

Fourth Sunday *in the season of* LENT

*“The Lord is my
Shepherd; there is
nothing I shall want.”*

Psalm 23



Dear brothers and sisters, if we follow the “Good Shepherd” – no matter how difficult, tortuous or long the pathways of our life may seem, even through spiritual deserts without water and under the scorching sun of rationalism – with the guidance of Christ the Good Shepherd, we too, like the Psalmist, may be sure that we are walking on “paths of righteousness” and that the Lord is leading us, is ever close to us and that we “shall lack nothing.” For this reason the Psalmist can declare his calm assurance without doubt or fear: “Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I fear no evil; for you are with me; your rod and your staff they comfort me.”

+Pope Benedict XVI



HOLY MASS SCHEDULE

SEE BULLETIN FOR HOLY DAYS

Saturday Vigil	4:00pm
Sunday	8:30am
	10:30am
	12:30pm
	5:00pm

Daily

Monday-Friday	6:30am
Monday-Saturday	8:15am

SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM

2:00pm on first and third Sundays.
Pre-Baptism class is at 2:00pm on
second Sunday. All by appointment.

Sponsors need letter from
their pastor.

SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION

2:30–3:30pm every Saturday;
Weekly Holy Hour with
Confessions from 6:30–7:30pm
every Wednesday.
Anytime upon request.
(Call for appointment.)

SACRAMENT OF MARRIAGE

No date should be set prior to
seeing a priest or deacon six
months before desired date.

SACRAMENT OF THE SICK

Please contact the Parish office.

614.885.7814

SAINTMICHAEL-CD.ORG
5750 NORTH HIGH STREET
WORTHINGTON, OHIO 43085



FIND US ON

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facebook.com/stmichaelworthington

SAINT MICHAEL STAFF DIRECTORY

Website: saintmichael-cd.org

Parish Office: 614-885-7814

MINISTERS TO THE PARISH

Pastor: Fr. Michael J. Lumpe

Parochial Vicar: Fr. Wojciech Stachura, SAC

Priest in Residence/Diocesan Judicial Vicar:

Fr. Robert Kitsmiller

Priest in Holy Service: Fr. Peter Fegan, O.P.

Permanent Deacons:

Dcn. John Crerand

Dcn. Bill Demidovich

Dcn. Klaus Fricke (Retired)

Pastoral Minister: Sr. Riya Mary

srriya@saintmichael-cd.org

Youth Minister: Jake Asuncion

jasuncion@saintmichael-cd.org

Director of RCIA: Jake Neal

jneal@sjchcc.org

PARISH OFFICE

Business Manager: Kris Jesse

kjesse@saintmichael-cd.org

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ktrafford@saintmichael-cd.org

Receptionist/Secretary: Rhonda Marinelli

rmarinelli@saintmichael-cd.org

Marketing & Communications: Rebecca Lund

rlund@saintmichael-cd.org

Campus Facility and Safety Director:

Steve Moore

smoore@saintmichael-cd.org

Safe Environment Coordinator: Bethany Cook

bcook@saintmichael-cd.org

Choir Director/Organist: Ron Barrett

rbarrett@saintmichael-cd.org

ST. MICHAEL SCHOOL

Website: stmichaelworthington.org

School Office: 614-885-3149

Principal: Sr. Mary Regina, O.P.

principal@stmichaelworthington.org

Preschool Director: Laura Wells

lwells@stmichaelworthington.org

PARISH REPRESENTATIVES

Athletic Association Representative: Liz Trolli

smaa@saintmichael-cd.org

Knights of Columbus Representative:

Seth Walker

grandknight@kofc11445.com

St. Vincent de Paul Society Representative:

Elaine Miracle

svdp@saintmichael-cd.org

SAINT MICHAEL INFORMATION CENTER



LOW-GLUTEN HOST

If you are in need of a low-gluten host, please scan this QR code for full details.



NEW MEMBERS

Registering in a parish is a declaration of your desire to be part of a Catholic community and a commitment to the life of the parish family. We are often asked to provide affidavits for parishioner standing. We can only do this if a person is a registered, active, and contributing member in our parish. You can register by scanning the QR code above or by visiting our website at www.saintmichael-cd.org.

BULLETIN DEADLINE

To submit a bulletin request, the request must be made no later than 12:00 p.m., Monday. Send bulletin requests to rlund@saintmichael-cd.org with "BULLETIN REQUEST" in the subject line with all details and contact person for questions. Early submission deadlines may be required surrounding holidays. All bulletin requests are subject to approval.

HOMEBOUND MINISTRY

St. Michael's Homebound Ministry is available to bring the Eucharist to the homebound. If you or a loved one within St. Michael Parish boundaries would like someone to bring the Eucharist to you, please reach out to Sr. Riya Mary to coordinate. She can be reached by calling the Parish Office or by emailing srriya@stmichael-cd.org.



ONLINE GIVING

St. Michael offers online giving as a convenient tool for you to use. Scan the QR code to learn more or to set up online contributions.

ADORATION CHAPEL

There is no better way to spend an hour of your week than in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament. Consider signing up for Adoration. Our Adoration Chapel offers Eucharistic Exposition on Thursdays and Fridays from 9:00 a.m., Thursday morning through 9:00 p.m., Friday evening. Adoration is available at all other times with the Blessed Sacrament reposed in the tabernacle. Registration is easy to do from your phone. Visit StMichael.WeAdoreHim.com to sign up. You can also visit the Church on Wednesdays for our weekly Holy Hour with Confessions from 6:30-7:30 p.m. each week.

FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT

MARCH 10, 2024

DAILY MASS INTENTIONS

Saturday, March 9

4:00 p.m. + Jo Kell (Claudia & Cristopher Mueller)

Sunday, March 10

8:30 a.m. Special Intention of John & Deb Smith on their
45th Wedding Anniversary

10:30 a.m. + Dominic & Dominica Canini
(Armando & Liliana Tempesta)

12:30 p.m. For the Living & Deceased Members of our Parish

5:00 p.m. Special Intention of the Moran Family
(The Jimenez Family)

Monday, March 11

6:30 a.m. + Deacon Craig Smith

8:15 a.m. + Poor Souls in Purgatory

Tuesday, March 12

6:30 a.m. + Anna Lee Jones (The Marinelli Family)

8:15 a.m. + Dr. Dale Petrill (Dcn John Crerand)

Wednesday, March 13

6:30 a.m. + Hannah Hinger (Bill & MaryBeth Hinger)

8:15 a.m. For the School

6:00 p.m. + Robert & Joan Brown (The Brown Family)

Thursday, March 14

6:30 a.m. + Fred Miller

8:15 a.m. Special Intention of the Lynda Family

Friday, March 15

6:30 a.m. + Deceased Members of the Jimenez Family
(Brian & Dee Jimenez)

8:15 a.m. Special Intention of Jody Munhall (Karen & Lou Griffith)

Saturday, March 16

8:15 a.m. + Cathy Miller

4:00 p.m. + Jeff Siferd (Dcn. Klaus & Sharon Fricke)

Sunday, March 17

8:30 a.m. + Deacon Craig Smith (Dcn. John Crerand)

10:30 a.m. + Heinrich Bohnen (Brigitte Bohnen-Hartley)

12:30 p.m. + Warren, David & Michael Roberts (Carolyn Roberts)

5:00 p.m. For the Living & Deceased Members of our Parish

FINANCIAL STEWARDSHIP

MARCH 3, 2024:

Envelopes\$ 23,569.06

Online Giving\$ 13,099.00

Total:\$ 36,668.06



PARISH CALENDAR MARCH

SUNDAY, March 10	11:30 a.m. RCIA (UMR) 2:00 p.m. Baptism Class (UMR)	Thursday, March 14	Eucharistic Exposition (AC) 5:30 p.m. Cub Scout Meeting (U) 6:00 p.m. Respect Life Ministry Meeting (UMR) 6:30 p.m. Young Adult Bible Study (LMR) 7:00 p.m. Choir Practice (C)
Monday, March 11	6:30 p.m. Boy Scouts (U)	Friday, March 15	Eucharistic Exposition (AC) 5:00 p.m. Fish Fry (U) 7:30 p.m. Stations of the Cross (C)
Tuesday, March 12	11:30 a.m. Live Wires (MH)	Saturday, March 16	6:45 a.m. Men's Faith & Fellowship (UMR) 7:00 a.m. Pietra (LMR) 2:30 p.m. Confessions (C)
Wednesday, March 13	6:00 p.m. Mass, Holy Hour & Confessions (C) 6:00 p.m. Melchizedek Project (UMR)	SUNDAY, March 17	11:30 a.m. RCIA (UMR) 11:30 a.m. PSR (LMR)

(U) = Undercroft/Cafeteria, (S) = School, (C) = Church, (G) = Gym, (MH) = Marian Hall, (SL) = School Library, (UMR) = Meeting room on the first floor of the Parish Ministry Center, (LMR) = Meeting room in the basement of the Parish Ministry Center, (AC) = Adoration Chapel

FROM THE PASTOR

ON THIS FOURTH SUNDAY IN LENT – AT THIS MIDPOINT OF OUR LENTEN JOURNEY, we are reminded in today's Gospel narrative that light triumphs over darkness, truth over half-truths and lies, faith over disbelief. It also tells us that, while physical blindness is certainly a terrible affliction, how much worse an affliction is that of spiritual blindness. This miracle tells us that admission of ignorance can open the door to knowledge of God. It tells us that the poor and the afflicted frequently have far more insight than the religious elite. It tells us that Christ the Light of the World wants to enlighten the lives of each one of us. In our everyday language, we speak of "sight" and "insight." We see by ordinary physical sight the things around us, even though to call this ordinary could hardly be correct, since sight is in itself one of the most extraordinary aspects of creation. But with insight, we see at quite another level, we come to a realization, we make connections that are not immediately apparent. There is a moment when the real truth of something dawns on us; the moment of insight. But if we go one step deeper than so-called "ordinary" insight, we recognize the moment of coming to faith in our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. I am certain that almost everyone reading this has experienced such a moment, which is something much deeper even than insight. It is the moment, when we came to realize that God exists, that He is the author and sustainer of all creation, that Jesus is His Son and our Savior. And that the only appropriate thing for us to do in the face of this realization is to do just what that blind man did – get on our knees and worship Christ our Lord, Savior and Redeemer! Now, when we look at the Gospel of the blind man, and look also at the word of the Psalmist today – "The Lord is my Shepherd, there is nothing I shall want," (Psalm 23) we know the Good Shepherd says that "the sheep hear his voice, and he calls his sheep by name." (John 10:3) Are we spiritually blind to Jesus, the Good Shepherd? If we are honest with ourselves, the answer is "Yes," but now we need to ask how frequently am I blinded by (fill in the blank...) which then leads me to turn away from the Good Shepherd and instead lead me to sin? How do I justify my actions by placing myself before God? God Himself can be blocked out of our consciousness if we hear only our own voice, by living in a "virtual reality" sustained by the imaginings of the ego. Jesus told Peter, "Tend my lambs... Feed my sheep ... Feed my sheep." (John 21:15-17) The sheep are those who hear God, but need encouragement. The lambs are those of us who, at times, seem to have blocked out God, Who continues to call to us. Once we have been brought to consciousness, sometimes by the shock of crises in life, which can strike like a rod, then God leads us with His shepherd's staff into green pastures and "restores my soul." (Psalm 23:3) Prayer is conversation with God, and it is often difficult for us because, by misuses of our freewill, we can "put Him on hold." When we do not answer, God leaves us a "recorded message," *per se*, through the Scriptures, the Saints, and the Liturgy. The Latin word for deaf is *surdus*, and man does become an absurdity to his very self when he willfully listens only to himself. When the dying Saint Stephen said he could see the Son seated at the right hand of the Father, the mob covered their ears, but one of them listened. When Saint Paul was converted, he said: "you also, who have heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and have believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit." (Ephesians 1:13) Folks, our often suborn, human pride has the capacity to blind our minds and our hearts to an authentic reality – the reality of living our lives according to the way of God and His Son, Jesus Christ. Our Lord predicted that some would not believe even if "were one raised from the dead." Moral blindness prefers impressions and opinions to facts, forgetting that no matter our human opinion, our opinions and our "feelings" on a particular matter never supersede the timeless truths of Jesus Christ. So, if we've been blinded by someone or something, remember that Jesus Christ is always out there with His invitation to follow Him. Remember that in today's Gospel, it was Jesus who approached the blind man. This first means that faith comes from God and is not the invention of our wishful thinking. "In this is love: not that we have loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as expiation for our sins." (1 John 4:10) Secondly, faith requires obedience. While the blind man could have washed in any water, Christ commanded that he wash in the Pool of Siloam. By doing so, the blind man conformed his will to God's. Our limited human reason may question the Divine Logic and Truth of God's commandments, but what matters is not logic but the *Logos*, the source of all logic. Jesus resolved this conflict between perception and the source of perception in His own human nature: "Not my will, but yours be done." (Luke 22:42) When the blind man did God's will he was changed: no longer an obsequious beggar but a winner in debate with the Pharisees. Defeated, the Pharisees could only try to get rid of Him. Silly Pharisees – they just don't get it! And look at what they missed out on because they let their pride get the best of them!

OF NOTE: MANY THANKS to all who volunteered at last weekend's Ministry Fair, with **MANY THANKS** to all who signed up in various capacities to serve one another here at Saint Michael's, and in serving the Lord – 125 new volunteer registrations! It takes a lot of people to make any parish carry out its mission to serve the Lord and one another, and so it was very encouraging to see so many step forward and say "Yes, I can do this... Yes, I want to do this..." Thank you!

CONTINUED THANKS to all involved in our Knights of Columbus Friday Fish Fry dinners, along with **MUCH THANKS** to all involved in last weekend's "**Power and Love**" high school youth retreat here on our parish campus.

God bless,
Fr. Mike

Early Bulletin Deadlines

Please note the following early bulletin deadlines as we approach the Easter Season:

March 10 Bulletin submissions due March 4
March 17 Bulletin submissions due March 6
March 24 bulletin submissions due March 7
March 31 bulletin submissions due March 18
April 7 bulletin submissions due March 25

Easter Flowers

All Easter Flower envelopes and donations must be received by March 18 to be included in the Easter bulletin.

Parish Office Holiday Hours

Please note that the Parish Office will be closed on March 29 & April 1 as we celebrate the Easter Triduum with our families.



ATTENTION ALL BAKERS!

The Knights of Columbus are accepting baked goods for the dessert table for the Fish Fry. Please drop off baked goods at the church any time after 3:30 p.m. on Fridays through March 22. Thank you for your support and generosity!

2024 Easter Triduum Services

Thursday, March 28, 6:00pm:
Mass of the Lord's Supper

Friday, March 29, 3:00pm:
Good Friday Liturgy

Saturday, March 30, 8:00pm:
Easter Vigil*

Sunday, March 31; 8:30am, 10:30am & 12:30pm**
Easter Sunday Masses

Holy Week Confessions

Monday, March 25, 5:00pm-7:00pm

Wednesday, March 27, 6:30pm-7:30pm

Friday, April 7, after the Good Friday Liturgy
until 6:00pm

*Join us after the Easter Vigil for a reception to welcome our newest members of the Church.

**Easter Egg Hunt immediately following the 12:30pm Mass.



Women's Faith & Fellowship Daughterhood by Candlelight

with Monica Richards

Thursday, April 18th

7:00pm

Marian Hall



RSVP Now!

Join us for an evening of fellowship as we enjoy a meal and listen to Monica Richards share with us about our Daughterhood as beloved daughters of our King. Monica Richards is a full-time missionary with Damascus, wife & mother of five, and licensed Doctor of clinical Psychology. She has an amazing ability to drill fearlessly into deep issues, develop trust, & facilitate pathways toward healing and wholeness for each individual she encounters. *To host a table or RSVP as an individual, please use the QR code to join us for this amazing evening.*

YOUNG ADULT BIBLE STUDY

Young adults of the parish are invited to join our Bible Study on Thursday evenings in the Lower Meeting Room from 6:30-7:30 p.m. All are welcome – invite a friend to join you! Questions? Email Jake Asuncion at jasuncion@saintmichael-cd.org.

ST. VINCENT DE PAUL FOOD PANTRY

The St. Vincent de Paul Food Pantry at St. Michael is in need of the following items: Canned beef stew, Manwich/sloppy joe, body wash, shampoo, conditioner, and toothpaste. Thank you for your continued generosity to those in need!

LIVE WIRES

Join us on Tuesday, March 12th at 11:30 a.m. for a potluck lunch! Sandwiches and drinks will be provided; you provide a side dish or dessert to share! To ensure we have enough sandwiches for all, please RSVP to Barb Edwards at 614-888-6782, by Monday, March 11th. We hope to see you there!

Join us this week for
Stations of the Cross
Friday at 7:30pm



EXPERIENCE PIETRA

Join us for *Pietra*: an exercise class that strengthens body, mind, and spirit! Upcoming classes include *Pietra Kids*, *Lenten Pietra*, *Mother/Daughter*, and our regular *Women's Saturday morning* classes. Information and signup can be found at the QR code or by visiting www.viribuswellness.com/pietra.

Recently St. Michael Athletic Association's Spring Flower Fundraiser started! We rely on this and other fundraisers each year and are really grateful for your support! Please see the Foertmeyer and Sons' Spring Flower Catalog for information on what's available, pricing, and how to order your plants online!

SALE EXTENDED THROUGH MARCH 12!! DON'T DELAY!

Sale Ends ~~3/6~~ **2024** Plant Pick Up (@ St Michael Church) **5/1/2024**

1. Go to **Fundraiseit.org**
2. Click the green "Online Shopping" button
3. Find the "Quick Lookup" in green writing
4. Type in "1FA980" in "Enter code here"

It's Easy! Shop Online.

SCAN THE QR CODE



Scan the QR code to generate your link to order.

www.fundraiseit.org

Be "Doers of the Word"

SAINT MICHAEL THE ARCHANGEL ▪ 5750 N. HIGH STREET WORTHINGTON, OHIO 43085 ▪ (614) 885-7814

Conquer spiritual blindness

by Fr. Ed Broom, OMV

Jesus the "Light of the world" gave sight to the blind! Spiritual blindness is an extremely prevalent reality. However, spiritually blind eyes can still have their sight restored.

This short article will bring to the light three major reasons for spiritual blindness and then three remedies to conquer this blindness! May Jesus the "light of the world" dispel the spiritual blindness in our souls.

1. *Jealousy and Envy.* One of the Capital sins is Envy. A definition for envy: "You feel bad because somebody else has something that you do not have and when something bad happens to this person you rejoice." Cain killed Able due to envy. Saul tried to kill young David because of envy. Joseph was sold as a slave into Egypt due to the envy of his brothers. Finally, one of the principal reasons for the condemnation, crucifixion and death of Jesus was the envy of some of the Jews. Have you ever given into jealousy or envy in your life? Time to repent.

2. *Bitter Anger.* Anger does not fulfill the justice of God. When the passion of anger has gotten control of your life, it is probably best not to speak and react towards others; this could prove catastrophic. We have to learn to cope with our anger and learn techniques to extinguish the fire and calm down.

3. *Impurity.* Without a doubt one of the chief causes of modern spiritual blindness is a rapidly increasing viewing and addiction to pornography. One of the principal reasons is the ease of access to pornography. A half a decade ago, porn was available mostly through a magazine or two. However today no matter where one turns he is literally bombarded with impure images: T.V. programs and commercials, Cable, Movies, Magazines, Newspaper advertisements, and most especially the easy access to Internet—the sources never end! It is like an avalanche that has started and in full force.

There is barely anything in the world that militates more fiercely against growth in the spiritual life than giving in to impurity. St. Thomas Aquinas, the Angelic Doctor, asserts that impurity causes spiritual blindness and leads even to hating God. Many will reject God, the Church, the reception of the Sacraments because they have become addicts—to one of the tentacles of the ugly octopus of impurity, especially internet porn! May God save us, heal us and restore our sight!

As Jesus healed the blind two thousand years ago, so He is just as powerful today to heal all spiritual maladies and that of course includes spiritual blindness. Our prayer should be: "Lord grant me light to contemplate the beauty of your face now and for all eternity!" Following are three ways that we can use our eyes well so as to glorify God, sanctify our souls and live out the beatitude: "*Blessed are the pure of heart for they will see God.*" (Mt. 5:8)

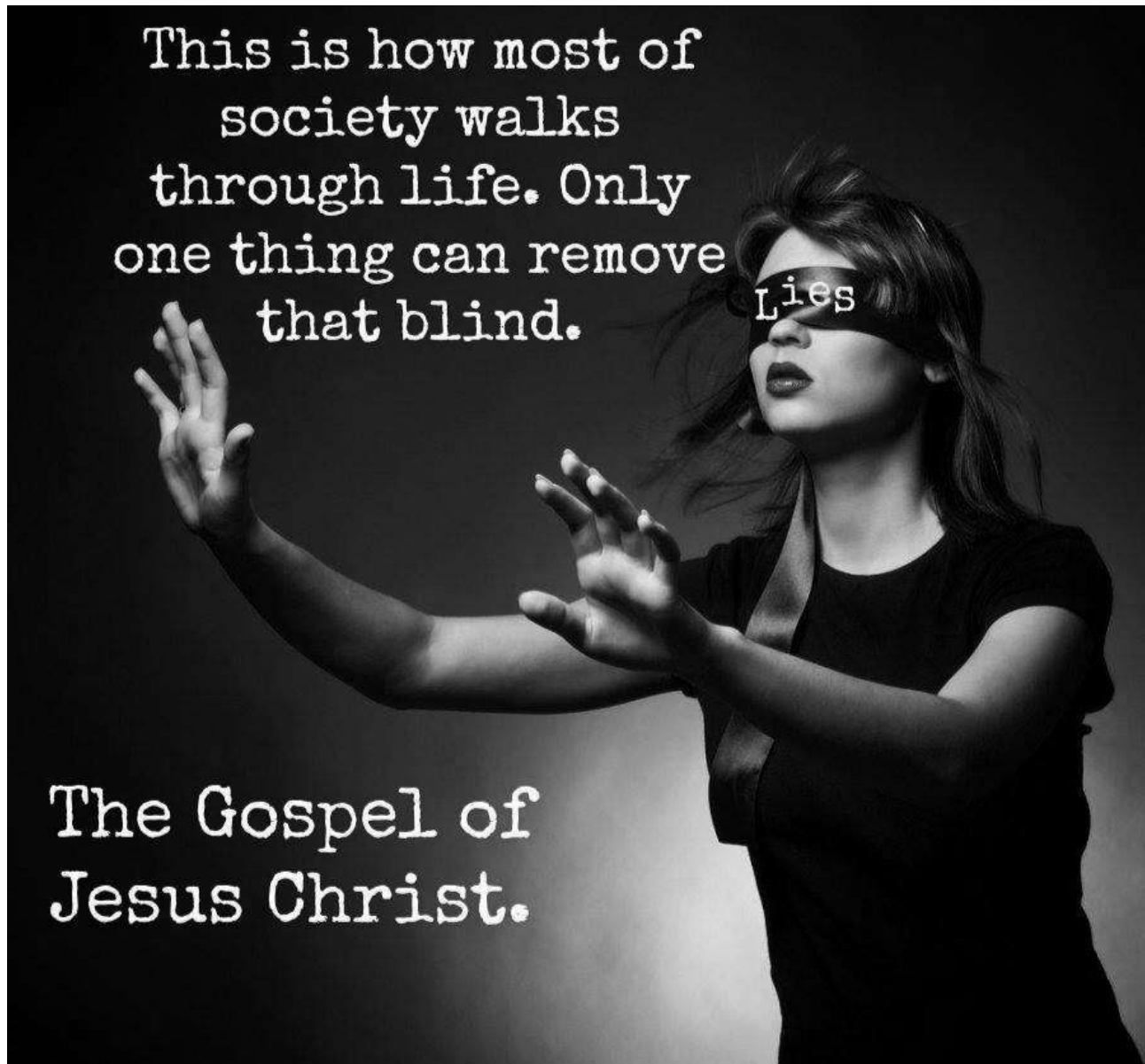
1. *Meditate on the Word of God.* What chlorine is to the pool water, the Word of God is to the human mind. If our mind has been contaminated by indecent and impure images they must be dislodged, purified and discarded. One of the most efficacious tools to rid one's mind of bad images and to restore spiritual sight is the daily reading, meditating and even memorizing of the Word of God. The Psalmist describes the Word of God as a light and lantern for our steps. Jesus is the Word of God and the Light of the World who came to dispel darkness and even blindness.

2. *Contemplate the Eucharistic God.* When Jesus lived 2000 years ago people could not always see Him. When He was in Galilee, He was not at the same time in Jerusalem. In other words, even though Jesus could have been in many places at the same time, He decided to limit His presence to one time and place. Right now we have an extraordinary grace: contact and exposure to the Real Presence of Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ in the most Blessed Sacrament. In all of the Catholic Churches throughout the world Jesus is present in either the Tabernacle or exposed in the monstrance and sometimes both at the same time! He invites all to come to Him: "*Come to me all of you who are weary*

and you will find rest for your souls because my yoke is easy and my burden is light. I am meek and humble of heart."(Mt. 11:28-30) What a privilege we have right now: to visit Jesus, look at Him present in the Blessed Sacrament and to love Him with all of our hearts. The Psalmist once again invites us: *"Look to the Lord and be radiant with joy."*

3. *Contemplate the Face of Mary.* All of us should form the wonderful habit of praying to Mary every day: the Morning Offering, Angelus, *Memorare*, Litany, and especially the Holy Rosary. While praying to Mary it is of great help to have before our eyes a beautiful image of Mary—statue, painting, icon, mural, mosaic, stain-glass window.... Prayer is the lifting up of the mind and heart to God. By contemplating a beautiful image of Mary, such as Our Lady of grace, Our Lady of Fatima, Our Lady of Lourdes, Our Lady of Guadalupe, Our Lady of Perpetual Help, a transformation takes place in our eyes, mind, heart, soul and even in our body! The scales of our spiritual blindness fall from our interior eyes and we are able to see God and all that refers to God with greater clarity! Indeed among the many beautiful titles given to Mary, several refer to light: Mary, star of the sea, Mary, morning star, Mary, the star of evangelization. Saint Pope John Paul II in his Apostolic letter on the Rosary, in which he introduced the Mysteries of light, stated that we should strive to contemplate the Face of Jesus through the eyes of Mary. Let us cure our spiritual blindness by contemplating the beauty of the face of Mary, the "Masterpiece of creation". (St. Louis de Montfort).

This article is made available courtesy of The Catholic Exchange.



Lectio Divina

SCRIPTURE READING + MEDITATION + PRAYER + CONTEMPLATION

"What page, what passage of the inspired books of the Old and New Testaments is not the truest of guides for human life?" ~Saint Benedict, from the *Rule of Saint Benedict* (73:3)

The month of March is dedicated to Saint Joseph.

"Lent is the autumn of the spiritual life, during which we gather fruit to keep us going for the rest of the year."
+ SAINT FRANCIS DE SALES, PATRON SAINT OF THE DIOCESE OF COLUMBUS

Monday, March 11 ~ Fourth Week in the Season of Lent

Holy Gospel: John 4:43-54 At that time Jesus left [Samaria] for Galilee. For Jesus himself testified that a prophet has no honor in his native place. When he came into Galilee, the Galileans welcomed him, since they had seen all he had done in Jerusalem at the feast; for they themselves had gone to the feast. Then he returned to Cana in Galilee, where he had made the water wine. Now there was a royal official whose son was ill in Capernaum. When he heard that Jesus had arrived in Galilee from Judea, he went to him and asked him to come down and heal his son, who was near death. Jesus said to him, "Unless you people see signs and wonders, you will not believe." The royal official said to him, "Sir, come down before my child dies." Jesus said to him, "You may go; your son will live." The man believed what Jesus said to him and left. While the man was on his way back, his slaves met him and told him that his boy would live. He asked them when he began to recover. They told him, "The fever left him yesterday, about one in the afternoon." The father realized that just at that time Jesus had said to him, "Your son will live," and he and his whole household came to believe. Now this was the second sign Jesus did when he came to Galilee from Judea.

Meditation: Isaiah prophesied that God would establish a new heavens and earth when he came to restore his people. Jesus' miracles are signs that manifest the presence and power of God's kingdom. When a Gentile official heard the reports of Jesus' preaching and miracles, he decided to seek Jesus out for an extraordinary favor. It took raw courage for a Gentile court official to travel twenty miles in search of Jesus, the Galilean carpenter. He had to swallow his pride and put up with some ridicule from his cronies. And when he found the healer carpenter, Jesus seemed to put him off with the blunt statement that people would not believe unless they saw some kind of miracle or sign from heaven. Jesus likely said this to test the man to see if his faith was in earnest. If he turned away discouraged or irritated, he would prove to be insincere. Jesus, perceiving his faith, sent him home with the assurance that his prayer had been heard.

Prayer: O God, who renew the world through mysteries beyond all telling, grant, we pray, that your Church may be guided by your eternal design. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Contemplation: If you think about it, it was probably not easy for this man to leave Jesus and go back home only with the assuring word that his son would be healed. Couldn't Jesus have come to this man's home and touched his dying child? The court official believed and surrendered to Jesus. He was ready to return home and face ridicule and laughter because he trusted in Jesus' word. God's mercy shows his generous love -- a love that bends down in response to our misery and wretchedness. Do you approach the Lord Jesus with the readiness to believe in his word and to do whatever he commands?

Tuesday, March 12 ~ Fourth Week in the Season of Lent

Holy Gospel: John 5:1-16 There was a feast of the Jews, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. Now there is in Jerusalem at the Sheep Gate a pool called in Hebrew Bethesda, with five porticoes. In these lay a large number of ill, blind, lame, and crippled. One man was there who had been ill for thirty-eight years. When Jesus saw him lying there and knew that he had been ill for a long time, he said to him, "Do you want to

be well?" The sick man answered him, "Sir, I have no one to put me into the pool when the water is stirred up; while I am on my way, someone else gets down there before me." Jesus said to him, "Rise, take up your mat, and walk." Immediately the man became well, took up his mat, and walked. Now that day was a Sabbath. So the Jews said to the man who was cured, "It is the Sabbath, and it is not lawful for you to carry your mat." He answered them, "The man who made me well told me, 'Take up your mat and walk.'" They asked him, "Who is the man who told you, 'Take it up and walk'?" The man who was healed did not know who it was, for Jesus had slipped away, since there was a crowd there. After this Jesus found him in the temple area and said to him, "Look, you are well; do not sin any more, so that nothing worse may happen to you." The man went and told the Jews that Jesus was the one who had made him well. Therefore, the Jews began to persecute Jesus because he did this on a Sabbath.

Meditation: Water has the power to transform everything it touches – water brings life, healing, and restoration. Jesus offers himself as the source of this living water which he will pour out upon his disciples in the gift of the Holy Spirit. The signs and miracles which Jesus performed manifest the power and presence of God's kingdom and they demonstrate the love and mercy God has for his people. In the pool at Bethesda we see an individual's helplessness overcome by God's mercy and power. On this occasion Jesus singles out an incurable invalid, helpless and hopeless for almost forty years. He awakens hope when he puts a probing question to the man, "Do you really want to be healed?" And he then orders him to "get up and walk!"

Prayer: May the venerable exercises of holy devotion shape the hearts of your faithful, O Lord, to welcome worthily the Paschal Mystery and proclaim the praises of your salvation. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, for ever and ever.

Contemplation: God wants to free us from the power of sin and make us whole. But he will not force our hand against our will. The first essential step towards growth and healing is the desire for change. If we are content to stay as we are, then no amount of coaxing will change us. The Lord manifests his power and saving grace towards those who desire transformation of life in Christ. The Lord approaches each of us with an important and probing question: "Do you really want to be changed, to be set free from the power of sin, and to be transformed in my holiness?" How we respond has life-long implications.

Wednesday, March 13 ~ Fourth Week in the Season of Lent

Holy Gospel: John 5:17-30 Jesus answered the Jews: "My Father is at work until now, so I am at work." For this reason they tried all the more to kill him, because he not only broke the Sabbath but he also called God his own father, making himself equal to God. Jesus answered and said to them, "Amen, amen, I say to you, the Son cannot do anything on his own, but only what he sees the Father doing; for what he does, the Son will do also. For the Father loves the Son and shows him everything that he himself does, and he will show him greater works than these, so that you may be amazed. For just as the Father raises the dead and gives life, so also does the Son give life to whomever he wishes. Nor does the Father judge anyone, but he has given all judgment to the Son, so that all may honor the Son just as they honor the Father. Whoever does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent him. Amen, amen, I say to you, whoever hears my word and believes in the one who sent me has eternal life and will not come to condemnation, but has passed from death to life. Amen, amen, I say to you, the hour is coming and is now here when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear will live. For just as the Father has life in himself, so also he gave to the Son the possession of life in himself. And he gave him power to exercise judgment, because he is the Son of Man. Do not be amazed at this, because the hour is coming in which all who are in the tombs will hear his voice and will come out, those who have done good deeds to the resurrection of life, but those who have done wicked deeds to the resurrection of condemnation. "I cannot do anything on my own; I judge as I hear, and my judgment is just, because I do not seek my own will but the will of the one who sent me."

Meditation: God's actions always reveal to us his mercy and his justice. Do you recognize his action in your life, his saving grace and love, and the purifying fire of his Spirit who convicts us of sin and transforms us in his holiness? Jesus fulfills the prophecy of Isaiah when he brings healing, restoration, and forgiveness to those who accept his divine message. Unfortunately many people refused Jesus' message and authority to speak and act on behalf of the Father. The religious authorities charged Jesus as a "Sabbath-breaker" and as a "blasphemer". They wanted to kill Jesus because he claimed the same authority and power as God. He claimed equality with God— something no mortal could say without blaspheming. Jesus answered their charge of breaking the Sabbath law by demonstrating God's purpose for creation and redemption — to save and restore life. God's love and mercy never ceases, even on the Sabbath. Jesus continues to show the Father's mercy, even on the Sabbath day of rest. When they

charged that Jesus was making himself equal with God, he replied that he was not acting independently of God because his relationship is that of a Father and Son relationship.

Prayer: O God, who reward the merits of the just and offer pardon to sinners who do penance, have mercy, we pray, on those who call upon you, that the admission of our guilt may serve to obtain your pardon for our sins. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Contemplation: If we wish to see how God reacts to sin and how he responds to our sinful condition, then we must look to Jesus. The mind of Jesus is the mind of God, and the words of Jesus are the words of God. Jesus also states that his identity to the Father is based on complete obedience. Jesus always did what his Father wanted him to do. His obedience was not based on submission or power, but on love. The unity between Jesus and the Father is a unity of love. We are called to submit our lives to God with the same love and obedience which Jesus demonstrated for his Father. Jesus states that to accept him is life and to reject him is death. Are you ready to follow the Lord and to leave behind whatever is false and contrary to his will?

Thursday, March 14 ~ Fourth Week in the Season of Lent

Holy Gospel: John 5:31-47 Jesus said to the Jews: "If I testify on my own behalf, my testimony is not true. But there is another who testifies on my behalf, and I know that the testimony he gives on my behalf is true. You sent emissaries to John, and he testified to the truth. I do not accept human testimony, but I say this so that you may be saved. He was a burning and shining lamp, and for a while you were content to rejoice in his light. But I have testimony greater than John's. The works that the Father gave me to accomplish, these works that I perform testify on my behalf that the Father has sent me. Moreover, the Father who sent me has testified on my behalf. But you have never heard his voice nor seen his form, and you do not have his word remaining in you, because you do not believe in the one whom he has sent. You search the Scriptures, because you think you have eternal life through them; even they testify on my behalf. But you do not want to come to me to have life. "I do not accept human praise; moreover, I know that you do not have the love of God in you. I came in the name of my Father, but you do not accept me; yet if another comes in his own name, you will accept him. How can you believe, when you accept praise from one another and do not seek the praise that comes from the only God? Do not think that I will accuse you before the Father: the one who will accuse you is Moses, in whom you have placed your hope. For if you had believed Moses, you would have believed me, because he wrote about me. But if you do not believe his writings, how will you believe my words?"

Meditation: Do you know the joy of embracing the teachings and challenges in the gospel? Do you understand the joy of fully submitting yourself to Jesus Christ? Jesus' opponents refused to accept his divine authority and claim to be the only Son from the Father. They demanded evidence for his Messianic claim and equality with God. Jesus answers their charges with the supporting evidence of witnesses. The Mosaic law had laid down the principle that the unsupported evidence of one person shall not prevail against a man for any crime or wrong in connection with any offence he committed (see Deuteronomy 17:6). At least two or three witnesses were needed. Jesus begins his defense by citing John the Baptist as a witness, since John publicly pointed to Jesus as the Messiah and had repeatedly borne witness to him (see John 1:19, 20, 26, 29, 35, 36). Jesus also asserts that a greater witness to his identity are the signs he performed. He cites his works, not to point to himself but to point to the power of God working in and through him. He cites God as his supreme witness.

Prayer: We invoke your mercy in humble prayer, O Lord, that you may cause us, your servants, corrected by penance and schooled by good works, to persevere sincerely in your commands and come safely to the paschal festivities. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Contemplation: Jesus asserts that the scriptures themselves, including the books of Moses, point to himself as the Messiah, the promised Savior. The problem with the scribes and Pharisees was that they did not believe what Moses had written. They desired the praise of their fellow humans and because of that they were unable to recognize and understand the word of God. Their pride made them deaf to God's voice. God reveals himself to the lowly, to those who trust not in themselves, but in God. The Lord opens the ears of those who are eager to hear his voice and he fills their hearts and minds with his love and wisdom. Saint Augustine once said: "As Christians, our task is to make daily progress toward God. Our pilgrimage on earth is a school in which God is the only teacher, and it demands good students, not ones who play truant. In this school we learn something every day. We learn something from commandments,

something from examples, and something from sacraments. These things are remedies for our wounds and materials for study." So we must ask ourselves: Are you an eager student of God's word and do you listen to it with faith and trust? If not, why not?

Friday, March 15 ~ Fourth Week in the Season of Lent

Holy Gospel: John 7:1-2, 10, 25-30 Jesus moved about within Galilee; he did not wish to travel in Judea, because the Jews were trying to kill him. But the Jewish feast of Tabernacles was near. But when his brothers had gone up to the feast, he himself also went up, not openly but as it were in secret. Some of the inhabitants of Jerusalem said, "Is he not the one they are trying to kill? And look, he is speaking openly and they say nothing to him. Could the authorities have realized that he is the Christ? But we know where he is from. When the Christ comes, no one will know where he is from." So Jesus cried out in the temple area as he was teaching and said, "You know me and also know where I am from. Yet I did not come on my own, but the one who sent me, whom you do not know, is true. I know him, because I am from him, and he sent me." So they tried to arrest him, but no one laid a hand upon him, because his hour had not yet come.

Meditation: What can hold us back from doing the will of God? Fear, especially the fear of death, can easily rob us of courage and the will to do what we know is right. Jesus met opposition and the threat of death with grace and determination to accomplish his Father's will. Jesus knew that his mission, his purpose in life, would entail sacrifice and suffering and culminate with death on the cross. But that would not be the end. His "hour" would crush defeat with victory, condemnation with pardon and freedom, and death with glory and everlasting life. He willingly suffered and went to the cross for our sake, to redeem us from sin and to restore our relationship with God the Father. Saint Augustine once noted: "Our Lord had the power to lay down his life and to take it up again. But we cannot choose how long we shall live, and death comes to us even against our will. Christ, by dying, has already overcome death. Our freedom from death comes only through his death. To save us Christ had no need of us. Yet without him we can do nothing. He gave himself to us as the vine to the branches; apart from him we cannot live."

Prayer: O God, who have prepared fitting helps for us in our weakness, grant we pray, that we may receive their healing effects with joy and reflect them in a holy way of life. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Contemplation: Despite how modern, sophisticated, or knowledgeable we may look upon or feel about ourselves, no one can be indifferent with Jesus for long. What he said and did – his signs and wonders – he did in the name of God. Jesus not only claimed to be the Messiah, God's Anointed One. He claimed to be in a unique relationship with God and to know him as no one else did. To the Jews this was utter blasphemy. The religious authorities did all they could to put a stop to Jesus because they could not accept his claims and the demands he made. We cannot be indifferent to the claims which Jesus makes on us. We are either for him or against him. There is no middle ground. We can try to mold Jesus to our own ideas and preferences or we can allow his word to free us from our own ignorance, stubborn pride, and deception. Do you accept all that Jesus has said and done for you with faith and reverence or with disbelief and contempt? The consequences are enormous, both in this life and in eternity.

Scripture passages (NAB translation) courtesy of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops. Daily meditations and contemplations adapted from the Irish Jesuits' *Sacred Space* web page and *Biblical Medications for Lent* by Rev. Carroll Stuhlmueller, C.P.; prayers are from *The Roman Missal*, Catholic Book Publishing, 2011; information about saints, solemnities, feasts and memorials courtesy of the Catholic Culture web site.

frlump:2024

A PRAYER TO SAINT JOSEPH, DURING THE MONTH OF MARCH WHICH IS DEDICATED TO SAINT JOSEPH
Glorious Saint Joseph, model of all who devote their lives to labor, obtain for me the grace to work in the spirit of penance in order thereby to atone for my many sins; to work conscientiously, setting devotion to duty in preference to my own whims; to work with thankfulness and joy, deeming it an honor to employ and to develop by my labor the gifts I have received from God; to work with order, peace, moderation, and patience, without ever shrinking from weariness and difficulties; to work above all with a pure intention and with detachment from self, having always before my eyes the hour of death and the accounting which I must then render of time ill spent, of talents wasted, of good omitted, and of vain complacency in success, which is so fatal to the work of God. All for Jesus, all through Mary, all in imitation of you, O Patriarch Joseph! This shall be my motto in life and in death. Amen.

SEASON OF LENT

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Drugs and the pursuit of happiness

by Howard Kainz

At the beginning of the *Nicomachean Ethics*, Aristotle examines the variety of human pursuits – for pleasure, honor, knowledge, etc. – and concludes that none of them are sought for their own sake. The only good sought for its own sake is happiness. It would be absurd to ask people why they are seeking happiness. Human beings are, as it were, “programmed” to seek happiness. Even the masochist or the suicide is seeking happiness, albeit in a distorted way.

Becoming more specific, Aristotle tries to define *ideal* happiness as living a long and virtuous life in good health, with sufficient material possessions, and exercising our endowment of rational powers, with a few good friends, and maybe good children also.

Obviously, this ideal requires a certain amount of luck, as well as some talents. But he admits that “great and continual misfortunes” can make the attainment of happiness difficult, even for the most virtuous person.

A more accessible version of happiness appears in a motto I used to see in the recreation center of my university – “aim for a natural high” – clearly meant to discourage the use of drugs and encouraging the use of tennis courts, swimming pool, weight-lifting apparatus, or (in my case) racquetball courts, to tone up body and mind.

The motto in the Rec Center contains a nugget of truth. Playing sports, helping others, being creative in arts and music and philosophy, can bring on a natural high. But if we pin our hopes on any such endeavor, we are still on the wrong track.

The problem is our oh-so-human tendency to look for almost infinite and unmitigated happiness. As St. Augustine put it in *Confessions*, “Our Hearts are Restless Until They Rest in [God].” No amount of wealth, pleasure, power, popularity, etc. can satisfy. Restlessness always ensues.

Fr. Robert Spitzer’s book, *The Soul’s Upward Yearning*, offers philosophical, psychological and scientific arguments for the widespread human aspiration for transcendence. Such tendencies can lead to serious searching – or be ignored. One who famously ignored such tendencies (and redefined transcendence as simply a relation to “otherness”) was the French existentialist Jean-Paul Sartre, who aspired to be one of the few great atheist philosophers, and in his 1964 book, *The Words*, mentions that he once had a concrete experience of the presence of God and resolutely rejected the experience.

In *The Church – Paradox and Mystery*, theologian Henri de Lubac writes: “Deep in human nature (and so in every man) the image of God is imprinted, that is, a quality that constitutes in it – and even without it – a kind of secret call to the object of the full and supernatural revelation brought by Christ.”

The New Testament may be “responsible” for offering to everyone a glimpse of some infinite but attainable experience of transcendence. Jesus unmistakably “raises the bar” for our happiness-expectations when he says, “Give and gifts will be given to you: a good measure, packed together, shaken down, and overflowing, will be poured into your lap” (Luke 6:38), and offers “fountains of water springing up into life everlasting” (Jn. 4:14) as well as a “hundredfold” of happiness to those that follow Him (Mt. 19:29).

Even Aristotle suggests in the *Ethics* that perhaps in everyone “there is some natural good stronger than themselves which aims at their proper good.”

In any case, many are clearly not satisfied with the “natural high” of the recreation center (or in friendship, creative activities, music, etc.), but are looking for something much more intense and satisfying.

Hospitals around the country are currently overwhelmed with cases of drug overdosing. In 2015, 52,000 Americans arrived too late and were not able to be resuscitated. Some such cases are the result of persons seeking an “instant high” (possibly transitioning from Marijuana or experimenting with opioids found on their grandmother’s medicine shelf, then looking for more and more intensive “highs” until they approach a fatal limit). Others unintentionally get hooked after legitimate prescriptions.

If one of the major causes for drug-related attempts at “instant happiness” is our “natural orientation to the supernatural” (as one theologian put it), perhaps supernatural help should be high on the list of remedies sought. Some evangelists have followed this route to countering drug addiction.

Indirectly, this “supernatural approach” helped give rise to the founding of the “Catholic Pentecostal” movement, at which I happened to be present. As a graduate student at Duquesne University in 1966, I was urged by a roommate to join in interactive relationships with a Protestant Pentecostal group reading and discussing pastor David Wilkerson’s book, *The Cross and the Switchblade*, which tells the story of the rescue of youth in New York from drugs and gang violence through the power of the Holy Spirit.

I agreed to read the book, which became a bestseller, but said I was too busy writing my dissertation to attend their meetings or go on the retreat. At that retreat, however, there were powerful manifestations of a Pentecostal nature, which no one could deny. Afterwards, my roommate and others urged me to attend some prayer meetings. I did, but never, to my knowledge, received the “baptism of the Spirit” or spoke in tongues like some of the others. I was perhaps too cerebral.

I have no reason to doubt that my friends at Duquesne had an experience similar to the Pentecostal experience narrated in Acts, and the outpourings of the Spirit in the epistles of the New Testament. But I believe they ended up living normal lives with “natural highs” and no intensive immersion in Pentecostalism.

We need to understand that “natural highs” just come unbidden, and should never be sought. Sound spiritual writers warn against seeking intense spiritual experiences. Most important, it is a serious, and potentially fatal, mistake to seek “instant happiness” in drugs. As Francis Seeburger advises in *Addiction and Responsibility*, drug addiction is a “perversely clever copy” of the “transcendent peace of God,” which is completely outside the false paradise of drugs.

This article is made available courtesy of The Catholic Thing.



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ST. MICHAEL SCHOOL IS HIRING!

St. Michael School is hiring a Before Care Assistant for the 2023-2024 School Year to work the following shift: 6:45-7:45 a.m., Monday-Friday. Students arrive at 7:00 a.m., so the start time for the position could be discussed if applicant wishes to attend the 6:30 a.m. Mass. **Requirements:**

- Current satisfactory BCI & FBI background checks
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For more information or to apply, please contact Sr. Mary Regina at principal@stmichaelworthington.org.

ST. MICHAEL PRESCHOOL REGISTRATION NOW OPEN FOR 2024-2025 SCHOOL YEAR

St. Michael Preschool is now accepting applications for the 2024-2025 school year. Please visit www.stmichaelworthington.org/admissions/preKindergarten/ for the application form and for more information. Completed applications can be emailed to Preschool Director Laura Wells at lwells@stmichaelworthington.org. Please note that we only accept digital copies of the application form. We anticipate having a waitlist, so be sure to get your applications in as soon as possible.

AROUND THE DIOCESE

SPORTS TRIVIA CUP - APRIL 13, 2024 BENEFITTING DAMASCUS, HOME OF CATHOLIC YOUTH SUMMER CAMP

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(The Sports Trivia Cup is an adult event.)

GOOD FRIDAY WAY OF THE CROSS WITH BISHOP EARL K. FERNANDES

Please join us in walking the Way of the Cross through downtown Columbus on Good Friday, March 29th, led by Bishop Fernandes. The procession will begin at 2:00 p.m., directly following the Good Friday service in the Cathedral, and will conclude at 4:00 p.m. The route begins on the Cathedral steps and has five stops throughout downtown, where people carry their crosses every day. Each stop will have moments of readings, music and poetry. The Way of the Cross is organized by the lay ecclesial movement, Communion and Liberation. For more information, please contact Alessandro at ando.scotti@gmail.com.

HELPING CHRISTIANS IN THE HOLY LAND

In this season of almsgiving, why not consider helping the Christians in the Holy Land by donating to the Good Friday Collection? Through our generosity last year, Catholics across our country helped make an incredible difference in many lives by helping to create more than 1,500 jobs and rehabilitate over 100 homes for Christian families in the Holy Land. This year, as war continues in the many countries that make up the Holy Land, your help is needed more than ever! Will you help make a difference again this year with your donation to the Good Friday Collection?

LAGHI CHAIR LECTURE AT THE JOSEPHINUM

The Pontifical College Josephinum's 2024 Pio Cardinal Laghi Chair Lecture will feature a presentation by alumnus Father Thomas Petri, OP, STD, President of the Pontifical Faculty of the Dominican House of Studies in Washington, D.C. He will present "Grace, Freedom, and Beauty: Saint Thomas Aquinas on the Blessed Mother" on Wednesday, March 13, at 7:00 p.m., in the Jessing Center. Free admission and parking; reservations not required. For more information, please call 614-985-2274. The Pio Cardinal Laghi Chair was inaugurated at the Josephinum in 1992 in honor of Pio Cardinal Laghi, then Prefect of the Congregation for Catholic Education. American cardinals and presidents of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops promoted the funding of this chair in recognition of Cardinal Laghi's dedicated service to the Catholic Church in the United States.

SPRING DIOCESAN VOCAL TRAINING PROGRAM WORKSHOP

We are excited to announce the Spring Diocesan Vocal Training Program Workshop! Even if you have previously attended a workshop, you are invited to join this "voice lesson" style workshop, where we will work on strengthening our vocal skills with vocal exercises, new repertoire and an opportunity to practice chant singing! The workshop will be held at St. Brendan the Navigator in Hilliard, Ohio from 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. on Saturday, April 20. Please email Dawn Beckman at rtbdb@aol.com with your reservation. We hope to see you there!

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PLENARY INDULGENCES

The Dominican Order is currently celebrating a Triple Jubilee in honor of St. Thomas Aquinas, remembering the 700th anniversary of his canonization (which was celebrated in July 2023), the 750th anniversary of his death (to be celebrated on March 7, 2024), and the 800th anniversary of his birth (which will be celebrated in 2025). In honor of these anniversaries, the Apostolic Penitentiary grants a plenary indulgence to those who make a pilgrimage to a holy place connected with the Dominican Order, and there devoutly take part in the jubilee ceremonies, or at least devote a suitable time to pious recollection, concluding with the Lord's Prayer, the Creed, and invocations of the Blessed Virgin Mary and of Saint Thomas Aquinas. Any church, shrine, or chapel currently entrusted to the Dominican Order can meet the requirements for the pilgrimage. In the Diocese of Columbus, St. Patrick Church in Columbus, St. Joseph Church in Somerset, and Holy Trinity Church in Somerset are entrusted to the Dominican Friars. The plenary indulgence may be obtained until January 28, 2025 under the usual conditions of Sacramental Confession 20 days before or after the indulgenced act, reception of Holy Communion, prayers for the intentions of the Holy Father, and complete detachment from sin, including venial sin. For more information, visit <https://www.op.org/rescript-of-the-apostolic-penitentiary-with-translation/>.

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