

Reflections

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Catholic Family Newsletter

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Overcoming-Ask God to Help You

Paul Harvey's Warning to America:

If I were the Devil

Blessing to All:

By: Richard Pickard on Overcoming...

Sometimes people give up on themselves because of physical or mental handicaps or due to a feeling of worthlessness. Some curse God and see themselves as people at the bottom of the barrel of life. No chance to better their lives. Some give up on overcoming a habitual serious sin; or not getting past a traumatic happening in their life, like divorce, or the death of a loved one that brings on deep emotional disorder; a drug dependency that rules their life; or a host of things that may steal their inner peace and their feeling of self-worth--- there is an answer. Seek help. Pray for Jesus to help you and then find organizations; Your Church, Temple, Physicians; Christian consoler; or even a friend or family member. Reach out. Don't become a victim but become an overcomer. God loves you. You are His child and destined for Heaven. He will help YOU !



The spark of **divinity** was given to you. The devil will try everything to keep you down. Jesus will try everything to help you overcome. And Jesus is stronger!

Here are some examples of people who turned to God and raised themselves up to be examples to others.

Overcoming Physical Handicaps

Helen Keller

Stricken by a severe illness when she was a child, Keller grew up unable to hear or see to become a celebrated author, speaker and activist for the deaf and blind. She graduated from Radcliffe College in 1904, campaigned for women's suffrage and founded Helen Keller International, a nonprofit dedicated to saving the sight and lives of the most vulnerable and disadvantaged in Africa and Asia.

Stephen Hawking

Renowned theoretical physicist Stephen Hawking was diagnosed with ALS, a form of motor neuron disease, shortly after he turned 21. Although only given two years to live, Hawking went on to become a celebrated physicist, author, lecturer and professor. His life was the subject of the film *The Theory of Everything* in 2014.

Michael J. Fox

Known for his iconic roles in television's "Family Ties" and "Spin City," Michael J. Fox was diagnosed with early onset Parkinson's disease in 1991. He announced his condition seven years later and, upon his retirement from acting full-time, founded the Michael J. Fox Foundation to advocate for research in finding a cure for Parkinson's. Fox continues to perform, occasionally guest starring in TV roles and giving voice to animated characters for film.

Bethany Hamilton

Surfing sensation Bethany Hamilton lost her left arm to a shark attack when she was only 13 but was back in the water only one month later. She won her first national title when she was 15 and today is a professional surfer and motivational speaker. The shark attack and her recovery were chronicled in the 2014 film "Body and Soul" released in 2014.

Marlee Matlin

Film and television actress and children's author Marlee Matlin lost her hearing when she was a child and went on to become the only deaf recipient of the Academy Award for Best Actress in a Leading Role, an award she won at the age of 21. She has starred in numerous film and television productions, including "Children of a Lesser God" and "The West Wing." She has written three children's books.

Ludwig van Beethoven

An aspiring composer, Beethoven began to lose his hearing in his 20s and overcame deep bouts of depression to continue writing music. Many of his celebrated works were written after he was almost completely deaf. Today he is regarded as one of the most famous and influential of all composers.

Franklin D. Roosevelt

When he was nearly 40, Franklin D. Roosevelt was stricken with polio, a disease that dramatically limited his ability to use his legs. Already an accomplished politician and government servant, FDR went on to become governor of New York and, in November 1932, was elected President of the United States. He remained in office until his death in 1945, becoming the longest-serving president in U.S. history.

Christopher Reeve

Known to a generation of movie fans as Superman, Christopher Reeve became a quadriplegic during a horse-riding accident. Confined to a wheelchair and requiring a ventilator, Reeve nevertheless advocated for research to help those suffering from spinal-cord injuries and founded what is today known as the Christopher & Dana Reeve Foundation. Reeve continued to act and direct until his death in 2004.

Overcoming Habitual Sins

Although the stories above, are about physical handicaps, we also can see people with a long history of sins, that overcame these sins. No matter how long the habit of a particular sin has been in your life, you can OVERCOME. Ask Jesus to help you. Don't give up! Keep asking Jesus to help you. In the end, you will win freedom from the slavery of the sin that has control of you.

Olga of Russia



A murderer and cold-hearted torturer turned-saint, St. Olga is venerated as the saint of widows and converts. While she was the first canonized Russian saint, she certainly was not the type of person anyone expected to become a saint.

Olga was once a princess, and the first documented female ruler of Russia. Her husband, Igor I, was the prince of Kiev, and was assassinated in 945 by those serving under him. Because their son was still a minor at the time of Igor's death, Olga became the regent of the grand principality of Kiev.

Seeking revenge against those who killed her husband, Olga had Igor's murderers captured and scalded to death. But she would not stop there. She went on to execute hundreds of people who were members of the same tribe as her husband's murderers. She is also said to have ordered the execution of nearly 5,000 men at a feast held in her honor.

After being touched by the majesty and awe of the liturgy, St. Olga converted to Christianity and was baptized between 945 and 957, despite her pagan son's disapproval. After her son took control of the country, Olga requested the appointment of archbishops and priests, however the Holy Roman Emperor refused her request, accusing her of lying and trickery.

Despite this, Olga secretly kept a Catholic priest near her at all times, and when she died in 969, her son granted her a Christian burial rather than a pagan celebration. Her grandson, Vladimir, would later take control of Kiev and make Christianity the official religion of the nation in the 980s

St Mary of Egypt



St. Mary, the patron saint of penitents, ran away from home at the age of 12 and became a prostitute. She took so much delight in seducing men, that it is said she didn't even charge for her services most of the time. After 17 years of living this lifestyle, she took an "anti-pilgrimage"

to Jerusalem where she said she wanted to find more men to seduce.

An unseen force is said to have prevented her from entering into the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, and it was this event that caused her to realize her sins and was struck with remorse at the way she had been living. As a result, she prayed for forgiveness at a statue of the Blessed Mother and promised to give up her sins. After this, she tried to enter the Church again and was permitted to enter. She later received absolution and Holy Communion, and to this day has become associated with fallen women, much like Mary Magdalene.

Bartolo Longo

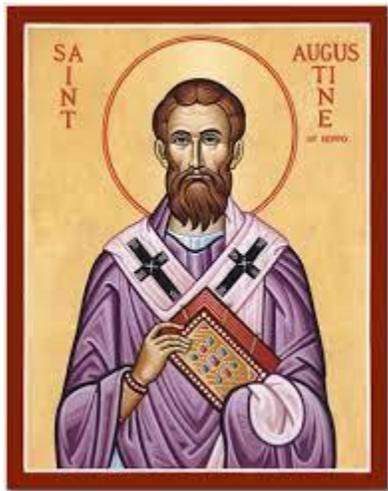


Although raised in a Catholic home, Bartolo turned away from the faith and became a satanic priest in his 20s after attending séances. He became involved in drugs and began encouraging others away from the faith. He publicly attacked and ridiculed the church while rising in the ranks of Satanism. As a lawyer, he was ordained as a priest in Satanism.

Because he was so heavily involved in Satanism, Bartolo became depressed, was paranoid, and nearly had a nervous breakdown. All throughout his struggles he clung to Satanism as his "faith". However, his family never gave up on him and despite him being an enemy of God and the Church, they continued to pray for his return to the true God.

Their prayers were later answered, and Bartolo returned to the faith he had abandoned, leaving behind the practices of Satanism and becoming devoted to the Lord Jesus. Instead of drawing people away from the faith, he began seeking to bring people into the faith.

Saint Augustine



St. Augustine—354—430 AD. Augustine of Hippo, also known as Saint Augustine, was a theologian, philosopher, and the bishop of Hippo Regius in Numidia, Roman North Africa. His Roman mother Monica (now known as St. Monica) was a Christian and raised him as such. Augustine did not give his life to Christ until he was c. age 33. In his late teens and 20's he struggled with sexual impurities and various current philosophies, primarily with Manichaeism. The Lord spared his praying mother Monica (332—387) to see the conversion of her son to Christ—a year after his conversion in c. 386.

Augustine's *Confessions*, written in Latin, was finished in c. 400. It includes the autobiography of his sin-plagued youth and his conversion to Christ.

After having a conversion of heart, Augustine was baptized, became a priest, bishop and after his death, "doctor of the Church."

Overcoming Drug Addiction

Samuel L. Jackson: The Hardest-Working Man in Hollywood



"...I was a drug addict, and I was out of my mind a lot of the time, but I had a good reputation. Showed up on time, knew my lines, hit my marks. I just wasn't making a lot of money... So, I was doing things the right way, it was just that one thing that was in the way – my addiction. And once that was out of the way, it was –BOOM! The door blew wide open."

~ Samuel L. Jackson

Sober since: 1991

Today, Samuel L. Jackson is the highest-grossing movie actor in the world. He is also one of the busiest, having appeared in 140 films (and counting). His resume' is filled with iconic roles in movies like *Pulp Fiction*, *Django Unchained*, and both the *Star Wars* and *Marvel Cinematic Universes*.

But before all of that success, Jackson was a struggling actor who struggled *even more* with drug use, including marijuana, LSD, heroin, and crack cocaine. He arrived at his personal rock bottom when his wife and 8-year-old daughter found him passed out in their kitchen. At his wife's urging, he checked into rehab.

Ironically enough, the first role he played after completing rehab was that of a drug addict, in *Jungle Fever*. His performance was so well-received that his career heated up and has not cooled down yet. The vast majority of his film roles have come since he regained his sobriety, as have all of his award nominations and wins.

Jackson, now 70, has 6 film roles in 2019 alone.

Robert Downey Jr.: From Addict to Avenger

"Job one is get out of that cave. A lot of people do get out but don't change. So, the thing is to get out and recognize the significance of that aggressive denial of your fate, come through the crucible forged into a stronger metal."



Sober since: 2003

"Forged into a stronger metal...". That is an interesting and extremely apropos choice of words for the actor whose most recognizable role is that of Iron Man in the Marvel Cinematic Universe. In reality, Downey has been acting since he was 5, and has even won a BAFTA and been nominated for an Oscar for 1992's *Chaplin*.

But as acclaimed as he was when he was younger and as successful as he has become in middle age, substance abuse very nearly derailed his career and his life.

His father, Robert Sr., was an actor and filmmaker who was also a drug addict. He allowed young Robert Jr. to use marijuana when he was just six years old. Because his drug-seeking made him so emotionally unavailable, this was the way he connected with his son.

Robert Jr. would later recall, "When my dad and I would do drugs together, it was like him trying to express his love for me in the only way he knew how." As a teenager and adult, he was arrested multiple times for drug charges involving marijuana, heroin, cocaine, crack, and Valium. He was in and out of rehab.

In one very important way, Downey was lucky. For his last arrest, he could have been facing several years in prison, but a recent change to California law said that his nonviolent offender status qualified him for probation and court-ordered drug rehab, instead.

Even after completing rehab, Downey had difficulty finding work, because his past made it problematic to insure him during production. For his first post-rehab film role, good friend Mel Gibson paid Downey's insurance bond out of his own pocket. For other roles, directors would withhold significant portions of Downey's salary until production was wrapped. This was their safeguard against any problems involving substance abuse.

In 2007, Downey was cast as Iron Man, a role he has now played 10 times. Because of this success, he is now one of the highest-paid actors in the world.

In a 2004 interview with Oprah Winfrey, Downey said, "I reached out for help, and I ran with it. You can reach out for help in kind of a half-assed way, and you'll get it, and you won't take advantage of it. It's not that difficult to overcome these seemingly-ghastly problems...what's hard is to decide to do it."

Jada Pinkett Smith: Drug Dealer to Power Player

"I had many addictions, of several kinds, to deal with my life issues, but today, at 42, I have my wisdom, my heart and my conscience as the only tools to overcome life's inevitable obstacles."



Sober since: 1997

Jada Pinkett Smith is somewhat of a renaissance woman—actress, musician, author, director, talk show host, and philanthropist. She and her husband, Will Smith, are one of the most powerful and influential couples in Hollywood.

Raised by her heroin-addicted mother and her grandmother in a “drug-infested neighborhood” in Baltimore, Pinkett Smith admits that her upbringing was “more scary than confusing because you’re pretty much on your own”. While attending the Baltimore School for the Arts, Pinkett Smith says she was a drug dealer. As a young woman, she struggled with addictive issues of her home, including sex, excessive exercise, and alcohol.

In a 2010 interview, Pinkett Smith said, “I went through a time when there were lots of drugs and alcohol, and are really, I was on the brink of death. And then Will scooped me up, brushed me off, and said, ‘There’s a diamond somewhere under here.’ I always knew there was something better for me out there, but the question was, did I want to take the journey to get it? When Will came along, I had a reason.”

Having her husband as a supportive partner has made a tremendous difference in her ability to stay sober, and her sobriety has helped her life and career. Since dealing with her addictions, Pinkett Smith has had her biggest acting roles, directed her first film, started a band and released an album, written a children’s book, and established a charity to help inner city youth.

Find help. Pray for help. Reach Out. Don’t live another day without seeking freedom from what holds you back.

Paul Harvey’s warning to America: If I were the devil

Many years ago, a courageous and devoted American broadcast a message to his listeners that served as a harbinger for where the nation was headed societally and culturally. In his broadcast he revealed what he would do if he were “the devil,” to destroy our culture and undermine our collective societal standards and social mores. That man was Paul Harvey Aurdndt, affectionately known to the nation



simply as Paul Harvey, and his message not only has proven to be prophetic but serves as a warning to Americans today of where our society continues to trend.

Paul Harvey was a broadcaster who rendered daily news on the radio from the 1950s through the 1990s, and inspired generations of Americans with true stories of goodness and heroism with his daily, "The Rest of the Story." He was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 2005 for his contributions to the nation. At his peak, his broadcasts reached as many as 24 million listeners and readers, as 1,600 radio stations and 300 newspapers carried his program and columns across the nation.

One broadcast, which he titled, "If I Were the Devil," ran originally in 1964, but he updated it several times over the years, and the version detailed below aired in 1996. In Paul Harvey's own words, here is what he said he would do, if he "were the devil."

"If I were the prince of darkness, I would want to engulf the whole world in darkness. I'd have a third of its real estate and four-fifths of its population, but I would not be happy until I had seized the ripest apple on the tree — thee. **So, I would set about however necessary to take over the United States.**



"I'd subvert the churches first, and I would begin with a campaign of whispers. With the wisdom of a serpent, I would whisper to you as I whispered to Eve: 'Do as you please.'

"To the young, I would whisper that the Bible is a myth. I would convince the children that man created God instead of the other way around. I'd confide that what's bad is good and what's good is square. **And the old, I**

would teach to pray after me, 'Our Father, which art in Washington ...'

"Then, I'd get organized, I'd educate authors in how to make lurid literature exciting so that anything else would appear dull and uninteresting. I'd peddle narcotics to whom I could. I'd sell alcohol to ladies and gentlemen of distinction. I'd tranquilize the rest with pills.

"If I were the devil, I'd soon have families at war with themselves, churches at war with themselves and nations at war with themselves until each, in its turn, was consumed. **And with promises of higher ratings, I'd have mesmerizing media fanning the flames.**

"If I were the devil, I would encourage schools to refine young intellect but neglect to discipline emotions. I'd tell teachers to let those students run wild. And before you knew it, you'd have drug-sniffing dogs and metal detectors at every schoolhouse door. With a decade, I'd have prisons overflowing and judges promoting pornography. **Soon, I would evict God from the courthouse and the schoolhouse and then from the houses of Congress.** In his own churches, I would substitute psychology for religion and deify science. I'd lure priests and pastors into misusing boys and girls and church money.

"If I were the devil, I'd take from those who have and give to those who wanted until I had killed the incentive of the ambitious. What'll you bet I couldn't get whole states to promote gambling as the way to get rich?

"I'd convince the young that marriage is old-fashioned, that swinging is more fun and that what you see on television is the way to be. And thus, I could undress you in public and lure you into bed with diseases for which there are no cures.

"In other words, if I were the devil, I'd just keep right on doing what he's doing."

Everything Harvey saw as nascent trends back in the 60's has come to fruition. And realizing that many readers may not believe in the devil,

per se, doesn't change the fact that these portents have achieved fruition. Whether the causality is the adversary, other nefarious evil or injurious sources, or merely the result of wanton and hedonistic human nature, the culmination of these destructive trends in society has ripened dramatically in recent years.

Some benighted souls may interpret the dissolution of our most fundamental institutions, the defloration of our cultural mores, the rejection and denunciation of God, and the abandonment of standards of decency as "progress." But to any with even a modicum of conscience, ethical grounding, or even objectivity in assessing our social viability from a historical perspective, we've not evolved as a society; we've devolved. Not unlike previous great cultures before us.

As intellectual historian Gertrude Himmelfarb has summarized, "What was once stigmatized as deviant behavior is now tolerated and even sanctioned; what was once regarded as abnormal has been normalized. ... As deviancy is normalized, so what was once normal becomes deviant. The kind of family that has been regarded for centuries as natural and moral – the 'bourgeois' family as it is invidiously called – is now seen as pathological."

Alas, where do we go from here? Do we continue to plunge to new depths of degeneracy as a society, or do we rise as a phoenix, reversing our downward spiral to nihilism? The answer lies in each of us, individually and collectively, and whether we, by honest introspection and appraisal, acknowledge our own failures and shortcomings, and determine to do better.

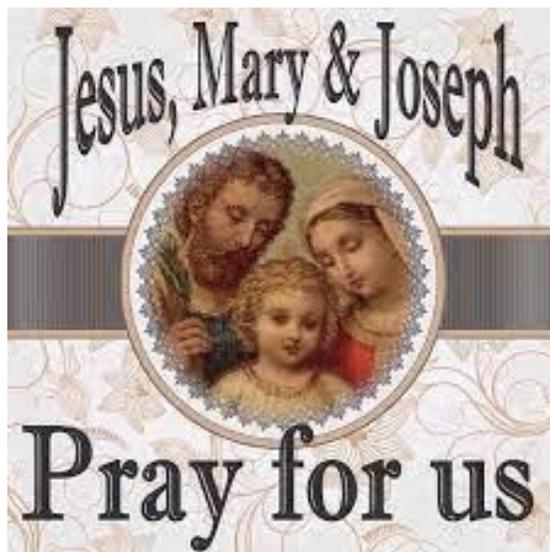
Woe to Those Who Say Good is Bad, and Bad is Good.

**Don't close your eyes and minds to think all is okay!
We Kill Babies; Legalize Drugs; Riot without
Consequences. Cause Race Hatred; Throw God Out of
Schools; Bring Fear Into the Nation by Any Means;
Suspend Common Sense. We are in a war with the devil
and his associates who are the Politicians; Media;
Hollywood Elites and others hiding under different labels.
Pray, Pray, Pray**

Know the fruit of the Tree...And you will see the Truth

This is not a time to be in fear. We are the children of the most High God and Jesus is our Savior. Trust in Jesus

Pray each day for your family. Even if it is just one Our Father and One Hail Mary.



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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.

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**I am watching over you. Pray my children,
Pray, Pray, Pray, My Rosary For The Salvation of
Sinners**



“... as for the cowardly, the faithless, the detestable, as for murderers, the sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars, their portion will be in the lake that burns with fire and sulfur, which is the second death.”

Revelation 21:8