



CWL

St. Catharines Diocese

Thursday, February 1, 2024



CWL Catholic Connections

National CWL: cwl.ca

ON Provincial CWL: cwl.on.ca

St. Catharines CWL: stcatharinescwl.ca

**CWL
President's Message**

Dear Members of the CWL,

Every year the first thing we say about Lent is "What are you giving up?". Not the meaning of Lent and why it is important never seems to come to mind. When I worked, it did not matter whether you believed or not, everyone just gave up something to see if they could do it. It was a challenge we all wanted to win.

However, as I get older, and I reflect giving up something is possibly not the route to take every year. Maybe we should focus more on challenging ourselves to pray more, go to Mass during the week, volunteer, read the Gospel daily. Maybe we should bring a meal to an elderly neighbour or drive someone to an appointment. Jesus gave his life for us. Lent should be the time we give to a greater purpose and practice our faith daily.

--Lisa Fillingham

Messages From Deedee Alexandre:

Quote for the Month:

The heart is the first organ in the human body to be formed. The heart symbolizes humility, for it is in the heart that this virtue has its principal seat: “Learn from me,” says the Lord, “for I am gentle and humble of heart.”

St. Anthony of Padua

Dear Ladies,

I hope that everyone has had a great beginning to the calendar year! The weather has certainly been all over the map--rain, rain, rain, snow, rain, snow...However, it looks like we're in for a spell of reasonable weather this coming week anyway.

Just a couple reminders now that it is February:

Wednesday, February 7: Diocesan Executive and Presidents Council meeting at 10 a.m. on Zoom

Thursday, February 8: final day to send in your cheque and register for the Lenten Retreats; Council Presidents should phone or e-mail Dina Marchionda with your total if your cheque is in the mail; she needs to contact Mount Carmel with final numbers; **please make this easy for Dina!**

Saturday, February 17 or Wednesday, February 21: Lenten Retreats-- 8 a.m.--registration opens; 9 a.m.--Retreat begins

Wednesday, March 6: Diocesan Executive and Presidents Council meeting at 10 a.m. on Zoom

Thursday, March 21: final day to send in your cheque and register for the CWL AMM

Tuesday, April 23: CWL AMM--Holiday Inn, Ontario Street, St. Catharines

Have a great month! Enjoy the Catholic Connections!

**The Catholic Women's League of Canada
St. Catharines Diocesan Council**

**66th Annual Diocesan
Annual Meeting of Members
(Convention)**



Holiday Inn and Suites Parkway
Conference Centre
327 Ontario Street, St. Catharines, Ontario

Tuesday, April 23, 2024

Guest Speaker	CWL ON-President	CWL National President	Banquet Keynote Speaker
Adelaine Nohara	Linda Squarzollo	Shari Quinta	Josephine Lombardi



AMM Registration: 7:45 a.m.-8:45 a.m. Tuesday, April 23, 2024

\$40.00: registration +

- lunch and day meeting = \$85.00
- banquet only = \$110.00
- full day--including banquet = \$150.00

**TO REGISTER,
PLEASE CONTACT
your
Parish Council
President!**

Please note: Vendors will be at the AMM Convention. The only **beverages** provided pre-AMM, at breaks, and at lunch are water, coffee, and tea; **no** juices, etc.

Registration Deadline: Thursday, March 21, 2024

What is the “sin of the have-nots against the

haves”?

The saints warn us that envy is a real threat to our spiritual lives.

The Catholic Company January 13, 2024

Catholic author Dorothy Sayers calls envy “the sin of the have-nots against the haves.”

Put another way, an envious person wants to see everyone else as miserable as he is. St. Thomas Aquinas writes, “Envy makes another’s good an evil to oneself.”

Born of pride, vanity, and distorted self-love, envy spawns hatred and misery. At its root, envy causes a person to feel lessened and humiliated when another is favored over himself.

This is the great sadness of envy: it turns the goodness of others into an occasion of misery, stripping one of Christian joy.



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...respect, or
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gratitude to another.

Though envy is a real threat to our souls, we are not without hope! Envy can be countered through the active practice of humility, vigilance against vanity, and the cultivation of friendship.

Humility is the best antidote to a myriad of sins, including envy, but it can be difficult to cultivate.

God wants you to waste your time

Our worth doesn't depend on our productivity.

RELIGION

ALICE CAMILLE

Published 5 hours ago January 4, 2024

What are you looking for? Jesus asks this question of his disciples, those who propose to fall in line behind him. It's a question we might ask more than we do. New Year's resolutions are a way to enter this question through the backdoor: Do we hope to be stronger, healthier, or just thinner? Do we want to pursue a virtuous life or just get our exterior act together?

For some of us, time may be running out to make the necessary changes. I became eligible for Medicare last year: More decades are behind me than ahead of me. So, what am I looking for from my time in this world, and what's the best way to pursue it?

Discernment, the name of this soul-searching decision-making process, isn't merely a New Year's activity. The church has long recommended a nightly examination of conscience to stay in touch with who we are becoming at the deepest level of our being. Contemplative prayer is another way to sit and listen as "heart speaks to heart": as your heart rests against the heart of God and seeks to imitate the divine rhythm. Some of us may have the means to go on an annual retreat for a weekend, a week, or longer. You may attend occasional days of recollection offered at spiritual centers. Or you may prefer to go camping and make it into a kind of pilgrimage into the presence of God in creation.

Depending on the stage of life where you happen to be perched, some discernment methods will be more accessible or attractive. When I started my career in church work, I had neither the time nor the money for retreats. But I could take long solitary walks through the city, and I did, gradually shrugging off all the busyness in my head until the "small, still voice" that saints and prophets hear could finally make itself understood.

Please don't imagine I rank up there with saints and prophets. I didn't always empty my brain or attain inner stillness even after hours and miles of walking. What Buddhist teachers call "monkey mind" is my natural state: thoughts swinging from vine to vine through a jungle of trivia both practical and pointless. I'm a planner and a worrier. I go from making a mental note to buy a new toothbrush to wondering if this ache in my jaw is something serious to deciding I should see a bone specialist—and to update my will, just in case.

These days, I have more time—or perhaps choose to make more time—to sit still and “waste time with God,” as an old spiritual director used to recommend in my more frantic periods. Back then, wasting time sounded to me like sloth, one of the seven deadly sins. I couldn’t imagine doing that or that God would actually waste time with me, though God has all of eternity to dispose of. Surely God has more vital things to do in the universe than hang out with me while my monkey mind leaps from tree to tree thinking about family and work and what’s for supper tonight.

Family, work, and supper remain concerning. But in the Medicare years, I’ve finally accepted that I’m not as essential to the machinery of the cosmos as I once believed. As a writer, I would get anxious when a moment of genius visited me in the supermarket, and I had no means with which to record the insight before it was lost forever. An older and wiser writer assured me that visitations of genius have very little to do with writing, and no phrase is so perfect that losing it will do the universe any harm.

So, I’ve managed to make friends with stillness and no longer confuse doing nothing with laziness. “Wasting time with God” is a down payment on eternity after all, a temporal trust walk that suggests we believe God will supply all the time we need to get all that’s needed done.

Hoarding our mortal time as so precious that we can’t waste it on God in stillness is an indication that we don’t really believe all the stuff we pretend to profess. Which is why, on those many occasions in which I find myself standing in the middle of a room, torn between separately screaming tasks and unsure which direction to move, I sometimes hear

an inner voice shout: “Sit down!” And I do. The busier you are, the more nothing you need to be doing. This is the only wisdom I have to impart on the subject of discernment: Do more nothing.

We’re so persuaded that being productive is the justification of our existence. No surprise there: From the beginning, everything in our experience tells us this is so. Parents demand that we do our chores or clean up our rooms. In our formative years, teachers and tests and mounds of homework stare us in the face. Years of education are followed by decades in the workforce. Now parents ourselves, we raise children while struggling to keep up with housework, errands, meal preparation. Getting stuff done is why we are here—isn’t it?

Then comes the question: But what if we’re getting the wrong stuff done? What if the most important stuff languishes while we do another load of laundry and boil another pot of rice? This is the moment when that question of Jesus to would-be disciples might invade our thoughts: What are you looking for? It’s the discernment question, the one that tells us where to aim this journey of ours and to course correct if need be. To course correct as needed, more likely. Because it seems we’re always drifting off into some random territory while fixated on doing the laundry or making the rice.

Monks learn that it’s possible to chop wood and carry water and do so prayerfully. They don’t have to stop and say formal prayers—though in fact they choose to pause for prayer at many hours of the day and do it with full presence and mindfulness, as if it were a new encounter each time. Which it is. Some of us like to say our work is our prayer, and that’s

not entirely wrong—so long as we don't substitute wood-chopping and water-carrying for the real thing.

Our work can become prayer only after the spirit of prayer invades our bones and takes over the jungle of our thoughts. It's only after sitting in stillness, leaning into the holy presence as the beloved disciple leans into Jesus at the Last Supper, with mortal heart beating against divine heart, learning the divine rhythm in our whole being, that we can dare to make the claim that what we do the rest of our time is an incarnation of prayer.

What are you and I looking for? What are our lives about? It's certainly good to have clean clothes and regular meals, to make a living and pay bills. For believers, life includes saying prayers and going to church, sharing our resources with others in need. But that's just the tiniest bit of what it means to follow Jesus. Discipleship fundamentally involves being a healing presence for the sick, lonely, and sorrowful. Being summoned to show compassion, to forgive offenses, to insist on justice.

We're here to love, bring peace, inspire hope, share joy, and make captives free. If that doesn't sound like what we're doing, now's a good time to sit awhile and discern the path we're on.

Life is so busy. How can I find time to pray?"

With all the obligations in our lives, it's tempting to leave prayer till tomorrow. And then forget about it. How can we make time for prayer?

The Catholic Company--January 24, 2024

**If we don't take time to pray, we could not do this work.
—Mother Teresa**

If anyone in the world might have seemed to have an excuse for “not having time to pray,” it was Mother Teresa and her tireless sisters in the Missionaries of Charity.

But Mother Teresa never allowed any amount of work to encroach on her prayer time or that of her sisters. The good Mother knew that, without prayer, everything else failed.



Prayer is the heart of every Christian life—not just that of religious orders. If you take the heart out, the body will die. If you make the heart stronger, the body will be stronger. If you make greater demands on the body, the heart needs to be extra-strong.

It's easy to sideline prayer amidst the constant demands of work, family, school, and other practical things, but if we aren't praying, every aspect of our lives suffers.

One way to make prayer a consistent practice is to schedule regular prayer time for yourself at home. A holy hour at home—perhaps weekly, perhaps biweekly—can keep you centered and spiritually strong, even if the pace of life seems overwhelming at times. It'll

Saint Thomas Aquinas' Remedies for Sadness

- 1 **Indulge** in something you like.
- 2 Give yourself a **good cry**.
- 3 **Share your sorrow** with a friend.
- 4 Contemplate the **truth**.
- 5 **Rest and bathe**.

churchpop.com



help you to keep praying even if you can't make a holy hour in church as often as you'd like to. Every moment of every day can be united to Christ through prayer. While constant prayer can seem a daunting proposition, it can be achieved with some guidance and grace.

Netflix series 'Mysteries of the Faith' shows power of Catholic relics

[CULTURE](#)



THE
NATIONAL
CATHOLIC
REPORTER--
JAN. 27, 2024

A priest carries the crown of thorns in an image from the Netflix series

"Mysteries of the Faith." The relic, held at Notre Dame Cathedral in Paris since the French Revolution, was quickly retrieved from the church when a fire started there April 15, 2019.



BY MACIE SWEET

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What is the power of belief? And how do fragments from the distant past hold and shape this belief? These questions are at the heart of the four-part Netflix series "[Mysteries of the Faith](#)," which examines the role of relics in the Catholic Church today.

Each episode highlights a specific passion relic, or object, that Jesus interacted with during his death on the cross or in his tomb. explaining its story, past and present, often shrouded in legend. The series also features the people who care for and venerate these sacred objects. Well-suited for both novice and practiced devotee, the series provides detailed explanations about relics themselves and their significance without losing sight of their personal impact.

The first episode centers on Jesus' crown of thorns and its momentous history. Beginning at the cross as a symbol of mockery, it later became imbued with meaning as an object stained by Jesus' blood, providing a special connection to that holy moment in time. The crown's later passage from Constantinople to France is artfully narrated through stained glass depictions in [St.-Chapelle](#) in Paris, where it resided until the 18th century, finally moving to its contemporary residence in the [Notre Dame Cathedral](#) after the French Revolution.

The contemporary significance and emotional resonance of the crown of thorns is highlighted by the April 15, 2019, [fire](#) that spread throughout Notre Dame. The Paris fire chief explains how this relic was the [first item to be retrieved](#), despite firefighters having no direct map to its location, given its unique holiness. Through its safe



retrieval from the flames, the relic became a new symbol of hope and the perseverance of faith amidst tragedy.

A priest carries a relic during a procession in an image from the Netflix series "Mysteries of the Faith." (NCR screenshot/YouTube/Netflix)

The second episode examines what happens when the histories of these relics become contested. While most people would associate the [Holy Grail](#) from the Last Supper with medieval lore and King Arthur, this episode places the grail in Spain, where three local historians debate its current location, two placing it in the Valencia Cathedral and one in León, where it is known as the Chalice of Urraca.

While the history and location of the chalice itself may be disputed, both draw the attention and faith of devotees, raising questions concerning the importance of historical authenticity in matters of faith. There is a particularly touching moment as a historian recounts a woman who approached her, wanting to touch the hands of someone who worked with the Holy Grail.

This episode also depicts the role of miracles and their

connection to relics. Rocco Rulli, a Manoppello resident, shares how the relic of the Holy Face, Christ's resurrection veil, has protected his family throughout generations, most notably when his daughter Francesca was healed from a fatal brain hemorrhage 24 hours after a special Mass was celebrated for her.

Francesca prefers to call it a gift among many gifts rather than a miracle, saying in an interview, "I believe that the Holy Face saves my life every day." The next scene presents her father in the processional carrying the grand display of the Holy Face, demonstrating the integration of these relics into the everyday moments of life as well as the most significant.

The third episode moves to the cross itself as the most prominent icon of Christianity. The history of the relic of the True Cross begins with Empress Helena in the fourth century, her pilgrimage to Jerusalem and the discovery of the True Cross being revealed in three parts and placed on it. Once the relic is divided into three parts, each piece carrying the full power of the whole cross.



The relic known as the Holy Face is seen in an image from the Netflix series "Mysteries of the Faith." (NCR screenshot/YouTube/Netflix)

Shifting to present day, the episode highlights a canon in the Rio de Janeiro Cathedral, Cláudio dos Santos, who wants to utilize the relic of the True Cross as an evangelization tool, taking it out of the cathedrals and into the favelas, areas stricken by poverty and gang violence. As the procession moves through the streets, a woman from the community describes how the cross garnered reverence from everyone gathered. Even gangsters bowed their heads.

The final episode tackles the question of modern-day saints, beginning with the story of an Italian judge, Rosario Livatino, who spent his life fighting corruption but was murdered by mobsters in 1990. While the process of beatification began shortly after his death, he was officially declared a martyr by Pope Francis in 2020. His blood-stained shirt was preserved by the cathedral in Agrigento, becoming a modern relic of the Catholic Church. Livatino's life and death embodies Pope Francis' call for the necessity of everyday saints, the people who comprise the living blood of the church.

This episode also examines questions of authenticity surrounding the veil of the Holy Face and the shroud of Turin. While in both cases, scientific examination declared them fake, the transcendent quality of belief surpasses scientific scrutiny. Don Gero, custodian of Livatino's Holy Shirt, states, "Every time I hold the relic in my hands, it sends a shiver down my spine. A thousand

thoughts go through my mind about how, despite all the difficulties we encounter in life, holiness is within reach ... A bloodied shirt with two bullet holes speaks to a teen without the need for words."

Whether voiced through historians and scholars, or priests and devotees, this series gestures toward an innate human need for belief, for miracles, and the power of relics to provide a physical touchpoint, something to behold and connect one more directly to the passion of Jesus Christ. Each episode highlights the intricate care these objects receive, their storage in vaults, various caretakers who spend their lives guarding these relics, and the select few who touch them, carefully placing them on altars or holding them during processions.

Although "Mysteries of the Faith" is ostensibly about various relics connected to Jesus and their multifaceted histories, it is equally about the people who worship them, the strength of their faith in these sacred objects and the ways it shapes their lives.

While this show is not explicitly religious or affiliated with the Catholic Church, it foregrounds the perspective of believers over skeptics. Commentary from academics provides historical background and context as well as the psychological and spiritual impetus for belief.

Like the relics themselves, "Mysteries of the Faith"

brings together past and present, as the historical journeys of these sacred objects narrated by historians are set alongside current worship practices. The moving scenes of people in the presence of these sacred objects and miracle stories make a compelling case that relics are not simply things of the past, but powerful sources of belief even today.

Ultimate guide to wedding anniversaries from 1 to 100 years!



[Cerith Gardiner](#) - published on
01/23/24

Aleteia helps you discover the 100 different themes and symbols to celebrate marriages up to a century long!

It's so important to celebrate a wedding anniversary — especially when you consider how many marriages end in divorce these days. A wedding anniversary allows a couple to reflect on their love for each other, and their family. And hopefully these special occasions will be plentiful throughout a couple's lives.

Therefore, in order to help a husband and wife celebrate their commitment to each other over the years, we have listed the main anniversaries below with their theme, and what this symbolizes in marriage.

Why you may want to buy more commercial gifts based on the theme itself, **we've also included Catholic inspired ideas that highlight the religious aspect of marriage.**

Themes to celebrate for 1 to 10 years of marriage

First Anniversary – Paper: “A Sacred Script”



Celebrate your first year with a theme centered around the sacred bond written on the pages of your shared story. Gift each other personalized prayer journals or beautiful stationery for writing love

notes.

Second Anniversary – Cotton: “Wrapped in Love”

Cotton symbolizes comfort and durability. Consider exchanging cozy, custom-made blankets or embroidered linens. Share your favorite Bible verses about love as you snuggle up together.

Third Anniversary – Leather: “Together in Faith”

Embrace the durability of leather, symbolizing the strength of your marriage, with leather-bound Bibles or journals. Consider a weekend retreat or pilgrimage to deepen your faith.

Fourth Anniversary – Fruit/Flowers: “Blossoming Relationship”

Celebrate with flowers that symbolize the beauty of your relationship. Attend a flower arranging class together, or plant a symbolic tree or garden at your home.

Fifth Anniversary – Wood: “Deeply Rooted”

Explore the symbolism of a strong and enduring marriage, like a sturdy oak tree, and maybe plant a tree together or commission a wooden artwork with a meaningful Bible verse.

Sixth Anniversary – Iron: “Forged in Faith”

Reflect on the strength of your union as it’s “forged” over six years. Gift iron home decor or plan a visit to a historic church with ironwork. Attend a marriage enrichment program or retreat.

Seventh Anniversary – Wool/Copper: “Warmth of Love”

Wool and copper signify warmth. Gift cozy wool blankets or copper cookware for the kitchen. You could also attend a couples’ cooking class featuring recipes inspired by biblical feasts.

Eighth Anniversary – Bronze/Pottery: “Sculpted by God”

Celebrate with bronze or pottery, representing fortitude and flexibility. Consider taking a pottery class together or gifting each other handcrafted religious sculptures or art.

Ninth Anniversary – Willow: “Bending, Not Breaking”

Willow represents flexibility and resilience. Invest in a piece of willow furniture or plan a serene picnic by a willow tree. Reflect on how your marriage has adapted and grown.

Tenth Anniversary – Tin/Aluminum: “A Decade of Endurance”

Tin and aluminum symbolize the durability of a decade-long commitment. Gift personalized tin or aluminum items and consider renewing your vows in a church ceremony with close family and friends.

Themes to celebrate for 11 to 20 years of marriage

11th Anniversary – Steel: “Solid as Steel, Strong in Faith”

Steel represents strength and durability. You could give each other personalized steel jewelry or plan a weekend getaway to a historic cathedral or religious site known for its steel structures.

12th Anniversary – Silk/Linen: “Wrapped in Heavenly Love”

Embrace the luxurious feel of silk and linen. Exchange beautifully crafted silk or linen religious artwork or attend a religious concert in your area, wrapping yourselves in the heavenly joy of music.

13th Anniversary – Lace: “Woven in Gratitude”

Lace symbolizes intricate beauty. Renew your vows in a lace-themed ceremony at your parish or exchange lace-themed gifts, such as embroidered religious linens or lace rosaries.

14th Anniversary – Ivory: “Pure Delight”

While traditional ivory is not encouraged, you can celebrate with the symbolism of purity. Give each other devotional ivory-colored items, such as a Bible or prayer candles.

15th Anniversary – Crystal: “Clear Vision of Love”

Celebrate your crystal anniversary with a clear vision of your love. Attend a spiritual retreat together, or exchange crystal rosaries to strengthen your commitment to faith.

16th Anniversary – Silver Holloware: “Polished by Commitment”

Silver holloware represents refinement. Gift each other silver religious items, such as engraved chalices or candle holders. Attend a solemn Mass together, polished by the love and grace of your journey.

17th Anniversary – Furniture: “Building Our Sanctuary”

Furniture symbolizes comfort and stability. Consider buying a piece of furniture for your home, like a prayer kneeler or a religiously inspired artwork. Revisit the church where you got married.

18th Anniversary – Porcelain: “A Delicate Bond”

Porcelain signifies delicacy and grace. Gift each other delicate porcelain religious figurines or plan a quiet evening at home with a homemade dinner served on porcelain plates.

19th Anniversary – Bronze: “Strength in Unity”

Reflect on the strength of your unity with bronze-themed gifts. Attend a spiritual workshop together or visit a bronze statue of a saint.

20th Anniversary – China: “Building a Spiritual Dynasty”

Celebrate two decades with a theme of building a spiritual dynasty. Exchange china plates or cups with religious motifs. Plan a special dinner with a priest, reflecting on your journey and seeking guidance for the future.

Themes to celebrate for 21 to 30 years of marriage

21st Anniversary – Brass/Nickel: “Everlasting Harmony”

Brass and nickel symbolize durability and harmony. Gift each other brass or nickel religious artifacts, like a customized family Bible or a

beautifully crafted religious music box.

22nd Anniversary – Copper: “Rooted in Faith”

Revisit the symbolism of copper, representing strength and flexibility. Plan a pilgrimage to a holy site with copper elements or exchange personalized copper rosaries.

23rd Anniversary – Silver Plate: “Polished Blessings”

Silver plate signifies refinement. Offer each other engraved silver-plated religious items, such as a family Bible or a decorative cross. Attend a Mass of thanksgiving for the blessings in your marriage.

24th Anniversary – Opal: “Radiant Love”

Opal represents radiant love. Opal-themed religious jewelry would make great gifts, or plan a romantic evening under the stars, reflecting on the radiance of your love in God’s eyes.

25th Anniversary – Silver: “Jubilee of Renewal”

Celebrate your silver jubilee with renewed commitment. Attend a special Mass, renew your vows, and exchange silver-themed religious gifts like engraved crosses or silver rosaries.

26th Anniversary – Original Pictures: “Painting Our Love Story”

Original pictures symbolize uniqueness. Consider commissioning an artist to paint a portrait of your family or a religious scene significant to your marriage. Share the story behind the painting during a family gathering.

27th Anniversary – Sculpture: “Sculpted by Devotion”

Sculpture represents molding and shaping. Gift each other religious sculptures or plan a visit to a museum featuring Christian sculptures. Attend a sculpting class together for a fun and unique experience.

28th Anniversary – Orchids: “Blossoming in Hope”

Orchids signify beauty and strength. Gift each other orchids, or orchid-themed religious decor or attend a spiritual retreat in a serene location surrounded by orchids.

29th Anniversary – Furniture: “Enhancing Our Spiritual Home”

Reflect on your journey by revisiting the furniture theme. Buy a piece of furniture with religious significance, like a prayer bench or a family altar. Attend a Mass together at a church that holds special memories.

30th Anniversary – Pearl: “Pearls of Wisdom and Love”

Celebrate three decades with the wisdom pearls bring. Exchange pearl-themed religious jewelry or plan a weekend getaway to a seaside retreat to renew your commitment surrounded by the symbolism of pearls.

Themes to celebrate for 31 to 40 years of marriage



31st Anniversary – Timepieces: “Timeless Love”

Celebrate the passing of time with timepiece-themed gifts. Buy each other engraved pocket watches or wall clocks with a biblical verse about enduring love.

32nd Anniversary – Conveyances: “Intimate Journey”

Conveyances represent the journey. Plan a pilgrimage together or exchange gifts related to your spiritual journey, such as a map with marked significant locations in your faith.

33rd Anniversary – Amethyst: “Radiant Spirituality”

Amethyst symbolizes spirituality and radiance. Gift each other amethyst-themed religious items, like jewelry or home decor. Attend a spiritual retreat to deepen your connection.

34th Anniversary – Opal: “Harmony in Holiness”

Revisit the opal theme, emphasizing the harmony in your holiness. Opal-themed religious art would make for a special gift, or attend a

church concert to experience the harmonious beauty of sacred music.

35th Anniversary – Coral: “Building on a Solid Foundation”

Coral symbolizes the foundation of a relationship. Exchange coral-themed religious items, like coral-colored rosaries or home decor. Reflect on the solid foundation your faith has provided.

36th Anniversary – Bone China: “Delicate Endurance”

Bone china represents both fragility and strength. Gift each other bone china religious figurines or enjoy a delicate dinner together served on bone china, reflecting on the strength that comes from vulnerability.

37th Anniversary – Alabaster: “Radiant Transcendence”

Alabaster signifies spiritual transcendence. Offer each other alabaster religious sculptures or attend a church service where the light plays on alabaster windows.

38th Anniversary – Beryl: “Clarity in Commitment”

Beryl symbolizes clarity and commitment. Exchange beryl-themed gifts, such as jewelry or decor. Attend a marriage enrichment program together, gaining clarity on your commitment.

39th Anniversary – Lace: “Intricate Blessings”

Revisit the lace theme, emphasizing the intricate blessings of your marriage. Gift each other lace-themed religious items or plan a renewal of vows ceremony with lace accents.

40th Anniversary – Ruby: “40 Years of Passionate Love”

Celebrate four decades with the passion of rubies. Exchange ruby-

themed religious jewelry or plan a romantic weekend getaway, reflecting on the passionate love that has sustained your marriage.



**Themes
to
celebrate
for 41 to
50 years
of
marriage**

41st Anniversary – Land: “Fruitful Harvest”

Land symbolizes a fruitful harvest. Consider buying each other items related to gardening or plan a visit to a vineyard or orchard. Reflect on the fruitful harvest of love and blessings in your marriage.

42nd Anniversary – Real Estate: “Giving Thanks for Our Sanctuary”

Embrace the real estate theme by reflecting on your spiritual home. Gift each other religious home decor or plan a visit to a significant church or religious site that holds a special place in your hearts.

43rd Anniversary – Travel: “The Journey Continues”

Celebrate the theme of travel by planning a spiritual journey together.

Attend a religious conference or pilgrimage, or exchange gifts related to your future spiritual adventures.

44th Anniversary – Groceries: “Nourishing Love”

Groceries symbolize the daily nourishment of love. Gift each other a basket of your favorite snacks or plan a special dinner with dishes inspired by biblical feasts.

45th Anniversary – Sapphire: “Receiving Divine Wisdom”

Sapphire represents divine wisdom. Exchange sapphire-themed religious jewelry or attend a lecture or workshop on spiritual wisdom together.

46th Anniversary – Original Poetry: “Verses of Devotion”

Original poetry signifies uniqueness and expression. Write each other love poems or hire a poet to create personalized verses capturing the essence of your journey. Share them in a private setting.

47th Anniversary – Books: “Chapters of Love”

Celebrate the theme of books by exchanging books with spiritual or deeply human themes or attending a literary book fair. Consider reaffirming your vows in a small ceremony with close family and friends, each reading a chosen passage.

48th Anniversary – Optical Goods: “Seeing the Beauty of the Other Clearly”

Optical goods symbolize clear vision. Gift each other items related to clear vision, such as personalized religious art or eyeglasses. Attend a church service where clarity of vision is emphasized.

49th Anniversary – Luxury Goods: “Luxuriant Union”

Celebrate with the theme of luxury goods by exchanging fine religious items, such as gold-trimmed religious decor or a special religious retreat in a beautiful setting.

Themes to celebrate for 50 to 100 years of marriage

50th Anniversary – Gold: “A Golden Legacy of Love”

Mark half a century with the golden theme. Exchange gold-themed religious jewelry, attend a special Mass, and consider renewing your vows in a grand ceremony surrounded by family and friends.

55th Anniversary – Emerald: “Evergreen Glory”

Celebrate with emerald-themed gifts, symbolizing how thankful you always are to God for the gift of your marriage. Exchange emerald-colored rosaries or plan a special garden outing surrounded by the vibrant greenery. You could even hop across the pond to the Emerald Isle for a romantic getaway!

60th Anniversary – Diamond: “Shining in Divine Love”

Mark the diamond anniversary with gifts that reflect the shining light of divine love. Attend a Mass together, renew your vows, and exchange diamond-themed religious jewelry.

65th Anniversary – Blue Sapphire: “Serenity in the Spirit”

Sapphire represents serenity and faith. Gift each other blue sapphire-themed religious items, like artwork or jewelry. Spend a peaceful day at a serene location, reflecting on your journey.

70th Anniversary – Platinum: “Platinum Blessings”

Celebrate with platinum-themed blessings. Exchange platinum-colored religious decor or attend a platinum-themed church event. Reflect on the rare and precious nature of your enduring love.

75th Anniversary – Diamond: “Diamond Jubilee of Grace”

The second diamond anniversary signifies a jubilee of grace. Attend a special Mass of thanksgiving, renew your vows, and exchange diamond-themed religious gifts.

80th Anniversary – Oak: “In the Grove of Eternal Love”

Oak symbolizes strength and endurance. Gift each other oak-themed religious items or plan a visit to a historic oak tree. Reflect on the enduring strength of your love.

85th Anniversary – Moonstone: “Reflecting a Lifetime of Tenderness”

Moonstone represents reflection and balance. Exchange moonstone-themed religious decor or jewelry. Spend a day reflecting on your lifetime of love, perhaps under the moonlight.

90th Anniversary – Granite: “Blessed with a Solid Foundation”

Celebrate with the theme of granite, symbolizing a solid foundation. Gift each other granite-themed religious sculptures or decor. Attend a Mass together, focusing on the strength of your foundation.

95th Anniversary – Star Sapphire: “Guided by Heavenly Stars”

Star sapphire signifies guidance and divine connection. Exchange star

sapphire-themed religious items or gaze at the stars together, reflecting on the heavenly guidance in your marriage and how it reflects God's eternal love for each of you.

100th Anniversary – Platinum: “Centennial Celebration of Love”

Reaching a century calls for a platinum celebration! Plan a grand ceremony, attend a Mass of thanksgiving, and exchange platinum-themed religious gifts. Share your wisdom with younger generations, passing on a legacy of enduring love.

God has a special mission for you –

discover your vocation!

[Karen Hutch](#) - published on 01/21/24--Aleteia



Have you ever wondered for what purpose God made you? Have you been uncertain how to discover the perfect plan

God is calling you to?

If you've wondered what mission God has in store for you, then you're in the right place. In the book of Isaiah we are told: "I have called you by name and you are mine" (Isaiah 43:1).

The call

Throughout our lives we experience multiple callings. This series of calls is part of our vocation, a word that comes from the Latin word *vocare*, which means to call.

The first call from God is when he **calls us into existence**. We've all been called as human beings, men or women, each of us in a different context and in a particular geographical area.

This isn't our only calling; rather, it helps set the stage for **where we will discover our mission in life as we grow and evolve**.

Fr. Alfonso Navarro, in his book *Misión en el mundo* ("Mission

in the World”), points out that we often reduce the meaning of “vocation” to religious vocations. When we do so, we aren’t considering the **different calls that God has for each one of us in different states of life**. Some people are called to marriage or to a particular profession for the common good, such as medicine, social work, etc.

As we grow we discover our vocation through our talents and abilities. Fr. Alfonso explains that we carry in our physical and



psychological makeup a specific directionality that will make us **feel inclined towards a certain path**.

But to discover what this path is, **God not only calls us, but also equips us and sends us**. Just as we prepare ourselves in our studies for an exam or an important interview, in the same way God equips us for the mission to which we are called.

Nothing is by chance. The place where we find ourselves and our physical and intellectual traits are part of our mission, because **God already had it in mind before we were born**.

Here are some tips to help us discover and follow our mission in life:

1

DISCOVER WHAT YOU'RE MADE FOR

How can we discover our mission? Fr. Alfonso Navarro recommends that we do it in the light of the Gospel. Reading and meditating on Sacred Scripture can lead to inspiration in our heart.

It can help to write down our talents and abilities and ask the Holy Spirit to guide us and show us the path.

2

ACCEPT THE MISSION

Jesus says: “As the Father has sent me, so I send you” (Jn 20:21). This shows us that even Jesus himself had a mission: our salvation. He saved us because he accepted the mission the Father gave him. What would’ve happened if he hadn’t said “yes” to his mission? In the same way, Jesus sends his disciples, including us. It’s a great responsibility, but also a privilege. We can’t imagine all that God can do through us if we cooperate with him by accepting our mission!

3

EQUIP YOURSELF FOR THE MISSION

We can strengthen ourselves and prepare for our mission in life by forming our good habits, practicing virtues with constancy, and serving others. This requires daily prayer and making an intentional effort to form ourselves.

It’s highly recommendable to seek a spiritual director to help us in the process of our vocational discernment.

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Do Catholics really pray “to” statues?

Many people outside the Church misunderstand the Catholic use of (and love for) statues.

No, Catholics don't worship statues or pray to them.

That would be either idolatry at worst or, at best, just a silly thing to do.

Catholics use statues and images as visual reminders of the people they represent.



It's similar to keeping a picture of our family in our wallet or on the wall. None of us actually treat the photo as being the actual people depicted: it's simply valuable as a reminder of them. We may touch the image fondly, or even kiss it—but that touch or kiss is for the absent person, not the image itself.

We likewise use statues as reminders of God, Our Lady, and the saints when we pray. Since we are creatures of sense, physical representations help us to focus our thoughts and prayers on God or the person to whom we are praying.

Images also convey for us critical aspects of the Faith. For example, an image of Our Lady and her Child illustrates for us their closeness and love. Michelangelo's magnificent *Pietà* pulls us into the sorrow of this Mother and the awful concept of the dead Son of God. Crucifixes help us to meditate in a profound way on Our Lord's terrible sufferings.

Additionally, beautiful depictions of holy people and events are good for our imaginations which, in this age, are constantly besieged by ugly and sinful images. Sacred art fortifies our imaginations with holiness and beauty, providing a crucial antidote to the assaults of the world.

So how about a statue to assist you in prayer, remind you of a beloved saint, and inspire your imagination?



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--Father Mike Schmitz

Why Were the Samaritans So Hated?

<https://youtu.be/KuKbgqIiDds?si=OeZyqDqwowpLgy7i>



Passed Away:

a) Bernice Kramer: January 15, 2024; the Cathedral of St. Catherine of Alexandria--14 years of service

b) Carmella Calaguero: January 17, 2024; Our Lady of the Scapular--65 years of service

Just a Gentle Reminder!

When a CWL member passes away, there is a completed form that needs to be sent to Deedee Alexandre: deedeealexandre321@gmail.com and to debbiepine@royalpage.ca

Thank you.

The Church lists the corporal works of mercy as follows:

1. **Feeding the hungry**
2. **Giving drink to the thirsty**
3. **Sheltering the homeless**
4. **Clothing the naked**
5. **Visiting the sick**
6. **Visiting the imprisoned** (sometimes listed as “ransoming the captive”)
7. **Burying the dead**

The Church lists the spiritual works of mercy as follows:

1. **To instruct the ignorant**
2. **To counsel the doubtful**
3. **To admonish sinners**
4. **To bear wrongs patiently**
5. **To forgive offenses willingly**
6. **To comfort the afflicted**
7. **To pray for the living and the dead**

CWL Executive: 2022-2024

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~the end~