

PRAYERS IN THE PEW™ MONTHLY

FAITH IN ACTION CALENDAR / HIGHLIGHTS

FRI MAR 17 St. Patrick, Bishop and Patron of Ireland

SAT MAR 25 Solemnity of the Annunciation of Mary

SAT MAR 29 Knights of Columbus Founder's Day

Faith Formation Companion to Prayers in the Pew™

→ MONTHLY SYNOPSIS ←

March 2023 – Lent takes up the whole month of March this year, which makes it a time of preparation and deep listening to the voice of the Lord. Lent is also a penitential season in which we aim to overcome our worldly tendencies and strengthen our spiritual lives. To help us do that, we feature the Daily Offering as a form of self-surrender to the Lord each day. It is a regular reminder that we are children of God and of His Church.

THE DAILY OFFERING

It has been a pious tradition throughout Church history for the faithful to make an offering of themselves and their activities to the Lord at the beginning of each day. Catholics consecrate every aspect of our lives (works, prayers, joys and sufferings) to Christ at the first waking moment of the day with the intention of living our Christian vocation to the fullest.

The great monastic religious orders developed a system of prayer throughout the day, which is called the *Liturgy of the Hours*. It is essentially a structured regimen of psalms to be prayed at regular times (hours) during the course of the day. Catholic clergy and religious are required to pray an abbreviated form of this monastic prayer (they use a book called a *breviary* for that reason).

But the laity are not deprived of this beautiful prayer tradition either! A French Jesuit, Fr. Francois Xavier Gautrelet, composed a Morning Offering (also called the Daily Offering) in 1844, which has become well-known for its simplicity and beauty. He established a ministry called

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the Apostleship of Prayer, which even today propagates the Daily Offering as well as all of the prayer intentions of the Holy Father.

As you pray this Offering, keep in mind that you are united with the entire Church at prayer, from the most pious nun and monk in their monasteries to the simplest believers on all five continents:

THE DAILY OFFERING

*Jesus, through the Immaculate Heart of Mary,
I offer you my works, prayers, joys and sufferings
of this day for all the intentions of your Sacred Heart.
I offer them in union with the Holy Sacrifice of
the Mass throughout the world, in reparation
for my sins, for the intentions of all my relatives and
friends, and in particular for the intentions
of the Holy Father. Amen.*

Pope Benedict XVI reminded us that this practice of “offering up” the sacrifices of the day is a way of participating in Christ’s ongoing redemption of the world. Do yourself a spiritual favor and take the time to learn this beautiful prayer by heart. Allow it – through daily recitation – to transform your faith practice from a simple Sunday obligation to a continual offering of yourself to God from the first moment of every day.

SPIRITUAL CHALLENGE

During the Lenten Season I challenge you to make the Daily Offering a habit in your life. I challenge you to memorize this short prayer! By increasing our habit of offering our words, actions, prayers and sufferings to the Lord on a daily basis, we become His instruments and grow in holiness.

- CA State Chaplain, Father John P. Grace, OSA

BIBLE BASICS



It's amazing how many references to morning prayer there are in the Bible. (Morning is the best time to make the Daily Offering).

Abraham (Gen 19:27), Jacob (Gen 28:16), Moses (Gen 34:4), Joshua (Josh 6:15), the Prophet Samuel's parents (1 Sam 1:19), among others, give us a view that prayer and worship in the morning was a regular habit of God's people. The Psalms are also full of references to prayer in the early hours (Psalms 5, 57, 90, 119, 143). Above all, Jesus Himself "rose early in the morning" to pray to His Father (Mt 28:1; Mk 51:35) giving us our best example of the Daily Offering of self to the mission of the Father.

FAITH FUNDAMENTALS



The Precepts of the Church

Our *Catechism* says that the moral life is "bound to and nourished by liturgical life" (CCC, 2041). The liturgy is literally the spiritual lifeblood of the Church, which is the nourishment for our own individual spiritual lives.

This is why the five precepts of the Church are all related to liturgy or sacraments. The precepts are not moral commandments as such but the natural responsibilities that come with membership in our Church. They are reminders to put into practice the fundamentals of our faith. (We often need reminders, even about important things!)

- 1 You shall attend mass on Sundays and holidays of obligation.
- 2 You shall confess your sins at least once a year.
- 3 You shall humbly receive your creator in Holy Communion at least during the Easter season.
- 4 You shall keep the holy days of obligation.
- 5 You shall observe the prescribed days of fasting and abstinence.

CATECHISM CONNECTION



2033 From generation to generation, under the aegis and vigilance of the pastors... Christian moral teaching has been handed on, a deposit composed of a characteristic body of rules, commandments, and virtues proceeding from faith in Christ and animated by charity.

2041 The precepts of the Church are set in the context of a moral life bound to and nourished by liturgical life. The obligatory character of these positive laws decreed by the pastoral authorities is meant to guarantee to the faithful the very necessary minimum in the spirit of prayer and moral effort, in the growth in love of God and neighbor.

CALENDAR OF FAITH | MARCH

MAR 3 <i>Fri</i>	St. Katherine Drexel, Virgin and Founder of Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament
MAR 4 <i>Sat</i>	St. Casimir, Confessor
MAR 7 <i>Tue</i>	Saints Perpetua and Felicity, Martyrs
MAR 8 <i>Wed</i>	Saint John of God, Religious
MAR 9 <i>Thu</i>	St. Frances of Rome, Religious
MAR 17 <i>Fri</i>	St. Patrick, Bishop and Patron of Ireland
MAR 18 <i>Sat</i>	St. Cyril of Jerusalem, Bishop and Doctor of the Church
MAR 19 <i>Tue</i>	SOLEMNITY OF ST. JOSEPH, HUSBAND OF MARY
MAR 23 <i>Thu</i>	St. Turibius de Mongrovejo, Bishop
MAR 25 <i>Sat</i>	SOLEMNITY OF THE ANNUNCIATION OF MARY
MAR 29 <i>Wed</i>	Knights of Columbus Founder's Day

THE SCHOOL OF SAINTS



"In prayer, more is accomplished by listening than by talking. Let us leave to God the decisions as to what shall be said." ~ *St. Francis de Sales*

"Take yourself off to the garden of olives or the foot of the cross, and stay there. Our Lord will speak to you; and you listen to Him." ~ *St. Bernadette Soubirou*

"There is nothing more powerful than a person praying well." ~ *St. John Chrysostom*

– FAITH IN ACTION –

FEATURED PROGRAM

K OF C GOOD CITIZENSHIP ESSAY CONTEST

The Knights of Columbus' annual essay contest encourages today's youth to be more connected to their community and their faith. The goal of this program is to involve young Catholics in grades 8 to 12 (public, private, parochial or home schools during the current school year) in civic discourse and instill in them religious and life-affirming values. The essay should be 500-750 words on a specific topic, changing every other year. Entrants will be judged on grammar, style, and how clearly they present the theme in a way that showcases creativity, imagination and overall development of the topic. The contest is open to all Catholic students. This year's topic: "Explain how young Catholics can evangelize our faith to families and friends who have turned away from religion and encourage them to return to the Church and embrace the sacraments." For more information, please contact your local K of C representative.