was called **"March of Thanksgiving to God,"** included more than **one million people.**



## The King & the Rosary

Our Lady blesses not only those who preach her Rosary, but she highly rewards those who get others to say it by their example.

Alphonsus, King of Leon and Galicia, wanted all his servants to honor the Blessed Virgin by saying the Rosary. So, he used to hang a large rosary on his belt and always wore it. Unfortunately, however, he never said it himself. Nevertheless, his wearing it encouraged his courtiers to say the Rosary very devoutly.



One day the King fell seriously ill, and when he was given up for dead, he found himself, in a vision, before the judgment seat of Our Lord. Many devils were there accusing him of all the sins he had committed and Our Lord as Sovereign Judge was just about to condemn him to Hell when Our Lady appeared to intercede for him.

She called for a pair of scales and had his sins placed in one of the balances. Then she put the Rosary that he had always worn on the other scale, together with all the Rosaries that had been said because of his example. It was found that the Rosaries weighed more than his sins.

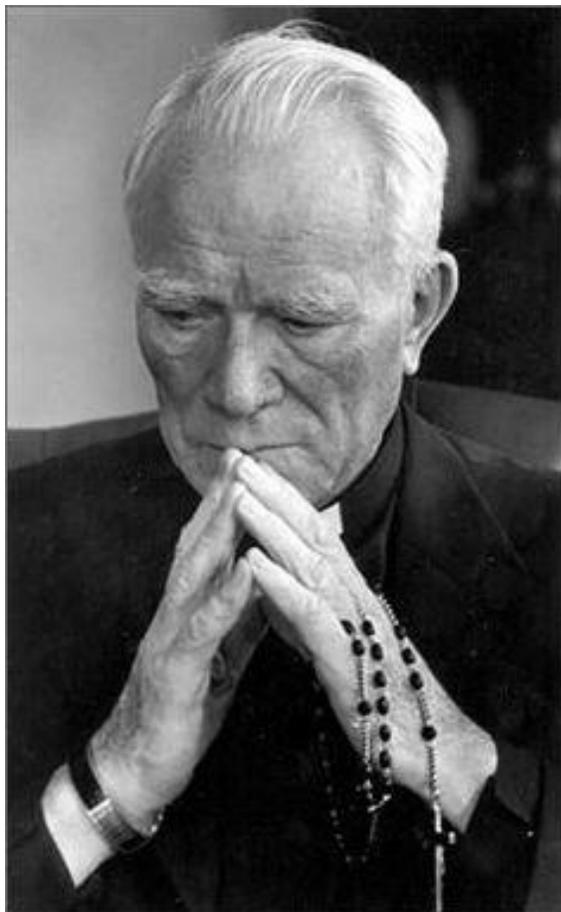
Looking at him with great kindness Our Lady said: "As a reward for this little honor that you paid me in wearing my Rosary, I have obtained a great grace for you from my Son. Your life will be spared for a few more years. See that you spend these years wisely, and do penance."

When the King regained consciousness, he cried out: "Blessed be the Rosary of the Most Holy Virgin Mary, by which I have been delivered from eternal damnation!"

After he had recovered his health, he spent the rest of his life in spreading devotion to the Holy Rosary and said it faithfully every day.

From *The Secret of the Rosary* by St. Louis de Montfort, Veritatis Splendor Publications, 2012, Eighth Rose, p. 28, Posted June 8, 2013

## Healing of the Rosary Priest



Praying the Rosary led to healing for Servant of God Fr. Patrick Peyton, who became known as the Rosary Priest. In 1938, after he had immigrated to the United States from Ireland but before he was ordained, he became very ill and was diagnosed with advanced Tuberculosis, which was incurable at the time. After his sister suggested that he pray to Blessed Mother for her intercession, he consecrated himself to Mary and began devoutly praying the Rosary. To the astonishment of his doctors, he was completely and miraculously cured, and he promised Blessed Mother that he would spend his life promoting the Rosary.

The popular priest, who coined the phrase "the family that prays together stays together," encouraged many to pray the Rosary. He was one of the pioneering television evangelists who used the medium to further God's Kingdom. In 1992, he passed away peacefully with a rosary in his hands, and he's now being considered for sainthood.



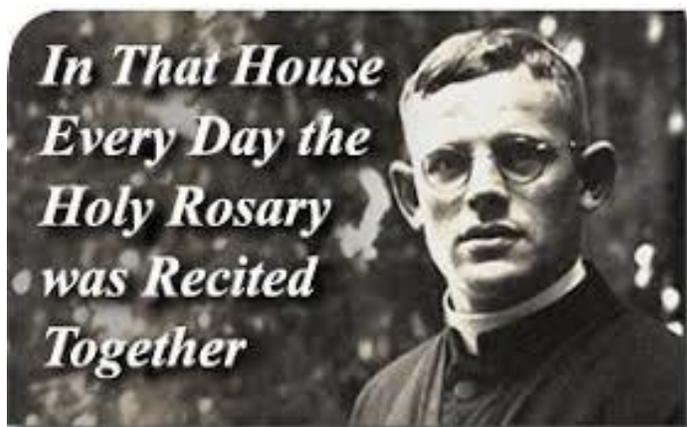
## The Miracle of Hiroshima



In 1945, during WWII, eight Jesuit priests were living in a parish house less than one mile from where the atomic bomb was dropped on the town of Hiroshima in Japan. While the church next to the parish house was completely destroyed and thousands of people were killed and thousands of people suffered tremendously from radiation exposure, the house remained standing and the eight

missionary priests miraculously survived. It was also miraculous and inexplicable that none of the eight Jesuits suffered from radiation exposure.

In the years following the blast, they were examined many times, and they lived for many years after it. When the priests were interviewed, they repeatedly said why they believed they survived and why they had not suffered from radiation exposure as was expected. They attributed their survival to the fact that they were living the message of Fatima. They said that they had prayed the Rosary faithfully in that house every day.



prayed the Rosary faithfully in that

## A Vision of Roses

In "The Secret of the Rosary," St. Louis De Montfort also wrote about a young friar whom he had learned about through the chronicles of Saint Francis. The friar prayed the Rosary every day before dinner. One day, he hadn't yet prayed it when the bell rang for dinner, so he received permission from the monastery Superior to go to his cell to pray it before eating.

"After he had been gone a long time the Superior sent another Friar to fetch him, and he found him in his room bathed in a heavenly light facing Our Lady who had two angels with her," wrote St. Louis De Montfort. "Beautiful roses kept issuing from his mouth at each Hail Mary; the angels took them one by one, placing them on Our Lady's head, and she smilingly accepted them.



Finally, two other friars who had been sent to find out what happened to the first two saw the same lovely scene, and Our Lady did not go away until the whole Rosary had been said."

In the same book, St. Louis De Montfort also explained the meaning behind that miracle. "The word Rosary means 'Crown of Roses,' that is to say that every time people say the Rosary devoutly they place a crown of one hundred and fifty-three red roses and sixteen white roses upon the heads of Jesus and Mary," the saint wrote. "Being heavenly flowers, these roses will never fade or lose their exquisite beauty."

## A Troubled Veteran's Eye-Opening Encounter

A stranger did more than save this Vietnam Vet from a bad snowstorm.



I stuck my thumb out into the biting wind. I was somewhere in Utah, trying to hitch a ride as the daylight faded. It was bitterly cold and beginning to snow. I had on a coat and the combat boots I'd worn in Vietnam. But not much else to protect me from the late spring snowstorm.

It was 1970. I'd served a tour of duty in Vietnam and come home in 1966 with plans to help my dad with our family farm in Minnesota. Maybe go to college and find a career. Instead...I drifted. No reason. Just a vague sense of unease.

Vietnam had left me with nightmares. I was in an artillery unit, the so-called kings of battle. Sometimes our maps were wrong, and we ended up shelling our own guys. Once, we accidentally hit a South Vietnamese militiaman. He died alongside his pregnant wife.

I tried to blot out the horrible memories with alcohol and marijuana. Then I tried to outrun the thoughts by moving around. My nine older siblings lived all over the U.S., and I hitched from place to place, finding work on farms or in construction. California, North Dakota, Alaska, Missouri, Oregon, Idaho, Nevada. Wherever I was, I wanted to be somewhere else.

Now I was broke and attempting to get back to Minnesota to see my dad before he died. Can't remember why I thought it was a good idea to walk along this empty highway in a snowstorm. There's a lot from that time I don't remember well.

I'd been walking all day. I'm sure I looked awful. Long, scraggly hair and beard. Dirty clothes. Probably smelled like whatever I'd drunk the night before. I hadn't eaten all day.

Evening descended. The last bit of dim light vanished. I could barely see. The snow picked up, falling in sheets, whipping my face. It was getting colder by the minute. Was I going to freeze to death on this lonely highway? After all I'd survived?

I wasn't a praying man. Not since Vietnam. Sure, I'd tossed up the same foxhole prayers other guys did. But prayers didn't save the people I'd accidentally shelled. Prayers didn't take away the nightmares.

And yet here, in the middle of the blizzard, prayers were all I had left. Shivering violently, I prayed for God's help.

Light sliced the darkness, illuminating the swirling flakes of snow. I turned and saw a pair of headlights approaching. A truck. I waved frantically with both arms.

Brakes squealed and the transmission shuddered as the truck slowed. It loomed out of the snow and rumbled past, stopping with a hiss

ahead of me. I jogged to catch up, and the cab's passenger door swung open.

I clambered up and a voice said, "Hi there."

The driver was a big guy, a real trucker, rough-looking. That voice, though, put me right at ease. It was calm, reassuring. I couldn't remember the last time someone had spoken to me like that.

"Where you headed?" the driver asked, offering me a sandwich and a thermos of coffee before putting the big rig in gear.

"Minnesota," I said, unwrapping the sandwich and wolfing it down. The cab was warm and dry, and for a minute I just sat there, eating that sandwich and drinking the coffee.

"Thank you," I said at last.

"No problem, buddy. I can take you at least 50 miles before I have to turn south. You planning to keep hitching? Not a great night for it."

In fact, I had no idea what I was going to do next. "I'm kind of broke," I said. "I'm trying to get back home to the family farm. My dad's not doing well."

The trucker nodded and gave me a quick appraising look.

"I don't want to preach or anything," he said after a silence. "But I used to be in your shoes. Served in Korea. Came home drinking, smoking, drifting. One day I was driving drunk and I hit someone. The guy lived, but he was disabled."

His words hung in the air. Without taking his eyes from the road, the trucker continued: "That horrible accident made me take a long, hard look at myself. And the man I hit? He was something special. He

forgave me, and we became friends. I quit the drinking. Got a steady job and gave the guy a part of every paycheck I earned. Still do.”

His story struck home big-time. It was like he had lived my life and was telling me I could change.

I didn’t go into my story much as we drove on. It didn’t seem as if I had to. The driver’s turnoff was in a small town. He insisted I take enough money for a bus ticket to Minnesota. Before I got out onto the icy road, the driver cleared his throat.

“Funny thing,” he said. “When I saw it was going to snow today, I got all fixed to stop for the night at the last town back. But something told me to keep going. Good thing I did, huh?”

I nodded.

“Like I said, I don’t want to preach, but I believe great things can happen if you believe and pray for what you need,” he added. “Good luck to you, son.”

All I could say was “Thanks.” I closed the passenger-side door to the cab and watched the truck rumble away until it disappeared into the snowy darkness.

Something changed that night. It wasn’t immediate. But that ride was the turning point for me. I made it to the farm. Dad lived a few more years, and I stayed with him, helping him and getting my life back together. I stopped drinking, went to college, found work. I married, had kids and got treatment for my PTSD.

Through the years, anytime I’ve felt down, I just think of that truck appearing out of the night. A gentle voice speaks the words that saved me then and keep saving me now: “Great things can happen if you believe.”

**Whether you're a troubled Veteran; a Divorced Man or Woman; a Drug Addict; a Thief....God has a plan for you. Your cross can be overcome. But you need Jesus with you. Trust in Him. No matter what happens or how many times you fail. There is salvation in the cross and there is pain. But Jesus will help you.**

**We All Have A Cross That We Must Pass on the Road to Heaven**



**Stay the Course and Trust in Jesus**

We all need to rest and to enjoy the Peace of Christ.  
During this time of stress due to the virus, take some  
quiet time to renew your spirit.



### **The International Catholic Family Newsletter Is Published Monthly**

**Our mission statement is to motivate people to pray and to be Christian examples in their work, home and with others, for those needing the Light in a world of Darkness.**

**<https://www.catholicfamilynewsletter.com>**

**Trust in Jesus. He Saves.**



**God is waiting for you to stop trying to change, and to  
start trusting Him to change you**