

Spiritual Catalyst



May 2025

Breaking
Open the
Word



Introduction

God (+) come to my assistance. Lord make hast to help me!

Opening Prayer (Prayer of St. John Chrysostom)

O Lord Jesus Christ, open the eyes of my heart that I may hear your word, and understand and do your will, for I am a sojourner upon the Earth. Hide not your commandments from me, but open my eyes, that I may perceive the wonders of your Law. Speak unto me the hidden and secret things of your wisdom. On you do I set my hope, O my God, that you shall enlighten my mind and understanding with the light of your knowledge; not only to cherish those things which are written, but to do them; That in reading the lives and sayings of the Saints I may not sin, but that such may serve for my restoration, enlightenment and sanctification, for the salvation of my soul, and the inheritance of life everlasting. For

you are the enlightenment of those who lie in darkness, and from you comes every good deed and every gift. Amen.



May 4 SUN // THIRD SUNDAY OF EASTER // white // Gospel JN 21:1-19

At that time, Jesus revealed himself again to his disciples at the Sea of Tiberias. He revealed himself in this way. Together were Simon Peter, Thomas called Didymus, Nathanael from Cana in Galilee, Zebedee's sons, and two others of his disciples. Simon Peter said to them, "I am going fishing." They said to him, "We also will come with you." So, they went out and got into the boat, but that night they caught nothing. When it was already dawn, Jesus was standing on the shore; but the disciples did not realize that it was Jesus. Jesus said to them, "Children, have you caught anything to eat?" They answered him, "No." So he said to them, "Cast the net over the right side of the boat and you will find something." So they cast it, and were not able to pull it in because of the number of fish. So the disciple whom Jesus loved said to Peter, "It is the Lord." When Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he tucked in his garment, for he was lightly clad, and jumped into the sea. The other disciples came in the boat, for they were not far from the shore, only about a hundred yards, dragging the net with the fish. When they climbed out on the shore, they saw a charcoal fire with fish on it and bread. Jesus said to them, "Bring some of the fish you just caught." So, Simon Peter went over and dragged the net ashore full of one hundred fifty-three large fish. Even though there were so many, the net was not torn. Jesus said to them, "Come, have breakfast." And none of the disciples dared to ask him, "Who are you?" because they realized it was the Lord. Jesus came over and took the bread and gave it to them, and in like manner the fish. This was now the third time Jesus was revealed to his disciples after being raised from the dead. When they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon, son of John, do you love me more than these?" Simon Peter answered him, "Yes, Lord, you know that I love you." Jesus said to him, "Feed my lambs." He then said to Simon Peter a second time, "Simon, son of John, do you love me?" Simon Peter answered him, "Yes, Lord, you know that I love you." Jesus said to him, "Tend my sheep." Jesus said to him the third time, "Simon, son of John, do you love me?" Peter was distressed that Jesus had

said to him a third time, "Do you love me?" and he said to him, "Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you." Jesus said to him, "Feed my sheep. Amen, amen, I say to you, when you were younger, you used to dress yourself and go where you wanted; but when you grow old, you will stretch out your hands, and someone else will dress you and lead you where you do not want to go." He said this signifying by what kind of death he would glorify God. And when he said this, he said to him, "Follow me."



Spiritual Reflection: There are two places in Scripture where a "charcoal fire" is mentioned. Here in today's Gospel and in the high priest courtyard. At the first fire Peter denies Jesus three times and this time Peter acknowledges his love for Jesus. This shows that we do not always have to repeat old sins.

Spiritual Questions:

1. What is God calling me to do so that I may continue truly developing as a whole person?
2. In what ways might I help increase other's ability to respond to their vocation and hence to God's call?
3. What sins do you need help to overcome?
4. What leads to your habitual sins?
5. What spiritual lessons do you get from the story of Peter's denial?

Closing Prayer:

Lord Jesus, you are the light of the world. I believe that you are present here and now. I believe that you desire me to come to you and ask you for that which I need. Lord, I ask that your light shine ever more brightly in my life so that I may follow you more faithfully in every aspect of my life. Lord, I believe all that you have revealed through your Church. I hope in your goodness, trusting that you give me all that I need to come to eternal life with you. I love you, Lord, above all things because you first loved me.



Introduction

God (+) come to my assistance. Lord make hast to help me.

Opening Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven, sacred is Your Word. Your kingdom come; Your Words be heard on earth as they are in heaven. Give us today Your Sacred Word. Forgive our neglect of it in the past as we forgive those who neglect us. Lead us toward an encounter with You each time we delve into the Scriptures. For Your presence, Your power, and Your glory are ever present among us now and forever. Amen

May 11 SUN // FOURTH SUNDAY OF EASTER // white // Gospel JN 10:27-30

Jesus said: "My sheep hear my voice; I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish. No one can take them out of my hand. My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all, and no one can take them out of the Father's hand. The Father and I are one.



Spiritual Reflection: Many voices compete for our attention and obedience. Many of these voices can chart a course that is foreign to the ways of Jesus.

Spiritual Questions:

1. When Jesus says to me: "No one can take (you) out of my hands," what is your reaction?
2. Does anyone in my community seem to be trying to take people away from Jesus, away from God? If so, what might I do about it?
3. Whose voice do you listen to the most?
4. What are the characteristics of God's voice?
5. Who helps you hear God's voice today?

Closing Prayer:

Lord, I come before you as one of the participants in this wedding feast, along with Mary, putting myself beside her at the table as she approaches you with this problem. Like her, I renew my faith that you have the power to do

great things in my life, in the world around me, and in my soul in prayer.



Introduction

+God (+) come to my assistance. Lord make hast to help me!

Opening Prayer

Open my eyes, gracious Lord, as I turn to your word. I long to know you, to understand life, and to be changed. Examine me, Lord, by the floodlight of your truth. Amen.

May 18 SUN // FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER // white // Gospel JN 13:31-33A, 34-35

When Judas had left them, Jesus said, "Now is the Son of Man glorified, and God is glorified in him. If God is glorified in him, God will also glorify him in himself, and God will glorify him at once. My children, I will be with you only a little while longer. I give you a new commandment: love one another. As I have loved you, so you also should love one another. This is how all will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another."



Spiritual Reflection: Judas apparently gives into the effects of Original sin and believes that his plans are better than God's plans.

Spiritual Questions:

1. How has Jesus loved you?
2. How is Jesus currently loving you?
3. What does God's love for you say about you?
4. What happens when you do things your way verses God's way?
5. Do you believe God wants what is best for you?

Closing Prayer:

Lord, open my heart to be prepared to encounter you in prayer and in others today. Amen.



Introduction

+God (+) come to my assistance. Lord make hast to help me!.

Opening Prayer

Open my eyes, gracious Lord, as I turn to your word. I long to know you, to understand life, and to be changed. Examine me, Lord, by the floodlight of your truth. Amen.

May 25 SUN // SIXTH SUNDAY OF EASTER // white // Gospel JN 14:23-29

Jesus said to his disciples: "Whoever loves me will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our dwelling with him. Whoever does not love me does not keep my words; yet the word you hear is not mine but that of the Father who sent me. "I have told you this while I am with you. The Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you everything and remind you of all that I told you. Peace, I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give it to you. Do not let your hearts be troubled or afraid. You heard me tell you, 'I

am going away and I will come back to you.' If you loved me, you would rejoice that I am going to the Father; for the Father is greater than I. And now I have told you this before it happens, so that when it happens you may believe."



Spiritual Reflection: The word advocate means protector, coach, defender, supporter, proponent. Jesus uses this word to describe the Holy Spirit. The devil on the other hand is called the accuser. Who do you want on your side?

Spiritual Questions

1. What gifts or charisms has the Holy Spirit bestowed upon you?
2. How do you use these gifts?
3. How can you help others recognize their gifts?
4. How can you help others develop their gifts?
5. Are you more likely to be an accuser or an advocate?

Closing Prayer:

Lord Jesus, help me to find you today in the ordinariness of my life. I want to offer what I have, my poverty, and let you fill me with yourself. Thank you for the gift of my family. – Amen



Spiritual Ponderings

I thought for the month of May that I would do something different with my Spiritual Ponderings column. Instead of taking a topic and writing about it, I thought instead I would imagine myself writing a series of letters to someone who is not currently going to Church for one reason or another.

Dear Friend,
My primary hope and prayer is that you will see this as not only an invitation to explore the idea of faith again but also as a sign that there is a community that desires to show God’ love to you. My secondary hope and prayer is that you will see this letter as an invitation to take some time and re-explore what it truly means to be Catholic and how participation in the life of the Catholic Church on a regular basis can

Fr. Thomas M. Pastorius
May 4, 2025
Spiritual Ponderings
Dear...

help improve your life and the lives of those around you.

When I was a newly ordained priest, I wanted to develop a better relationship with my pastor, and I noticed that he loved to watch football on Sunday afternoons. I grew up with a distain for football because my dad would become possessed on Sunday afternoons watching the game and yelling at the television and anyone else who disturbed him during the game. My mother would often take us over to my grandmother's house so that we would not disturb him. Wanting to get to know my pastor better, I decided that I would put aside my past negative experience with the game of football and make time to watch a Sunday afternoon game with him. As the game began, I sat down on the couch in our shared living room. My pastor quickly invited me to share in some of the snacks that he had prepared. Over the next few weeks, my pastor helped me come to a better understanding of the game of football and as I began to understand more and more about what was going on, I began to grow in appreciation of the game.

Dr. Edward Sri in his book ***Love Unveiled: The Catholic Faith Explained*** writes:

“If you were to walk into a coffee shop and randomly ask people, “What does the Catholic Church stand for?” what kind of response to you think you would receive? Some people might talk about the rituals of the Catholic faith. Others might mention the pope or the Blessed Virgin Mary. A large number probably would focus on controversial moral issues of our day: “The Catholic Church is against abortion, against contraception, and against gay marriage.”

Few, however, would get to the heart of the gospel and say, “The Catholic Church stand for God who is madly in love with you, who has a plan for you and wants you to be happy—the God who even sent his Son, Jesus Christ, to die for you, who wants to forgive you and help you in your life, and who, most of all, wants an intimate, personal relationship with

you so that you can be with him forever in heaven.”

To continue with my football analogy from above the people who boil the Catholic faith down to controversial topics are like my father when the game was on. His love for the game and fanatical desire to have his team win literally scared me away. My first pastor, on the other hand, love of the game gave him a desire to help me grow in appreciation of the game.

I understand that there is something nice about the idea of being “spiritual but not religious.” I also know deep down when I was telling people that I was “spiritual but not religious” it was because I was wearing a mask and carried a lot of anger toward God. I also did not like the idea of so many rules for many reasons but probably most importantly it was because I was afraid, I would accidentally break one and be ridiculed by others. As I have grown older, I have discovered that part of what brings a football game into existence is the agreed upon rules and the rules in football are not created to limit a player's freedom but rather to help them be safe and to know how to win the game. In the same way, I have come to see the rules that organized religion have been meant not to limit our freedom but rather are meant to direct us to being the best version of ourselves as possible. I have also come to understand that most people's response to mistakes is not ridicule but rather concern and compassion.

I am pastor of two great parishes Epiphany of Our Lord and St. James the Greater who are striving each day to become even better, and it is our desire to help you encounter the God that loves you

Thank you for taking the time to read this note and I pray that you will see that you having been giving it is a true sign of God's desire to draw you closer to Him. If we at St. James the Greater or Epiphany of Our Lord can be of help, please do not hesitate to reach out.

Fr. Thomas M. Pastorius
May 11, 2025
Spiritual Ponderings
Dear...

I thought for the month of May that I would do something different with my Spiritual Ponderings

column. Instead of taking a topic and writing about it, I thought instead I would imagine myself writing a series of letters to someone who is not currently going to Church for one reason or another.

Dear Friend,

When I think about the idea of faith and what it means to be a believer, I find my mind drawn to the 32nd Chapter of Genesis. In this chapter of Genesis, Jacob wrestles with God and as daybreaks, Jacob asks God for a blessing. The blessing he received comes in the form of a name change. God changes Jacob's name from Jacob, which means usurper, to Israel, which means "He who wrestles with God." Jacob's sons will become the nation of Israel (the nation who wrestles with God," and the Church calls herself the New Israel. (The new people who wrestle with being in relationship with God.)

When I talk about wrestling, I encourage you not to think of professional or amateur wrestling but rather think about a father wrestling with his child for fun. There are moments when he is picking and holding the child up in the air and there are moments when he is holding the child close to his heart. There are times that the father is gently shaking the kid to elicit laughter and there are times where the father is blowing on the kids' skin in order to make weird noises. There are moments where the child is filled with joy and moments when the child is scared to death. Throughout these times it is evident to anyone watching at a distance that this is a time of bonding between father and child. In much the same way God wishes to bond with us.

Maybe another way to look at it is to think of life like a rollercoaster. When we get on a rollercoaster, we are in fact trusting three people. The first person is the architect who designed the rollercoaster. You trust that the twists, turns, and loops are designed to increase your enjoyment of the ride and not to harm you in any way. The second person is the person who belts you into the seat and makes sure your seatbelt is secure. Finally, the third person you trust is the mechanic that is working behind the scenes. Similarly in life, faith is about learning to trust the architects of our lives (the Father), the person who belts us (the Son through the Sacraments), and finally the mechanic working behind the scenes to make sure the Father's plan comes to fruition and that being the Holy Spirit. The more we trust the

more we can enjoy the ride. Faith therefore is not about removing obstacles in our lives but rather faith is about helping us trust that in the end God will bring about all things for our good.

I truly believe that everyone wants to belong to a community of believers that help them encounter the God that loves them deeply and helps them discover and trust in God's plan for their lives. A parish, (Catholic name for the local Church) can be a sacred place where the human and the divine meet, where people of all ages grow in the knowledge and understanding of what it means to be a follower of Jesus Christ. It can be a place where people receive spiritual nourishment, guidance, inspiration and strength — not just from the priests but from other members of the parish as well. It can be a spiritual home where people share each other's joys, support each other in times of sorrow, offer encouragement to those who are struggling, and help to heal anyone who feels battered or broken by life's trials and tragedies. It can also be a social place where people make new friends, reach out to those less fortunate, and invite others to become part of a community of believers who try their best to live the Gospel message.

The good thing is that we do not have to do this alone. God calls us to be part of a community that travels together in faith. Going back to the rollercoaster analogy, I am more likely to trust the three people, if I see have listen to others who have gone on the ride before me, the rest of the rollercoaster is filled with people, and finally I know there is a line for people who want to get on the ride with me or after me.

Maybe to summarize this letter, I simply want to say that it is alright not to be perfect, and it is alright to ask questions.

Fr. Thomas M. Pastorius

May 18, 2025

Spiritual Ponderings

Dear...

For the month of May that I am do something different with my Spiritual Ponderings column. Instead of taking a topic and writing about it, I am writing a series of open letters to someone who is not currently going to Church for one reason or another.

Dear Friend,

One of the reasons why I became frustrated with the Church when I was younger was because everyone seemed to know how to grow in their faith and I was at a loss. I felt like someone gave me a plot of land and told me to build a garden on it but gave me no instructions on what my next step should be. I came back to the faith after being away for a short time when different individuals were able to help me understand what my next step in the faith journey was and how to take it. The simplest way, I can help you grow in your faith, I believe is by sharing with you what some people call the Five Faith Catalysts.

1: Orthodox/Practical Teaching

Archbishop Fulton Sheen once said: “There are not one hundred people in the United States who hate The Catholic Church, but there are millions who hate what they wrongly perceive the Catholic Church to be.” All the laws, commandments and rules, of the Catholic Church boil down to the fact that the Catholic Church, with her two-thousand-year history, is trying to help you become the best version of yourself as possible by helping you learn to love as God loves. In a similar way, learning about nutrition helps one become healthier so learning how to love God, others, and ourselves helps us flourish.

2: Private & Community Disciplines & Devotions

St. Augustine tells us: “To fall in love with God is the greatest romance; to seek him the greatest adventure; to find him, the greatest human achievement.” & “Our hearts are restless until it rests in you.” For Catholics, God is not a divine boss or task master but rather He is a loving Father who desires a deep personal relationship with you. Prayer is basically talking with God and the more you do it the easier and more fulfilling it becomes.

3: Personal Ministry/Service

When John the Baptist was in prison, he sent his disciples to Jesus so that Jesus could affirm who He was. John’s disciples asked Jesus “if he was the one.” Jesus’s response is not “yes” or “no” but rather he tells John’s disciple to report what they see – the blind see, the lame walk, the poor have the good news proclaimed to them, etc. If we want to know someone better there is no better way than to work alongside them. Acts of charity and service make us coworkers with Jesus.

4. Providential Relationships/Holy Friendships

The truth of the matter is that our friends have a great influence on our lives and therefore we are more likely to do good things if we hang out with others who are doing good and we are more likely to do bad things if we hang out with people who are doing good. There is a great strength that comes in numbers and having a shared common purpose. I personally enjoy being with others whose mission can be summarized by the following quote from the great spiritual writer Fr. Henry Nouwen: “In a world so torn apart by rivalry, anger, and hatred, we have the privileged vocation to be living signs of a love that can bridge all divisions and heal all wounds.

5. Pivotal Circumstances

St. John Paul II instructed people to “remember the past with gratitude, live in the present with enthusiasm, and look toward the future with confidence.” Our Church teaches us that every person and every moment matters because every moment can be a moment that leads us closer to God or further away. Realizing that I have a purpose, and eternal destiny inspires me to use my time wisely and to invest in the things that eternally endure. Special moments that help me build relationships with God and others are always more important than collecting items that will one day perish. I am sure that every parish provides some way for you to add one or more of these faith catalysts to your life, if you are willing to invest yourself, and once again, I want to offer my assistance as well.

Fr. Thomas M. Pastorius

May 25, 2025

Spiritual Ponderings

Dear...

For the month of May that I have been doing something different with my Spiritual Ponderings column. Instead of taking a topic and writing about it, I have been writing a series of open letters to someone who is not currently going to Church for one reason or another. For this last letter, I would like to address those who have been wounded by the Church.

Dear Friend,

This is the most difficult of the four letters that I have written this month, because there are so many ways that people have been hurt by the Church, and I know that this broad letter cannot address each and every way. Please note that the intention of this letter is not to excuse bad actions performed by the members of the Church but rather is an invitation to move past the bitterness if possible.

I was in my final years of seminary during the Mark McGwire and Sammy Sosa home run race was taking place in Major League Baseball. It was a fun and amazing time to be alive and be a baseball fan and then we eventually learn that both of them had been using steroids. What a crushing blow. Despite all of this, I am a fan of baseball. I refuse to let a few bad apples ruin my love for the game. In a similar way, I have been wounded by many different people in the Church – clerical and laity – but I do not let them come between me and the Church as a whole.

I would like to share with you two quick Gospel stories. The first story is the story of the blindman Bartimaeus. Bartimaeus was a blindman who heard that Jesus was passing by and so he shouted out “Son of David – Have pity on me!” The crowd, including the disciples, began to try to hush him by telling him to be quiet. The second story is the story of the Syrophenician woman who had a sick daughter. In this story, it even appears that Jesus desires to drive her away, but I think He responds to her in this way in order to drive home the point later of how great her faith is and how much the disciples have misjudged her and could learn from her. In each of these moments Jesus is able to bring a greater good out of the situation despite His followers, Bartimaeus’s healing and the woman’s daughter’s healing. I guess what I am trying to say is that don’t let a few negative or bad members of the Church keep you from developing a relationship God.

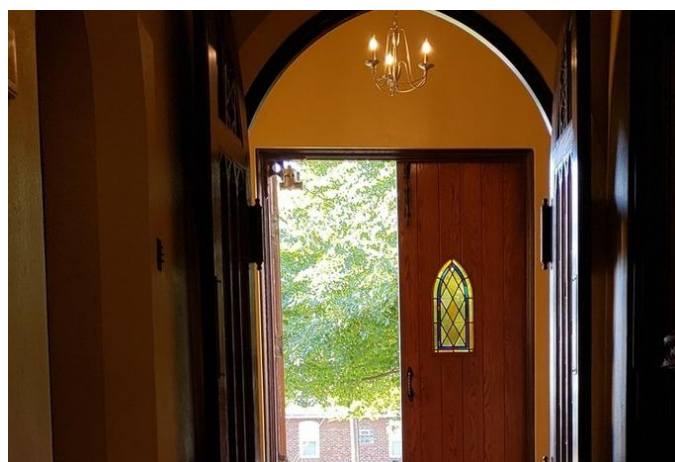
I also want to express my sadness and ask your pardon for the little times that the Church has let you down or you feel that the Church has let you down. I know from personal experience the pain of having to

watch a parish that you love close. My home parish, the parish that nurtured my vocation for twenty-five years, closed a year before I could celebrate my First Mass there. I have seen the pain of watching good holy friends be shunned by a brother priest or hurt by other parishioners for one silly reason or another. I trust though in each of these situation that God has or will bring out a greater good and that greater good will eventually include justice and mercy in a way that my human mind cannot fathom now.

If you have experienced, pain, loss, or disappointments that have distance you from the Church, know that God has never abandoned you. He has been walking with you every step of the way, even in the moments when you couldn’t feel His presence. He desires you to return not just to a building or an institution but to His loving embrace, His mercy, His love,

If you ever feel the pull to come back even if it you’re not sure of what that looks like, I would love to talk with you, to listen to your story, and walk with you on this journey. No matter how long it’s been, no matter the questions or struggles you carry, the Church is still your home and God is always ready to welcome you with open arms

Please know that you are in my prayers. If you ever want to talk, I am here.



Personal Penance Service



Blessed Virgin Mary Ecce, Fiat, and Magnificat

Beginning: (+) God come to my assistance, Lord make haste to help me.

Opening Prayer:

Receive my confession, O most loving and gracious Lord Jesus Christ, only hope for the salvation of my soul. Grant to me true contrition of soul, so that day and night I may by penance make satisfaction for my many sins. Savior of the world, O good Jesus, Who gave Yourself to the death of the Cross to save sinners, look upon me, most wretched of all sinners; have pity on me, and give me the light to know my sins, true sorrow for them, and a firm purpose of never committing them again.

O gracious Virgin Mary, Immaculate Mother of Jesus, I implore you to obtain for me by

your powerful intercession these graces from your Divine Son.

St. Joseph, pray for me.

Scripture Reading: Luke 1:26-38

In the sixth month, the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a town of Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man named Joseph, of the house of David, and the virgin's name was Mary. And coming to her, he said, "Hail, favored one! The Lord is with you." But she was greatly troubled at what was said and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. Then the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. Behold, you will conceive in your

womb and bear a son, and you shall name him Jesus. He will be great and will be called Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give him the throne of David his father, and he will rule over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end." But Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I have no relations with a man?" And the angel said to her in reply, "The holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. Therefore, the child to be born will be called holy, the Son of God. And behold, Elizabeth, your relative, has also conceived a son in her old age, and this is the sixth month for her who

was called barren; for nothing will be impossible for God.” Mary said, “Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord. May it be done to me according to your word.” Then the angel departed from her.

Quick Reflection:

“The life of Mary is summed up in three words: Ecce, Fiat, and Maginificat. With spiritual fervor, impressed them on your heart, ponder them, and act on them: “Behold the handmaid of the Lord,” Ecce. “Let it be does to me according to your word,” Fiat (Lk 1:38). “My souls gives praise to the Lord,” Maginificat (Lk 1:46) – Cardinal Thuan*

Examination of Conscience

“Behold”

1. Do I think that I know better than God?
2. Do I willingly subject myself to God’s will?
3. Do I follow the 10 Commandments?
4. Do I serve the Lord or other people or things?
5. Do I serve the Lord by serving others especially in the poor?

“Fiat”

1. Do I do things God’s way or do I think I know better?
2. Do I take time to pray to discover God’s will?
3. Do I go to Mass on Sunday?
4. Do I go against any of the Church’s teachings?

5. Do I fail to put my faith into practice?

“Magnificat”

1. Do I live out my Christian Life in Joy?
2. Do I praise God for all His gifts?
3. Do I appreciate that God’s ways are not my ways?
4. Do I take time to give God glory?
5. Do I practice my faith in a way that is undeniable to others?

Time For Individual Confession

At this time, you should go and celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation with the priest and afterwards come back and pray your prayer of thanksgiving in addition to your penance.

Act of Contrition

My God, I am sorry for my sins with all my heart. In choosing to do wrong and failing to do good, I have sinned against you whom I should love above all things. I firmly intend, with your help, to do penance, to sin no more, and to avoid whatever leads me to sin. Our Savior Jesus Christ suffered and died for us. In His Name, my God, have mercy. - Amen.

Prayer of Thanksgiving

My dearest Jesus, I have told all my sins to the best of my ability. I have sincerely tried to make a good confession, and I know that you have forgiven me. Thank you, dear Jesus! Your divine heart is

full of love and mercy for poor sinners. I love You dear Jesus; you are so good to me. My loving Savior, I shall try to keep from sin and to love You more each day. Dearest Mother Mary, pray for me and help me to keep all my promises. Protect me and do not let me fall back into sin. Dear God, help me to lead a good life. Without Your grace I can do nothing. Amen!

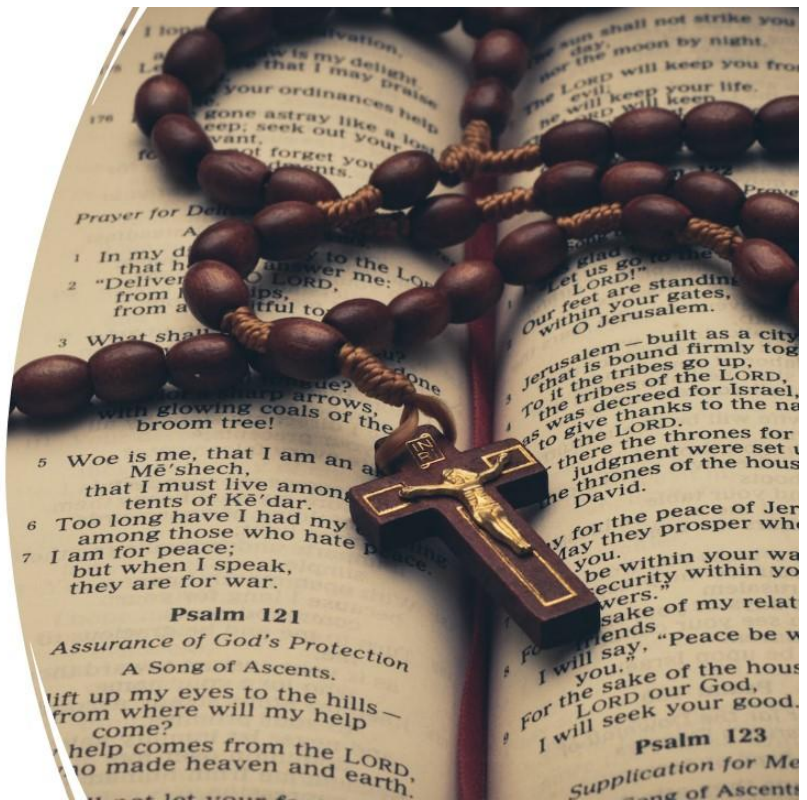
Blessing

May almighty God bless me (+), protect me from all evil and bring me to everlasting life. Amen

*Thuan, Francis Xavier Nguyen Van Thuan: *The Road Of Hope: A Gospel from Prison* (Boston: Pauline Books & Media, 2001)



Prayers



May 2025

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1 St. Joseph the Worker	2 St. Athanasius	3 Sts. Philip & James
4 3 rd Sunday Easter	5	6	7	8	9	10
11 4 th Sunday Mother's Day	12	13	14 St. Matthias	15	16	17
18 5 th Sunday	19	20	21	22	23	24
25 6 th Sunday	26 St. Philip Neri Memorial Day	27	28	29	30	31 Visitation

Prayers to St. Joseph For Workers

Joseph, by the work of your hands and the sweat of your brow, you supported Jesus and Mary and had the Son of God as your fellow worker. Teach me to work as you did, with patience and perseverance, for God and for those whom God has given me to support. Teach me to see in my fellow workers the Christ who desires to be in them, that I may always be charitable and forbearing towards all.

Grant me to look upon work with the eyes of faith, so that I shall recognize in it my share in God's own creative activity and in Christ's work of our redemption and so take pride in it. When it is pleasant and productive, remind me to give thanks to God for it. And when it is burdensome, teach me to offer it to God, in reparation for my sins and the sins of the world.

To you, O blessed Joseph (Ad te, beate Ioseph)

To you, O blessed Joseph, do we come in our afflictions, and having implored the help of your most

holy Spouse, we confidently invoke your patronage also.

Through that charity which bound you to the Immaculate Virgin Mother of God and through the paternal love with which you embraced the Child Jesus, we humbly beg you graciously to regard the inheritance which Jesus Christ has purchased by his Blood, and with your power and strength to aid us in our necessities.

O most watchful guardian of the Holy Family, defend the chosen children of Jesus Christ; O most loving father, ward off from us every contagion of error and corrupting influence; O our most mighty protector, be kind to us and from heaven assist us in our struggle with the power of darkness.

As once you rescued the Child Jesus from deadly peril, so now protect God's Holy Church from the snares of the enemy and from all adversity; shield, too, each one of us by your constant protection, so that, supported by your example and your aid, we may be able to live piously, to die in holiness, and to obtain eternal happiness in heaven. Amen.

Memorare to St. Joseph

Remember, O most pure spouse of the Blessed Virgin Mary, my great protector, Saint Joseph, that no one ever had recourse to your protection, or implored your aid without obtaining relief. Confiding therefore in your goodness, I come before you. Do not turn down my petitions, foster father of the Redeemer, but graciously receive them. Amen.

A Prayer in Gratitude for Our Mothers

Good and Gentle God, we pray in gratitude for our mothers and for all the women of theory who have joined with you in the wonder of bringing forth new life. You who became human through a woman, grant to all mothers the courage they need to face the uncertain future that life with children always brings.

Give them the strength to live and to be loved in return, not perfectly, but humanly.

Give them the faithful support of husband, family and friends as they care for the physical and spiritual growth of their children.

Give them joy and delight in their children to sustain them through the trials of motherhood. Most of all, give them the wisdom to turn to you for help when they need it most. - Author Unknown

An Irish blessing

There is but one and only one, Whose love will fail you never. One who lives from sun to sun, With constant fond endeavor. There is but one and only one On earth there is no other. In heaven a noble work was done When God gave us a Mother. - Author Unknown

The Ascension Novena

Jesus, I honor You on the feast of Your Ascension into heaven. I rejoice with all my heart at the glory into which You entered to reign as King of heaven and earth. When the struggle of this life is over, give me the grace to share Your joy and triumph in heaven for all eternity.

I believe that You entered into Your glorious Kingdom to prepare a place for me, for You promised to come again to take me to Yourself. Grant that I may seek only the joys of Your friendship and love, so that I may deserve to be united with You in heaven.

In the hour of my own homecoming, when I appear before Your Father to give an account of my life on earth, have mercy on me.

Jesus, in Your love for me You have brought me from evil to good and from misery to happiness. Give me the grace to rise above my human weakness. May Your Humanity give me courage in my weakness and free me from my sins.

Through Your grace, give me the courage of perseverance for You have called and justified me by faith. May I hold fast to the life You have given me and come to the eternal gifts You promised.

You love me, dear Jesus. Help me to love You in return. I ask You to grant this special favor:

(Mention your request).

By Your unceasing care, guide my steps toward the life of glory You have prepared for those who love You. Make me grow in holiness and thank You by a life of faithful service.

Ascension Prayer

O Lord Jesus, I adore you, Son of Mary, my Savior and my Brother, for You are God. I follow You in my thoughts, O first-fruits of our race, as I hope one day by Your grace to follow You in my person into heavenly glory. Until then, do not let me neglect the earthly task which You have given me. Let me labour diligently all my life with a greater appreciation for the present. Let me realize that only by accomplishing true human fulfillment can I attain Divine fulfillment and ascend to You at the completion of my work.
Amen.

Novena to the Holy Spirit

Opening Prayer (All 9 Days)

In the name of the Father, & of the Son, & of the Holy Spirit. - Amen.

Let us bow down in humility at the power and grandeur of the Holy Spirit. Let us worship the Holy Trinity and give glory today to the Paraclete, our Advocate.

Day 1//Charity

O Holy Spirit, by Your power, Christ was raised from the dead to save us all. By Your grace, miracles are performed in Jesus' name. By Your love, we are protected from evil. And so, we ask with humility and a beggar's heart for Your gift of Charity within us.

The great charity of all the host of Saints is only made possible by your power, O Divine Spirit. Increase in me, the virtue of charity that I may love as God loves with the selflessness of the Saints.

Holy Spirit we ask for the grace of *[State your intention]*.
Amen.

Day 2 // Joy

O Holy Spirit, by Your power, Christ was raised from the dead to save us all. By Your grace, miracles are performed in Jesus' name. By Your love, we are protected from evil. And so, we ask with humility and a beggar's heart for Your gift of Joy within us.

All of the Saints are marked with an uncompromisable Joy in times of trial, difficulty, and pain. Give us, O Holy Spirit, the Joy that surpasses all understanding that we may live as a witness to Your love and fidelity!

Holy Spirit we ask for the grace of *[State your intention]*.
Amen.

Day 3 // Peace

O Holy Spirit, by Your power, Christ was raised from the dead to save us all. By Your grace, miracles are performed in Jesus' name. By Your love, we are protected from evil. And so, we ask with humility and a beggar's heart for Your gift of Peace within us.

The Saints were tempted, attacked and accused by the devil who is the destroyer of peace. When we are accused by the devil, come to our aid as our Advocate and give us Peace that lasts through all trials!

Holy Spirit we ask for the grace of *[State your intention]*.
Amen.

Day 4 // Patience

O Holy Spirit, by Your power, Christ was raised from the dead to save us all. By Your grace, miracles are performed in Jesus' name. By Your love, we are protected from evil. And so, we ask with humility and a beggar's heart for Your gift of Patience within us.

O Holy Spirit, you give lavishly to those who ask. Please give us the patience of the Saints who are now with you in heaven. Help us to endure everything with an eternal patience that is only possible with your help.

Holy Spirit we ask for the grace of *[State your intention]*.
Amen.

Day 5 // Kindness

O Holy Spirit, by Your power, Christ was raised from the dead to save us all. By Your grace, miracles are performed in Jesus' name. By Your love, we are protected from evil. And so, we ask with humility and a beggar's heart for Your gift of Kindness within us.

Jesus approached sinners with immense kindness. Holy Paraclete, please treat us humble sinners with the same kindness and give us the ability to treat all others with that kindness as well.

Holy Spirit we ask for the grace of *[State your intention]*.
Amen.

Day 6 // Faithfulness

O Holy Spirit, by Your power, Christ was raised from the dead to save us all. By Your grace, miracles are performed in Jesus' name. By Your love, we are

protected from evil. And so, we ask with humility and a beggar's heart for Your gift of Faithfulness within us.

You, O Lord, are ever faithful. You are faithful until the end. Though we are weak and distracted, please give us the grace to be faithful to You as you are to us!

Holy Spirit we ask for the grace for *[State your intention]*.
Amen.

Day 7 // Gentleness

O Holy Spirit, by Your power, Christ was raised from the dead to save us all. By Your grace, miracles are performed in Jesus' name. By Your love, we are protected from evil. And so, we ask with humility and a beggar's heart for Your gift of Gentleness within us.

Despite the gravity of our sins, O Lord, you treat us with Gentleness. Dear Holy Spirit, give us your power to treat all in our lives with the Gentleness of the Saints.

Holy Spirit we ask for the grace of *[State your intention]*.
Amen.

Day 8 // Self-Control

O Holy Spirit, by Your power, Christ was raised from the dead to save us all. By Your grace, miracles are performed in Jesus' name. By Your love, we are protected from evil. And so, we ask with humility and a beggar's heart for Your gift of Self-Control within us. Your Martyrs had the overwhelming self-control to go joyfully to a painful death without shrinking from the opportunity to join You in heaven. Give us this self-control to have command over our emotions and desires that we may serve You more fully.

Holy Spirit we ask for the grace of *[State your intention]*.
Amen.

Day 9 // Goodness

O Holy Spirit, by Your power, Christ was raised from the dead to save us all. By Your grace, miracles are performed in Jesus' name. By Your love, we are protected from evil. And so, we ask with humility and a beggar's heart for Goodness within us.

We want to be like your Saints in heaven. Holy Spirit, renew us by your power with your Goodness that we may bring the Good News to the world.

Holy Spirit we ask for the grace of *[State your intention]*.
Amen.

Closing Prayer (All 9 Days)

Come Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful and enkindle in them the fire of your love. Send forth your Spirit and they shall be created. And You shall renew the face of the earth.

O, God, who by the light of the Holy Spirit, did instruct the hearts of the faithful, grant that by the same Holy Spirit we may be truly wise and ever enjoy His consolations, through Christ Our Lord, Amen.

In the name of the Father, & of the Son, & of the Holy Spirit. - Amen.

PRAYER FOR THE GIFTS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

By: Saint Alphonsus Liguori

Holy Spirit, Divine Consoler, I adore You as my true God, with God the Father and God the Son. I adore You and unite myself to the adoration You receive from the angels and saints. I give You my heart and I offer my ardent thanksgiving for all the grace which You never cease to bestow on me.

O Giver of all supernatural gifts, who filled the soul of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of God, with such immense favors, I beg You to visit me with Your grace and Your love and to grant me the gift of holy fear, so that it may act on me as a check to prevent me from falling back into my past sins, for which I beg pardon.

Grant me the gift of piety, so that I may serve You for the future with increased fervor, follow with more promptness Your holy inspirations, and observe your divine precepts with greater fidelity.

Grant me the gift of knowledge, so that I may know the things of God and, enlightened by Your holy teaching, may walk, without deviation, in the path of eternal salvation.

Grant me the gift of fortitude, so that I may overcome courageously all the assaults of the devil, and all the dangers of this world which threaten the salvation of my soul.

Grant me the gift of counsel, so that I may choose what is more conducive to my spiritual

advancement and may discover the wiles and snares of the tempter.

Grant me the gift of understanding, so that I may apprehend the divine mysteries and by contemplation of heavenly things detach my thoughts and affections from the vain things of this miserable world.

Grant me the gift of wisdom, so that I may rightly direct all my actions, referring them to God as my last end; so that, having loved Him and served Him in this life, I may have the happiness of possessing Him eternally in the next. Amen.

Mary Mother of the Church

O Virgin Mary, Mother of the Church to you we recommend ourselves and the entire Church. Guide and assist our Holy Father and our Bishops in their apostolic mission, and aid all who help them in their work.

Mother of the Church!

Enlighten the People of God along the paths of faith, hope and love! You were given to us as a mother by your Divine Son at the moment of his redeeming death.

Remember us your children, support our prayers to God. Preserve our Faith, strengthen our Hope, increase our Charity.

Immaculate Heart!

Help us to conquer the menace of evil, which so easily takes root in the hearts of the people of today.

From nuclear war, from incalculable self-destruction, and from every kind of war, deliver us.

From sins against human life from its very beginning, deliver us.

From every kind of injustice in the life of society, deliver us.

From readiness to trample on the commandments of God, deliver us.

From attempts to stifle the very truth of God, deliver us.

From the loss of awareness of good and evil deliver us.

From sins against the Holy Spirit, deliver us.

O Mary, conceived without sin, we who are gathered here today place ourselves under your special protection.

We resolve to walk in your footsteps and to imitate your virtues. Obtain for us, O tender Mother, the grace of being faithful to this promise.

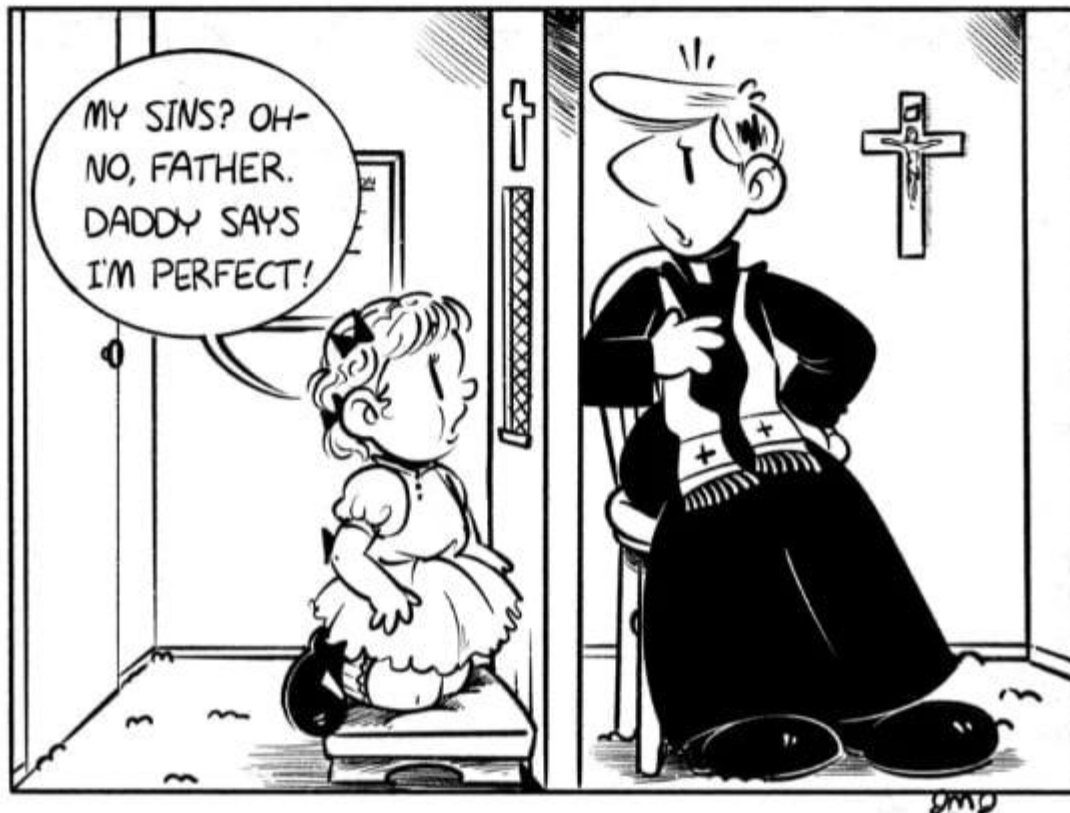
Amen!

Magnificat

My soul magnifies the Lord, And my spirit rejoices in God my Savior. For He has regarded the low estate of His handmaiden, For behold, henceforth all generations shall call me blessed. For He who is mighty has done great things for me, and holy is His name. And His mercy is on those who fear Him from generation to generation. He has shown strength with His arm: He has scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts. He has put down the mighty from their thrones and exalted those of low degree. He has filled the hungry with good things; and the rich He has sent empty away. He has helped His servant Israel, in remembrance of His mercy; As He spoke to our fathers, to Abraham and to His posterity forever. Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit. *As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end. Amen*



THE CATHOLIC CARTOON by JESUWA MASTERSON



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