



# TOGETHER IN THE SPIRIT

Bi-monthly Catholic Magazine

August 2021—Issue 10

## TOGETHER IN THE SPIRIT

**WELCOME** to the tenth edition of our bi-monthly magazine. Our hopes for 2021 appear to be slowly being fulfilled. Our churches are now reopening and gradually returning to normal but we must continue to pray for an end to this virus. We must also continue to do everything we can to stay safe and keep each other safe, with God's help.

We thank you for continuing to read our magazine and look forward to your observations and comments. We are currently looking at how we can make it available to a bigger audience. Watch for news!

You may contact the Healing Prayer Ministry, for any reason, on the numbers below:

|                     |                                  |
|---------------------|----------------------------------|
| <b>Deacon Dave:</b> | <b>07523425540</b>               |
| <b>Margaret:</b>    | <b>07716152552</b>               |
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We would like to hear from you, from anyone who needs help, or, who would just like someone to chat to. The need to care for and support each other will, of course, continue, and we are just a phone call away. You can contact us on the above numbers and we will continue to accept and pray for all your requests, while we look forward to getting back to regular Healing Prayer Ministry meetings.

Holy Hours and the First Fridays are going well and will continue. However, we may be required to make small changes as time goes on. Please watch for news on the website. And in the Church Bulletin.



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***CONGRATULATIONS to Deacon Dave on his OFFICIAL retirement from his long and wonderful service as a Deacon in the parishes of Sacred Heart, St. Mary's Lowe House and St. Thomas of Canterbury for which we are all grateful. However, we are delighted, of course, that he will continue to fulfill his role with the Healing Prayer Ministry and more than likely much more besides that. Thank you Dave for your dedicated service.***

## RECOMMENDED VIEWING AND LISTENING



Fr. Edward Meeks was raised Catholic, and even went to seminary, but in the confusion going on in the Church in the 1960's and 70's, he ended up leaving to go first to the Assemblies of God, and then the Charismatic Episcopal Church, in which he became a priest. When the Personal Ordinariate was announced by Pope Benedict XVI, he felt a strong conviction to return to the Catholic Church, and did so; and his entire congregation entered the Catholic Church with him!

Fr Meeks has some excellent videos / homilies on you tube, including his conversion story —we especially recommend you view 'The Final Battle and the Family' among others. - <https://youtu.be/36t93Qsfzqc>

**BIBLE STUDY** isn't simply about learning facts—it's a reorienting of our lives around Jesus. Meeting God everyday in His Word is the anchor that our lives need. A daily Word from the Lord feeds us, directs us, corrects us, and also gives us a Word that we may be called to share with others we meet later that day. Jeff Cavins created the Bible Timeline Learning System, which is the basis for the chart-topping "The Bible in a Year" podcast. Check out <https://aleteia.org/2021/08/23/the-time-to-start-a-bible-study-is-now/> and explore the possibilities... Link for Bible in a Year: <https://youtu.be/BW0gXbEvygA>

## LOV VERBUM DEI



This initiative began at the start of the pandemic in 2020, bringing together Catholics locally, nationally and now worldwide. Through intercessory prayer, meditations, and sacred music, they strive to fulfil their founding principle of the meaning of LOV which means Legere-Orare-Vivere: To read-To pray-To live daily the Word of God and let it transform our lives. The ministry has a wide range of resources distributed to all the members including homilies, and blessings from priests, novenas to favourite saints, Lenten/Advent meditations, online retreats, May Rosary, Adoration videos. Please pray for this ministry to grow and bring people closer to our Lord and if you would like to know more and get involved in this very special ministry, you can reach them via this link: [https://linktr.ee/lov\\_verbumdei](https://linktr.ee/lov_verbumdei) or speak to Mary Hilton at St. Mary's Lowe House, St Helens.

## *'The Little Arab'*

Sr. Mary of Jesus Crucified (1846 -1878)

Maryam Baouardy, St Mary of Jesus Crucified, 'The Little Arab', was born to Giries Baouardy and Mariam Shahine, a poor Greek Melchite Catholic family. Twelve of her thirteen brothers died in infancy, and Mary's birth was an answered prayer to Our Lady. Her parents died when Maryam was only two, and she was raised by a paternal uncle. As a child she had a marked spirit of religious fervour, and at the age of five began to fast on Saturdays in honour of the Blessed Virgin. Moved to Alexandria, Egypt at age eight.

Betrothed in an arranged marriage at age 13, she refused to go along with it, insisting on a religious life. As punishment for her disobedience, her uncle beat and tormented her and hired her out as a domestic servant, making sure she had the lowest and most menial of jobs. A Muslim servant with whom she worked began to act as her friend with an eye to converting her from Christianity. On 8 September 1858, Mary convinced him she would never abandon her faith; in response he cut her throat and dumped her in an alley. Mary lived; an apparition of the Virgin Mary treated her wound, and she left her uncle's house forever.

She supported herself as a domestic, working for a Christian family and praying. In 1860 she moved in with the Sisters of Saint Joseph. Supernatural events began to occur around her, and the Sisters would not let her join their house. She was taken to the Carmel at Pau by a Sister in 1867, and became a lay sister. Later that year she entered the cloister, taking the name Mary of Jesus Crucified, and making her final profession on 21 November 1871.

She continued to experience supernatural events. She fought off a demonic possession for 40 days, received the stigmata, was seen to levitate, had the gift of prophecy and knowledge of consciences, and permitted her guardian angel to speak through her. She helped found the missionary Carmel of Mangalore, India. Returned to France in 1872. Built a Carmelite monastery in Bethlehem in 1875. She died in 1878 from cancer which had developed in her bones as a result of the fall she had while working in the monastery, which led to gangrene that spread to her lungs.

Supernatural gifts aside, she was well known for her devotion to the Holy Spirit, even sending word to Pope Pius IX that the Spirit was not emphasized enough in seminaries. Recently the Parish Priest of Our Lady of Lourdes and St Swithun Parish, Portsmouth, Rev Marcin Drabik, posted on the parish website describing Mariam's devotion to the Holy Spirit.



Holy Spirit, inspire me.  
Love of God, consume me.  
On the true path, lead me.  
Mary, my Mother, look upon me,  
With Jesus, bless me.  
From all evil, from all illusion,  
From all danger, preserve me.

Saint Mary of Jesus Crucified

One day she saw the Holy Spirit. He revealed to her a secret: 'You can be a source of help for priests'. She said on 14 November 1871. "I suffered because I did not feel God. My heart was like iron. I could not think of God, I called the Holy Spirit and said, 'It is you who helps us to know Christ. The Apostles were a long time with Him, but did not understand Him, but one visit from You was enough to make them to understand. You now must come to me and show me Jesus as He is."

"The Lord showed me everything" – she said. – "I saw before me a Dove, over an overflowing cup, as if it were the source. What poured out of the cup bedewed the Dove and washed me. I heard a voice which came with this wonderful light. He said: 'Whoever shall call on the Holy Spirit will find Me through Him. His consciousness is like a delicate flower field. If it is a father or mother, then peace will reign in their family. The peace will be in their heart, both in this and the next world.

They will not die in darkness, but in My peace. Earnestly, I want you to say that all priests who will celebrate the Mass of the Holy Spirit once a month, would honour Me. And whoever will honour Me and will participate in the Mass, will be honoured by the Holy Spirit; and will have light in themselves; in the depths of their souls will be peace. It is He who will come to heal the sick and awaken those who sleep. As proof of this, all those who will celebrate this Mass, or who



participate in it, and who will invoke the Holy Spirit will leave Mass, having experienced this peace in the depths of their souls. They will not die in darkness “.

With the kind permission of Fr Drabik, Our Lady of Lourdes and St Swithun Parish, Portsmouth. <https://stswithuns.org.uk/blog-24062018>

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## **DIVINE MERCY REFLECTION 148:**

### **Mercy for Those in Purgatory.**



When a loved one dies, it is easy to instantly presume they are in Heaven and are no longer in need of our prayers. But one of the greatest gifts we can offer to those who have gone before us is our prayers. It's true that every person who dies in a state of grace (meaning they do not have unrepented mortal sin), will enter into the glories of Heaven, eventually. However, what we may often forget is that in order to enter into the full glory of the presence of the Most Holy Trinity, every last sin, no matter how small, must be purged away. This is Purgatory, and Purgatory is a clear and definitive teaching of our faith. But Purgatory, itself, is so easily misunderstood. It's not a place we go to be punished as a result of God's anger. Rather, it's a state in which we enter our final purification on account of God's love. It is His burning love that has the effect of purifying us of every last attachment we have to sin. Every bad habit, every omission of charity, every foul thought, everything that cannot enter into Heaven with us. Purgatory is an act of God's Mercy and we are called to help pour forth that Mercy on others through our prayers, sacrifices, and indulgences offered on their behalf after they pass from this Earth (See Diary #748).

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### **Quote:**

“It's time to fall in love again with the God who fell in love with you.”

**COME AND SEE** - Find Me here in the light and shallows. Open your heart to the waiting gifts of peace, healing and love. Rest on My paths. Travel My pilgrim road with a praying heart and find through My Way all you need for healing and life to the full. I go with you always You are never alone. Tell Me again the story of your heart and soul. Pour out your life into My Life. Allow Me to refill your heart with all you need for your path ahead. **Lorcan Brennan.**



## THE NINE FRUITS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

We often hear and speak about the Gifts of the Holy Spirit but less often refer to the Fruits of the Spirit. The Holy Spirit is associated with a number of sets of gifts and fruits. The gifts are to be used to bear fruit. There are nine biblically-based fruits of the Holy Spirit as given by St. Paul in his letter to the Galatians: “love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control” (Gal. 5:22-23). However, bearing fruit is something that is possible only when one stays firmly attached to Jesus, the vine (John 15:1-8).

The Fruit of the Holy Spirit is a biblical term that sums up nine attributes of a person, or community, living in accord with the Holy Spirit, according to chapter 5 of the Epistle to the Galatians: "But the fruits of the Spirit are love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. All who are confirmed are equipped with the gifts of the Holy Spirit, given in Baptism and strengthened at Confirmation, to help us live a virtuous and holy life. The graces of the Spirit strengthen confirmed Christians to carry out their vocations for the good of others and the benefit of the Church and the world.

The fruits of the Spirit are evidence of being connected to Christ, just as branches of a tree or a grapevine have to be connected to the trunk in order to bear grapes or apples. Good fruit is the result of hard work and careful tending. The fruits are powerful and permanent and evidence the work of the Holy Spirit in the lives of Christians.

## THE 9 FRUITS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

|                   |   |   |
|-------------------|---|---|
| Light             | Shadow  | Dark  |
| <b>The Fruits</b> | <b>Echo /Vistage</b>                            | <b>Opposite</b>                             |
| Love              | Passion/desire                                  | Hate  |
| Joy               | Happiness                                       | Depression                                  |
| Peace             | Calm  | Turmoil                                     |
| Patience          | Enduring  | Impatience                                  |
| Kindness          | Softness  | Unkind                                      |
| Goodness          | Pleasantness                                    | Badness                                     |
| Faithfulness      | Loyalty   | Unfaithfulness                              |
| Meekness          | Humbleness                                      | Hardiness                                   |
| Self-control      | Tolerance                                       | Out of controls                             |
|                   | No work for Satan<br>as we deceive<br>ourselves | Satan easily<br>deceives and<br>controls us |

Do we always bear good fruit or are we deceived by imitations? Jesus tells us “I am the true vine and my Father is the vinedresser. Every branch in me that bears no fruit He cuts away and every branch that does bear fruit He prunes to make it bear even more”. (John 15:1-2).

As we look at the lists above, we can see the fruits of the Spirit on the left and the opposite of the fruits (right). The interesting list is in the middle – the shadows (imitations) of the fruits. The shadows are the means by which we deceive ourselves into believing we are producing good fruit. For example, love; when we love, do we love truly or do we settle for passion or desire and appear to love? Are we patient or do we simply endure and deceive ourselves? Are we truly being good or simply being pleasant?

Are we meek? When the Bible speaks of “meekness,” it refers to someone who lives a life of submission to the Lord. Someone who can put aside self to follow God's direction rather than trusting solely in themselves. That was Moses. Well, the Bible also tells us that Moses was more humble than any man who ever lived. “Now the man Moses was very humble, more than any man who was on the face of



the earth.” (Num. 12:3).

Moses was in charge of leading many, many people but, he never let the power and authority become a blind spot in his focus on the Lord. Moses’ meekness was in fact ‘power under control’. Moses acknowledged that his success did not come from his own knowledge or expertise, but instead from trusting in the promises of the Lord. In this way, Moses brought immense and authentic honour and glory to God. His humility turned others’ eyes toward the One who delivered them.

Being meek like Moses is one way that we are able to imitate and reflect our Father in Heaven to others on Earth who may not know who He is. Living a life of meekness and humility allows us to display God to others; the fruits of the Spirit give us the opportunity to show others that God is who He says He is. We could spend some time thinking about how we can use our good fruits and successes to glorify God and point to Him.

Jesus tells us: “it is to the glory of my Father that you should bear much fruit and be my disciples. I have loved you just as the Father has loved me, Remain in my love”. (Rom 15: 8-9).



(Prayer revealed by Our Lord to Sister Marie of St. Peter in 1843)

**“May the most holy, most sacred, most adorable, most incomprehensible and ineffable Name of God be forever praised, blessed, loved, adored and glorified in Heaven, on Earth, and under the Earth by all the creatures of God and by the Sacred Heart of Our Lord Jesus Christ in the Most Holy Sacrament of the Altar. Amen”.**

The Golden Arrow is an important prayer based on reports of visions that Jesus gave to Sister Mary of St. Peter, a Carmelite nun in France,

in August of 1843. Sister Mary called it “an Act of Praise that our Lord Himself dictated to me, notwithstanding my unworthiness, for the reparation of Blasphemy [insulting or disrespectful thoughts or behaviour] against His Holy Name of God”. It is also a reparation for the profanation of Sunday and the Holy Days of Obligation.

You don't need to be a theologian or a biblical scholar to see how much our Lord Jesus Christ has suffered what Shakespeare called "the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune; since His birth in a cave in Bethlehem over 2000 years ago! Yet this prayer sends an actually pleasing projectile His way:

Our Lord showed Sr Mary how much blasphemy hurt Him “more grievously than all other sins” by having her visualise it as a poisoned arrow, continually wounding His Divine Heart.

She continued in her autobiography “after that He revealed to me that He wanted to give me a ‘Golden Arrow’ which would have the power of wounding him delightfully and which would also heal those other wounds inflicted by the malice of sinners, with torrents of grace emanating from it!

When it comes to our salvation the Golden Arrow is no magic bullet. Still, it can bring us closer to Christ by helping to make amends for the many insults He suffers on a daily basis. Today, as in Sister Mary's time, we often read harsh, offensive language about our Lord, in the papers or on the internet, for example.

We often notice how many abusive comments are spoken about Him, especially from those considered most sophisticated in our society. We have also seen television shows and movies that attempt to strip away Christ's Divinity and His Dignity, much as those who jeered Him during His Passion. And how many people only say Jesus' Name when they drop a jar of pickles on the floor, or see or experience something unexpectedly disagreeable.

There are also more than a few "smart" people these days who would rather think of our Lord just as some philosopher and leave it at that. This prayer can help us all provide our Lord with comfort for these various slings and arrows He suffers each day!

May this prayer inspire you to revere our Lord's name so that you may draw closer to Him, as St. Paul sought to inspire his readers to do in his letter to the Colossians (3:17) when he wrote "whatever you do in word or in work, do all in the Name of the Lord Jesus."

<https://www.ourcatholicprayers.com/golden-arrow.html>



## THE JESUS WHO WAS THE JESUS WHO IS

Christians, for the most part find Luke's infancy presentation more congenial than Matthew's. Luke's presentation of the story has no murderous king, no dead babies, and no flight into the desert. The keynote is joy and we feel that's the way it must have been. If we think about it at all, we are prepared to admit that, from the perspective of sober history and elementary astronomy, Matthew's star may have been no more than an inner light guiding the Magi. But we are loath to concede much else to the historical junkyard. Certainly, we will not concede our manger, our shepherds, the swaddling clothes, the Angel Gabriel or the heavenly choir. Yet in our tenacity to hold in the grasp of history what we have always believed (and never examined), we may well miss what Luke strove to teach.

The amazing design of Luke's drama is five tiny plays all linked together and all hinging on the central play which gives meaning to the other four:

Play 1: Gabriel makes an announcement to Zechariah (1:1-25)

Play 2: Gabriel makes an announcement to Mary (1:26-38)

**Play 3: Two Mothers meet - Mary visits Elizabeth (1:39-56)**

Play 4: The drama surrounding John's birth (1:57-80)

Play 5: The drama surrounding Jesus' birth (2:1-40)

In the central play, all is revealed. The presence of God has come into

the world. The baby John, in the womb of Elizabeth, identifies where God is now to be found in the world. In Luke's story John the Baptist never meets Jesus, his celebration of the one to come is accomplished by leaping and dancing for joy in his mother's womb.

The visitation leads into the fourth play, the birth of John and the hymn which tells of his place in the Divine scheme of things. The fifth and final play spells out who it is Elizabeth recognised as Lord and what God's purposes are in the life and times of Jesus of Nazareth.

### ***To be continued***

'The Jesus who was, the Jesus who is'. (2005) by Joseph O'Hanlon. The Columba Press, Dublin, Eire.



## **WHAT ARE SACRAMENTALS?**

The Catechism of the Catholic Church tells us: Sacramentals are sacred signs instituted by the Church. They prepare men to receive the fruit of the sacraments and sanctify different circumstances of life. (CCC No. 1677). There are various sacramentals such as the Holy Rosary, which Our Lady asks us to pray daily for personal conversion and the 'conversion of sinners'. Our Blessed Mother has asked this in various approved apparitions; various scapulars such as the Brown Scapular and the Green Scapular and the Miraculous Medal are sacramentals for example.

Holy water is also a sacramental which has different uses. St. Faustina, in her Diary no. 601, tells us that 'Holy Water is indeed of great help to the dying'.

The Church encourages us to use Holy Water especially in times of danger such as fire, storms and sickness. It is good to always have a supply of Holy Water in your home.

The devil hates Holy Water because it has power over him. St. Teresa of Avila tells of a time when the devil appeared to her three times, the third time she threw some Holy Water in his direction. He never returned again. Holy water has traditionally been considered as a power

ful weapon against evil and exorcists use it to drive out demons during exorcisms.

We can sprinkle Holy Water for ourselves or for someone else (who doesn't have to be present). God's blessings descend on the body and soul. When sprinkled with faith and piety, Holy Water can move the Sacred Heart to bless and protect those loved ones you are praying for from harm of body and soul.

We can also use Holy Water to help the Holy Souls in Purgatory. Sprinkle some of your Holy Water at home (or in Church when we next can!) and offer it for the souls in Purgatory. They will be only too pleased to pray for you too.

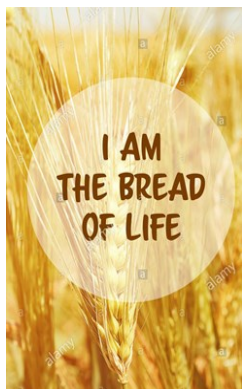
Holy water is a sign of repentance of sin; it recalls our Baptism when it is used to cleanse us of original sin. When we use the Holy Water font (at home or in Church), make the Sign of the Cross carefully and say as you do this: By this holy water and by Your Precious Blood, wash away all my sins, O, Lord'. This symbolizes our desire for God's forgiveness and remits our venial sins.

The Church also uses Holy Water in blessings for religious objects to be done by a priest or deacon, dependent on what blessing it is.

You can also use Holy Water for different blessings, like your pets, your car, etc. So well worth having some in your home, your handbag, your car. Ask you priest or deacon to bless some for you.

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## **THE BREAD OF LIFE.**



God provided the mysterious food called manna for the Israelites during their time in the desert. However, they were told not to stockpile the manna but to gather only what they needed for one day. Jesus told his disciples not to worry about tomorrow. He said: When you pray to your heavenly Father you are to say 'give us this day our daily bread' no matter how difficult life may be, for those who trust in God, and who live a day at a time, the manna falls every day.



## FAITH JOURNEY GOES ON!

Deacon Dave Caldwell

As I write this article for our magazine I reflect on where I am on the journey of faith following the teachings of our Lord Jesus Christ. I think on the times I have strayed from the way, the sorrow I felt and the determination to stand upright again and rejoin Jesus on the narrow road that leads to Heaven.

I know it's a hard road, and many are losing heart and often giving up, BUT our Lord said it wouldn't be easy, but persevere, offer any sufferings, failures, sickness to Him who suffered grievously for our Salvation by the Cross. The Cross is the tree of life and the resurrection the defeat of death and our reward for staying with Him.

These offerings can bring comfort and love to His Sacred Heart against all the blasphemies, sacrileges and indifference that are continually hurled at Him and also to the Immaculate Heart of our Blessed Mother, who also suffers these constant hurts.

We need to stay united in faith, spreading by word, deed and action the Good News Jesus preached to His Disciples and handed to us through the one true Apostolic teaching of the Catholic Church.

Community worship is a definite MUST for us all; we need to convince others that this is the only way, through the Sacraments, through the awesome power of the Holy Spirit, and that will result in whole congregations rising up shouting ALLELUIA TO THE RISEN LORD, who is THE WAY, THE TRUTH AND THE LIFE.

Let us, through prayer and Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, aim to stamp out apathy, indifference, hostility, anger, injustice, and the Holy Spirit will be the powerhouse on our journey. I say now - rally to Jesus, receive His blessings, peace and merciful Love and we will here on Earth rejoice with singing and never ending praise.



Watch the bulletins for details of our Holy Hours and other events. *Jesus has made Himself the Bread of Life to give us life. Night and day, He is there. If you really want to grow in love, come back to the Eucharist, come back to that Adoration (Mother Teresa).*

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## **“Not Seven Times, but Seventy Seven Times (Matthew 18:21-22)”**



This was Jesus’ response to Peter when Peter asked Him how many times we should forgive. Seven in Scripture is considered the number of completion. God finished creation and then rested on the seventh day. Seventy seven denotes an unlimited number. So the teaching of Jesus here is that we need to forgive until it is all completed and we find rest.

This is a big topic which we will need to continue next time but for now I just wanted to consider perhaps the more ordinary everyday things that happen which we just forget about remain hidden but remain a blockage within us.

An acquaintance once told the story of how he was driving within a few miles of a friend who had insisted that he must call in whenever he was passing by. Although his journey wasn’t directly in the path of his friend, he decided it would be nice to take up the invitation and drive the extra miles to see him. He arrived, knocked and waited. No response. He knocked several times more but still no response. He had had a long drive and it was a bit annoying that he had come out of his way and no-one was in. He stepped back and looked upstairs to see if there were any signs of life. He noticed the curtain twitching every so often as he stood and watched. Now he was getting angry. He had driven a long way, gone out of his way in response to an invitation, and now his friend was avoiding him.

For a few days he kept getting irritated when he thought about it, he

couldn't get rid of his frustration, in fact, he didn't want to get rid of it. His friend was obviously not a nice person after all and he would not be contacting him again. In fact, if he ever came across him at a function again, he would ignore him!

Eventually he forgot about the incident, that is until several months later when he answered a catch up call from his friend asking how he was as he hadn't seen him for ages. It all came flooding back and he was wondering how the man could act as though nothing had happened. Very coolly and purposefully he reminded him that he had visited him a few months ago, gone out of his way in fact, to do so, but although he knew he was in because the curtain had moved, he wouldn't open the door for him. 'Let's see what he thinks of the fact that I know what he did', he thought triumphantly. 'Oh', said his friend, 'Was it you? I have often wondered who it was. I am really sorry about that, I was laid up in bed ill, I was in alone and I couldn't get up. I heard someone at the door so I thought if I twitched the curtain they would know there was a problem and I couldn't get to the door'.

After that conversation, my acquaintance said he sat in prayer, and asked the Lord to show him why he had got that so wrong. He realised that he had jumped to conclusions without knowing the truth at all. He 'assumed' his friend was in but that he didn't want his company and was watching him through the bedroom window, hiding behind the curtain until he left. He was embarrassed to be in that position and couldn't forgive his friend for doing that to him. Of course, the truth was very different, but he hadn't attempted to even find out the truth; instead he had wallowed in unforgiveness.

In repentance for his unforgiveness, which he realised could have ended a perfectly good friendship, and left a blockage between him and God, he said the prayer that Jesus taught us, the Our Father – and he pondered greatly on the words 'Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us'.

We cannot do this alone, we need God's help, so if anyone finds they are holding a grudge against someone, they can't forget something the person has done to them, then talk to God about it. Forgiveness is not an emotion; it is an act of the will. The above story highlights how we can get things wrong because we don't know all the circumstances of a

particular situation, we make assumptions, but we must, instead, be open to realising that not everything may be as we assume. More next time.....



## **LETTING THE DEVIL SLIP IN WITHOUT EVEN REALIZING IT!**

God is the ultimate power, so the devil need not be feared, but he should be always be avoided for our own spiritual well-being. Hearing people say, “It’s no big deal,” is music to the devil’s ears. He likes to work undercover to ensnare people in his traps. Here are 10 things considered harmless by many that are ways that the devil has slipped into the culture.

**1. Horoscopes.** They are in newspapers and magazines. Horoscopes claim power to know the future that is not from God. Catholic Answers explains that the pagan world was once dominated by belief in astrology. It is still a pagan practice that goes against the First Commandment.

**2. Mediums.** On the TV reality series, Long Island Medium, Theresa Caputo claims to speak with the dead. She fills stadiums across the country with shows where people pay from \$50 to \$150 a ticket. (Psychics, fortune tellers, mediums and the like, are either shysters or drawing their power from the devil. The Old Testament in Deut. 18:10 -11 and Isaiah 19:3 condemns conjuring up the dead. That is not the same as not praying to saints asking for their intercessory prayers. Mediums claim to conjure up spirits and manipulate the spiritual realm).

**3. Paranormal Tourism.** Visiting haunted houses has become popular. There are an estimated 1,200 haunted houses generating around \$500 million annually in the U.S. where would-be ghost hunters use paranormal equipment that taunt spirits to get a response. (In a previous article two exorcists explained that real haunted houses were either souls in purgatory in need of prayer or evil spirits. If there are souls in need of prayers, they should be respected and if there are evil spirits, they should not be visited).

**4. Wishing for someone to burn in hell.** We've all heard someone cry out that they hope for someone to burn in hell. It could be a murderer, child molester, or someone who has done some other grave evil. Perhaps it seems understandable, even like a good desire.

Reflect on it for a moment, however. The devil wants as many souls as possible to spend eternity in hell. Despite how horrible that person is, we should never desire anyone's damnation since it aligns us with the devil and pits us against God's will.

**5. "Knock on wood" and other superstitions.** You may say it in jest. Or not. I've been around faithful Catholics who knock on wood or fear saying something will "jinx" them or they throw a coin into a wishing pond and actually make a wish. Rabbit's feet, good luck charms, and any sort of superstition may seem harmless, but they seek to use powers not of God. Instead of knocking on wood or making a wish, say a prayer instead.

**6. Fortune tellers, palm readers, Tarot card readers** and the like. They set up shop all over including at state fairs and street markets but steer clear. They seek to manipulate the known world by tapping into a power that is not God. And don't be fooled by someone who wears a cross or hangs up a Christian symbol and claims they are Christian so it's all good.

**7. Consumer products that offer powers.** Crystals and essential oils — perfectly good and natural materials — are sometimes used and sold by companies claiming they have supernatural powers. For real power, talk to the Creator of the Universe and receive supernatural graces through the#

through the sacraments.

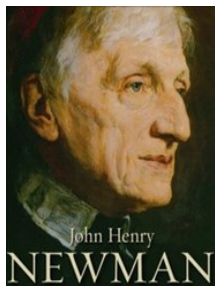
**8. Unforgiveness.** Jesus told us multiple times to forgive others. It doesn't mean we have to be friends. Praying for someone and letting go of hatred and anger with the help of God, helps to heal the wound. To intentionally hold on to unforgiveness gives a toe-hold to the devil to influence you against God's will.

**9. Pornography.** Even between married couples, everything about pornography is from the evil one, yet, it has a hold on our culture. The article 'Breaking Free From Porn's Enslavement' explains that pornography enslaves people and destroys relationships — just as the devil wants.

**10. Following Apparitions Condemned by the Church.** 'How to Tell True Apparitions from False' explained that the devil uses false apparitions to lure people against the Church. "'The Church investigates claims of private revelations cautiously,' according to Father Poulain, 'because the devil can use them to ensnare otherwise serious Catholics. The devil can by a ruse, feign to encourage them for a time for the sake of landing his victim in exaggeration and oddities,' he said. 'Provided that the end is evil, the road leading up to it matters little to him.'"

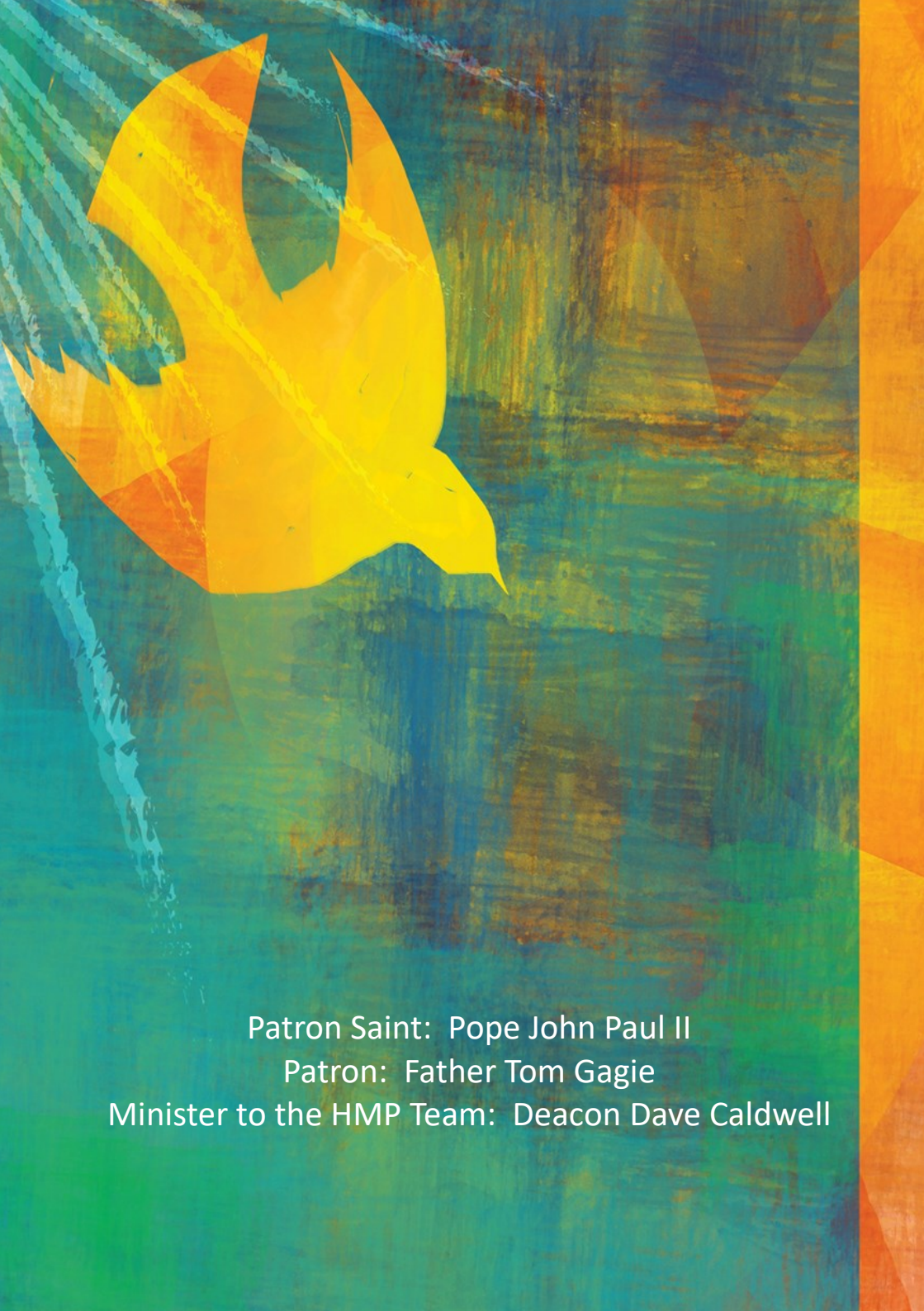
This list is not exhaustive but simply points out ways the devil slips into even Catholic circles as harmless. Yearning for the supernatural is inborn but entering through the wrong door leads to spiritual harm. The Church and the light of Jesus Christ shine a light onto the darkness to reveal it for what it is snares of the devil.

***Patti Maguire Armstrong Blogs+++++++ July 30, 2018.***



### **Prayer of St John Henry Newman:**

May the Lord support us all the day long, 'til the shades lengthen and evening comes, and the busy world is hushed, and the fever of life is over. Then in His mercy may He give us safe lodging and a holy rest and peace at last. May the Lord bless us, may He keep us from all evil and lead us to everlasting life.



Patron Saint: Pope John Paul II

Patron: Father Tom Gagie

Minister to the HMP Team: Deacon Dave Caldwell