



TOGETHER IN THE SPIRIT

Bi-monthly Catholic Magazine

April 2021—Issue 8

TOGETHER IN THE SPIRIT

WELCOME to the eight edition of our bi-monthly magazine. Our hopes for 2021 appear to be slowly being fulfilled. The Healing Prayer Ministry Team continue to meet regularly, keeping you all in our prayers and praying for your various petitions.

Its great to receive feedback on the magazine; we thank those of you who have let us know you have enjoyed it and forwarded it on to others, as well as those who have commented on particular articles. This encourages us to continue the magazine and helps us to understand what topics you enjoy. Please continue to send your comments.

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We would like to hear from you, 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.

Contributions to the magazine this month from: Deacon Dave, Maria, Trish, and Margaret. Your ideas and suggestions are always welcome.



COVID-19 constraints are still making life somewhat difficult but we are gradually opening up our churches. At the present time the HPMT are hosting the **First Friday devotion**, on the first Friday of the month, at 3.00 pm, in St Marys Lowe House. We began in February and will continue until October. We hope this will then continue into the future.

We also have a **Holy Hour** on the second Thursday of every month also at Lowe House at 7.00 pm, which includes a **Eucharistic Service** and a period of **Eucharistic Adoration**.

EVERYONE IS WELCOME TO JOIN US!

RECOMMENDED VIEWING AND LISTENING



In this issue we focus mostly on listening. In these difficult times we are hopefully increasingly saying the Rosary. Bishop John Keenan, Paisley, Scotland, hosts the recitation of the Rosary nightly on Facebook at 9.00 pm. His Facebook page indicates he regularly hosts online worship events and the recitation of the Rosary is also recorded to access if you miss the 9.00 pm event.

We also highly recommend an article published on ICN (Independent Catholic News), February 22nd, 2021, by Bishop Mark Davies, Bishop of Shrewsbury, in which he encourages us to draw inspiration from the story of Noah 'who emerged from 'a state of lockdown' with renewed hope in God's saving purpose.' Titled **Eucharistic Love can rebuild post-pandemic Church**, it can be accessed at <https://www.indcatholicnews.com/news/41609>.



Resurrection, The Easter Story

They slept, who should have guarded,
And watched over his tomb,
But he 'rose up" and none did see
His rebirth from this womb,
His spirit graced the garden,
His final act was done,
He was "The Resurrection"
His victory had been won.

Ernestine Northover



When his followers entered the tomb, the shroud was left at the foot of the slab; the napkin which had covered his face was folded neatly and left beside where his head had rested. It is a Jewish custom, when eating; if you leave the table during a meal and fold your napkin and leave it in your place, it means you are not finished, you will be back.
'I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you' John 14:18

WHO DO YOU SAY THAT JESUS IS?

THE JESUS WHO WAS; THE JESUS WHO IS

Of the four Gospels venerated by Christian people, only Matthew's and Luke's contain accounts of events around the coming of Jesus into the world. The two accounts, when compared, at first sight serve to cause confusion. We cannot say with certainty the year that Jesus was born; that Jesus was born in Bethlehem; we cannot be confident of a guiding star; we have no assurance that magi ever journeyed to the little town of Bethlehem, and so on...

The contradiction and contrasts between the accounts of Matthew and Luke of the infancy of Jesus are easily listed. The most obvious are:

Gospel of Matthew

1. Joseph and Mary are natives of the village of Bethlehem
2. Joseph is married to Mary
3. An unnamed Angel tells Joseph of the child to be born
4. Joseph is told to name the child
5. The child is born in a house
6. Magi visit the home of the child
7. The family are forced to flee to Egypt by Herod's evil plan

Gospel of Luke

- Joseph and Mary are natives of the village of Nazareth
- Mary has no husband
- Gabriel tells Mary of the child she will conceive
- Mary is told to name the child
- The child is placed in a manger
- Shepherds visit the manger
- The family make a peaceful pilgrimage to Jerusalem's Temple

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| 8. Children are slain in Bethlehem | Jesus is presented in the Temple |
| 9. The family are forced to resettle in the obscure village of Nazareth | The family return to their own town of Nazareth safely |
| 10. Matthew has many Quotations | Luke has beautiful hymns |

What are we to make of these contradictions and inconsistencies? We could try to reconcile them, eradicate the wrinkles, and tuck in the awkward protuberances. This, in fact, is what Christians do. We call it Christmas.

Our Christmas Crib, invented by St Francis of Assisi, has much to answer for. Francis saw the power of a visual aid, an aid to understanding, to appreciation, to prayer. To see the infant in a manger, to look on the mother, to stand guard with Joseph, to join with shepherds and wise men, to sing with the angels, is to open hearts to the wonder of God and the simplicity of love.

This is what happened on Christmas Eve, 1223, in Greccio, when St. Francis staged the Nativity in a cave. It is said that as he prayed St. Francis took up the infant Jesus who seemed to come alive in his arms. It has been happening in every Christian heart and home ever since.

But at a price.

The price to be paid for filleting the Gospels of Matthew and Luke to the dimensions of our Crib is to rob each of its individual voice. It is to create our story by destroying the integrity of their stories. It is to turn their poetry into our prose. In short, it is to corrupt the very word of God, for it creates a Christmas exclusively for children, a Christmas devoid of the cross, reeking of sentimentality and pious illusion. The price paid corrupts the purposes for which Matthew and Luke composed their stories. They were not writing a history of the infant Jesus. Each in his own way was constructing a prologue, an overture to the Jesus who would emerge in their pages.

In their sure and certain faith in the resurrection of Jesus, they sought to sustain in faith men and women who, like them saw in the person of Jesus the human face of God. They are not writing a history story, rather they travelled beyond history into realms of faith, contemplation and prayer. To travel with them, we must ask not only who Jesus was, but more demandingly, who Jesus is. *To be continued....*

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



Divine grace and celestial glory may be greatly increased by Spiritual Communion, if it be rightly and piously made. Spiritual Communion is nothing else but fervent desire to receive Our Lord and be united in Him. We may thus receive Him and enjoy His presence in a spiritual manner without actually communicating, to the great advantage and welfare of the soul. For even as Christ, when on earth, both healed many sick persons by laying upon them His sacred hands, and also restored many to health at a distance – as for instance, the daughter of the woman of Canaan, the ruler’s son and the centurion’s servant - so while he imparts great graces to those who receive Him worthily in the Adorable Sacrament of the Altar, He is none the less generous towards those who only receive Him in desire.

To this manner of communicating, He refers in the words: “I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall not hunger and he that believeth in Me shall never thirst”. (John 6:35). What is it to go to Christ but to believe in Him, to hope in Him, to love Him? He who does this, or desires to do this, communicates spiritually and will not thirst for all eternity. Christ can bestow His grace upon the soul without the medium of the sacraments and some persons receive more grace in spiritual than do others in Sacramental Communion if the former are actuated by a stronger desire for union with Him than the latter. For the more ardent our desires, the more ample is the grace imparted to us in Spiritual Communion.

The Church teaches how good and how salutary is the desire for Holy Communion when she says “those who, eating in desire the heavenly bread are, by a lively faith, made aware of the fruit and the usefulness thereof...and are as truly nourished by it as if they actually partook of that Sacred Bread.” (Council of Trent, Chapter 8).

Adapted from: The Incredible Catholic Mass, Fr. M. Von Cochem.

THE BIBLE

Our Lady asks us to return the Word of God to our homes. Do not let it sit in a dusty corner like a decoration, but put it in a place of honour where it will be seen and touched.

“With a simple heart accept His Word and live it. If you live His Word you will pray. If you live His Word you will love, you will love each other”. (Medjugorje, August 2, 2015).

She did not specify how much of the Bible we should read every day, but a few sentences are better than nothing. The most important thing is to open it regularly.

ELIZABETH PROUT – Mother Mary Joseph. Foundress of the Sisters of the Cross and Passion

A Shrewsbury-born nun is on course to become Britain’s first female non-martyr saint in 800 years after the Vatican ruled that she lived a life of ‘heroic virtue’.



Elizabeth Prout was born in Shrewsbury, England, in 1820. Her father was a lapsed Catholic and her mother a devout Anglican, both of whom later converted to Catholicism. They baptised Elizabeth in the Anglican Church. In her early twenties she converted to Catholicism under the influence of the Passionist missionary to England, Dominic Barberi, as well as another Passionist, Father Gaudentius Rossi.

Encouraged by Fr. Rossi, she joined the Sisters of the Infant Jesus in Northampton in 1848, but her health was poor and she moved back to her parents. Elizabeth, again encouraged by Fr. Rossi, moved to Manchester in 1849. There, touched by the misery and deprivation of the poor, she and a few companions came together to form a community to help the voiceless, downtrodden workers in the large industrial towns. Encouragement was ever present however, in the form of many benefactors and friends, not least amongst them Father Ignatius Spencer, son of Earl Spencer and convert to the Catholic faith. He too had become a Passionist and joined Father Dominic Barberi in his work in England. Fr Spencer eventually replaced Fr. Rossi as the spiritual guide of Mother Prout and her Institute.

In all Elizabeth Prout taught at or set up nine schools across the country. She died on 11 January 1864, physically broken by her labours, but with the future of the congregation secure. She was buried at the Passionist Church of St. Anne's, in Sutton, St. Helens near Liverpool, where Dominic Barberi and Ignatius Spencer were also buried.

At the end of the 20th century the cause for her canonisation was opened. Her body was exhumed on 20 June 1973 and on 30 July re-buried beside Ignatius Spencer, whose sainthood cause is also being scrutinised, and Dominic Barberi, in the new shrine at Sutton. Mother Elizabeth Prout was declared Venerable by the Vatican in January 2021.

Daily Reflection on Divine Mercy

Reflection 53: Difficulties in Prayer



There are both interior and exterior difficulties we encounter as we attempt to form a daily habit of prayer. Interior difficulties: discouragement, dryness, heaviness of spirit and temptations. These difficulties are overcome through patience and perseverance. Exterior difficulties: fear of what others may think or say, and setting time aside. These difficulties are overcome through humility and diligence (See Diary #147).

Try to set a daily time for prayer and do not be afraid if others become

aware of this commitment. Make it a time where you set aside every distraction and diligently focus on the voice of God. Try kneeling, or, even better, try laying prostrate before our Lord. Kneel or lay prostrate before the crucifix in your room or before the Blessed Sacrament at church. If you do, you will most likely encounter immediate temptations and difficulties. Do not be surprised by this. You will find yourself thinking about other things that you should do and you may even worry that others will discover you are praying. Persevere, stay focused and pray. Pray deep and pray hard and you will see the good fruits of this commitment in your life.

Lord, give me the strength I need to persevere through any and every difficulty that tries to keep me from my prayer with You. Make me strong so that I can set aside any struggle or temptation that comes my way. And as I press on in this new life of prayer, please take my life and form me into a new creation in Your love and Mercy. Jesus, I trust in You.

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Meditation of an Embryo



I can't see the daylight yet. I am nestled inside my mother, who is carrying me. I am tiny: but the man who is to be exists within me already. I am an embryo. The man and the woman who gave me life, my father and mother, were embryos before me. An embryo exists to grow, and to become a man or woman. Once I am fully grown, I shall be able in my turn to give life to new embryos. I am a link in the chain of being. My life hangs by a thread — the bond which binds me to my mother. All I receive comes through this thread. Like a fish in an aquarium, I live in a liquid which surrounds and protects me. I am safe, curled up in my mother's womb.

I am all hunched, my eyes and fists tight shut. Yet slowly, and minute by minute, I unfold. Gradually, I perceive things; I hear something of the world outside my mother. I grow, mysteriously, in this silent, secret room where none but muffled noises reach me, as if I were wrapped in cotton wool. Already I know the difference between high-pitched sounds and deep ones. There is a world outside; I am getting ready to conquer it! When I have grown, this is the world I shall discover.

Yet the thread by which I hang is too thin. My being is too secret, my presence too unknown. How can I defend myself, with my eyes shut and my little hands still closed? I cannot even cry out. I am too small; I am tiny. I am only an embryo.

I am here, but no one sees me. I am here, but no one wants me. I hurt no one, but they seek my life. I do nothing, and already I am dangerous. I am innocent, but already condemned.

The world outside has decided that I was not expected and that I am unwelcome. I am in here, but no one out there can be bothered with me. No one wants anything to do with me. Tiny though I am, I upset their plans. I don't shout, I make no noise, and I hardly move, but even so, I trouble them.

My life will end while I am still inside. The outside is forbidden me. They will do away with me, kill me. I don't know why; I didn't ask to come into being. And now that I exist, they want to send me back into nothingness. They want to break the chain. I don't understand — I am just an embryo whom the world does not want. I shall stay in the dark. I shall never see daylight.

Help me!

NOTE: Government latest statistics, for 2018, indicate 200,608 abortions were carried out in England and Wales – an increase of 4%. Nine out of ten abortions were performed at 12 weeks or less.

The above Meditation of an Embryo was published by Fr. Augustin-Marie of the Fraternity of St. Vincent Ferrer at Le Salon Beige and has been translated with permission from the author. Published online by

ALERT! Reports are emerging that scientists want to adapt the 14-day rule for embryo research to ‘encompass evolving technologies.’ They claim research on in-vitro development is necessary and the arguments against extending the 14-day limit are not convincing.



In Lent especially we seek to restore order in our souls and St Joseph can surely help us with this task. St Joseph’s life was filled with emergencies, his concern for Mary, providing a place for Jesus’ birth, the prophecy of Simeon, the flight into Egypt, protecting the Holy Family in a pagan land – his life had many moments of crisis. No-one has been in greater need of God’s help and no-one on earth has relied more faithfully on His assistance. Therefore, there is no better guide for us today than St. Joseph.

On 8th December 2020, Pope Francis announced a special Year of St Joseph, and on this occasion, the Apostolic Penitentiary granted the public the opportunity to gain indulgences:

According to the Decree granted by the Holy See the Plenary Indulgence is granted under the customary conditions and as indicated by the Apostolic Penitentiary:

...to those who shall contemplate the Lord’s Prayer for at least 30 minutes, or participate in a Special Retreat of at least one day which involves a meditation on St Joseph

...to those who, after the example of St. Joseph, shall fulfil a corporeal or spiritual work of mercy;

...or the recitation of the Holy Rosary in families and among the engaged couples.

...to those who shall entrust their life to the protection of St. Joseph, and all faithful who shall invoke through prayer the intercession of the Worker of Nazareth, so that those in search of work may find employment and the work of all people may be more dignified;

...to the faithful who shall recite the Litanies to St Joseph (for the Latin Tradition) or the Akathistos (hymn) to St Joseph in their entirety (for the Byzantine (Eastern Orthodox) tradition), or some other prayer to St Joseph proper to other liturgical traditions. On 1 May 1955, Pope Pius XII instituted the feast of St. Joseph “with the intent that the dignity of work be recognized by all, and that it inspires social life and laws, based on the fair distribution of rights and duties.”

...to the faithful who shall recite any prayer legitimately approved or act of piety in honour of St Joseph, especially on 19th March and 1st May, on the feast of the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph, on the Sunday of St Joseph according to the Byzantine tradition, on the 19th of every month and every Wednesday, the day dedicated to the Saints memory, according to the Latin tradition

In every attack on the family or the Church, St Joseph is our protector. Because God entrusted him with the most precious portion of His flock, Jesus and Mary, the Church recognises him as the guardian of all Christendom. After the Blessed Virgin Mary, no other human creature had the faith of St. Joseph. In this year dedicated to him, let us ask St Joseph to grant us the sense of the faith and the use of reason necessary to orient us, without getting lost, towards the Divine Cave of Bethlehem.

Adapted from Calx MARIAE. Magazine., Issue 12, Spring 2021.: voiceofthefamily.com/calx-mariae to subscribe or purchase online.

THE SERENITY PRAYER

GOD, grant me the Serenity to accept the things I cannot change. The courage to change the things I can, and the wisdom to know the difference. Living one day at a time; accepting hardship as a pathway to peace; taking, as Jesus did, this sinful world as it is; not as I would have it. Trusting that You will make all things right if I surrender to Your will; so that I may be reasonably happy in this life and supremely happy with you forever in the next. Amen.



PERSONAL ENCOUNTERS WITH JESUS AND MARY



Over the past year and in times of either anxiety, stress or uncertainty, I have had dialogue, out of the blue, with Jesus. It usually transpires in our prayer/music room which is an extension to our house and is also very quiet. I have learned over time to calm myself down and clear my mind of all distractions, which is when I must be ready to hear our Lord's very quiet voice.

At first when this happened, I passed it off as my over active imagination or even the evil one trying to mislead me. BUT, I was soon made to realise this was my Lord and Saviour wanting to uplift and often teach me His ways and to point out my lack of trust. This was my biggest lesson and I have slowly come to true knowledge of why I have these encounters. The one thing I most had to learn was the spiritual gift of humility, and that has been hard going! I think of where I am now and I cautiously would say that I'm learning – albeit one step at a time.

It starts with a total self giving and abandonment to God's Will. This is vital and it teaches you to reflect on Mary's total self giving in humility to God as she always gave her very self to Him – body, mind and spirit – keeping nothing back – just to please the Father in everything. Hence her Fiat.

My encounters always start by His calling my name (sometimes twice). David – David; and if I show the slightest doubt, He then says 'It is the Lord who speaks'. I sometimes say as Samuel did 'speak, Lord, your servant is listening'. Our Lord has encouraged me time and time again to persevere, to trust, to be humble and always with the loving promise that my rest is assured with Him in Heaven.

Mary has also spoken to me, the first time I visited Medjugorje, in the chapel of one of the Visionaries, Ivan, as the apparition started, Mary said to me 'Sweet David, I am here'. What a wonderful grace that was!

As I reflect on my life and how God has called me to himself (me often

kicking against His call), I realise that many people will say I'm suffering from delusions – God doesn't speak to people these days – and I am simply deceiving myself. How totally wrong these thoughts are! I have survived impending death several times and made lots of mistakes before I became a Christian. And there are a minority of people who cannot forgive certain things in my past – so I pray for them. As Christians, we are not to judge others or we will force even stronger judgments from our Lord at the end of our lives here on Earth. Everyone is a child of God, even the most ardent of sinners. Our Lord's Divine Mercy tells us that.

My spiritual life, now completely entrusted to the Lord, is about filling our Churches once more, praying all the time for conversions and saving as many souls as possible, enabling them to enter into His Heavenly Kingdom. Heaven is our only spiritual goal. This life has nothing in a spiritual sense to offer us. But let's remember the words of one of my favourite hymns: 'Walk with me, Oh my Lord; through the darkest night and brightest day'. He certainly will if we trust in Him.

Reflections from Deacon Dave ✠



BAPTISM IN THE SPIRIT

Taken from The Gifts of the Spirit and the new Evangelisation'. Pat Collins CM.

Many Catholics are wary of the notion of Baptism in the Spirit. Some admit 'I do not even know what the phrase means,' others ask, "if it is all that important, how come we never heard about it when we were growing up?" Others wonder whether Baptism in the Spirit is a Protestant notion or even a Pentecostal or Charismatic one?

The word 'baptism' in English comes from Greek and means to immerse, i.e., to soak, inundate or saturate. In other words, to be Baptised in the Spirit means to be filled with the Spirit (Eph. 5:28). As John 1:33 shows, there is nothing new about the phrase 'Baptised in the Spirit. It is significant that Jesus used a similar phrase before his ascension into heaven when He said to the apostles, John baptised with wa-

ter but, in a few days, you will be baptised by the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:5). While it is true in modern times Charismatics have drawn attention to the importance of this blessing, it is necessary to fulfil the church's universal call to holiness and evangelisation.

The Irish Bishops referred to its ability to foster holiness when they said in a pastoral letter entitled 'Life in the Spirit' that Baptism in the Spirit is: The outpouring of the Holy Spirit is a conversion gift through which one receives a new and significant commitment to the Lordship of Jesus and openness to the power and gifts of the Holy Spirit. When people are baptised in the Spirit it is as if the risen Jesus has taken up residence within them. As a result of knowing in an experiential way that 'God has poured His love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit whom He has given us' (Rom 5:5), they have a newfound desire to treat others the way they would like to be treated themselves, an increased ability to pray, a deeper insight into the meaning of the scriptures, a desire to be holy and a growing urge to evangelise.

When one reads the lives of the saints it becomes pretty obvious that many of them described religious awakenings that seemed to be similar to present day descriptions of Baptism in the Spirit. For example:

St Patrick (390 – 460) Apostle of Ireland. Speaking about his religious awakening he said: "I cannot hide the gift of God which he gave me in the land of my captivity." Time and time again in his Confessions he mentioned how the Spirit guided and empowered him in ordinary and extraordinary ways. Not only did he grow to be exceptionally holy, he evangelised a nation.

St Thérèse of Lisieux (1873 – 1897). At midnight Mass on Christmas Eve 1886 she had a life-changing religious experience. She called it her night of conversion and illumination. 'Charity found its way into my heart' she declares, 'calling on me to forget myself and simply do what God wanted of me.' Thérèse had experienced what Pentecostals and Charismatics refer to as Baptism in the Spirit. How does a person become baptised in the Spirit? There are four things necessary:

Firstly, he or she needs a wholehearted desire for this grace.

Secondly, it is important to rely on the infallible promises of God to send the Spirit to those whose desire prompts them to ask for it.

Thirdly, it is important that those who desire to be filled with the Holy Spirit must be willing to turn away from any obstacle that might stand in the way.

Fourthly, people should ask to be baptised in the Spirit with real expectancy.

People who have experienced the effusion of the Holy Spirit find that they are guided by the Spirit in all sorts of ways, e.g., the whispers of conscience, inner promptings, words of knowledge, scriptural inspirations, etc. When they get such inspirations, they rely upon the action of the Holy Spirit within them to empower them to do God's will even if it seems beyond the limitations of their human nature.

It appears that Baptism in the Spirit has been rediscovered by the Pentecostal and Charismatic movements but it has always been a gift for all the church. Baptism in the Spirit is not a movement, it is not an optional spirituality in the church such as a specific devotion. Baptism in the Holy Spirit does not belong to private piety - it is the spirituality of the church.

Pope John Paul II, in *Mission of the Redeemer*, observed 'God is preparing a great springtime for Christianity and we can already see the first signs.' There is an obvious need to integrate this notion into everyday Catholic spirituality, at every level of the church, in the conviction that the fullness of the Spirit is indispensable if one hopes to respond effectively to the universal call to holiness and evangelisation.

AN INVITATION: (SAINT LOUIS M. DE MONTFORT)

In order to draw close to men and give them a more convincing proof of His love, eternal Wisdom went so far as to become a man, even to become a little child, to embrace poverty and to die upon a cross for them. How many times, while here on earth, could He be heard pleading, "come to me,, come to me all of you. Do not be afraid, it is I. Why are you afraid? I am just like you. I love you. Are you afraid because you are sinners? But they are the very ones I am looking for; I am the friend of sinners. If it is because you have strayed from the fold through your own fault, then I am the Good Shepherd. If it is because you are weighed down with sin, covered with grime and utterly dejected, then that is just why you should come to me, for I will unburden you, purify you and console you."



(part two)

Continuing our series about the power of prayer, we will look today at the power of words in prayer, again this teaching coming from John Gillespie in his booklet 'The Key to Powerful Prayer' (Modern Printers, Kilkenny 056-7721739).

Before we explore John's teaching, let us think a little more about our relationship with Scripture, using an article from the Catholic News Agency adapted from <http://www.schooloffaith.com/>.

The Church tells us in the Catechism of the Catholic Church, 2653: The Church forcefully and specially exhorts all the Christian faithful to learn the surpassing knowledge of Jesus Christ by frequent reading of the Divine Scriptures. Let them remember, however, that prayer should accompany the reading of Sacred Scripture, so that a dialogue takes place between God and man. For we speak to Him when we pray; we listen to Him when we read the divine oracles.

♦ ***How to Allow God to Speak with You and Guide Your Life Daily Through Prayer using Scripture:***

Pope Leo XIII said, "In the sacred books, the Father who is in heaven comes lovingly to meet His children and talks with them." St. Ambrose says, "We have been given Sacred Scripture so that God and man may talk together; for we speak to Him when we pray; we hear Him when we read the divine saying."

Through Sacred Scripture the invisible God, out of the abundance of His love, speaks to men as friends so that He may invite and take them into fellowship with Himself. In the sacred books, the Father who is in heaven meets His children with great love and speaks with them; and the force and power in the Word of God is so great that it stands as the support and energy of the Church, the strength of faith for her sons, the food of the soul, the pure and everlasting source of spiritual life.

Through these sacred books comes the "good news" that God is with us to free us from the darkness of sin and death, and to raise us up to life eternal."

It is through the Bible that we meet the Person of Jesus Christ. We come to learn who He is, how He lived, what He taught, what He has done for me, and it is through Scripture that I learn His plan of salvation and happiness for my life. Reflecting on this truth allowed St. Jerome to say, "Ignorance of Scripture is ignorance of Christ."

◇ ***Simple 5 Step Method of Taking Scripture to Prayer:***

1 Give yourself to Jesus through the Hands of Mary: Ask the Holy Spirit to teach you to pray and to help you hear Him; to understand what He is asking of you; and for the grace to then do what He is asking of you.

2 Read a passage of the Bible slowly: See yourself in the passage as one of the characters. Picture yourself in the scene speaking with Jesus and Jesus speaking to you for He is speaking to you right now through this passage.

3. Ask the Lord what He is saying to you today.

4. Remain silent and re-read the same passage two or three more times very slowly while thinking about this. Be silent and listen as you slowly continue to go over the passage.

5. Make a resolution to do what the Lord asks of you: Write it down, go back to it over the course of the day and as we carry on using Scripture in our daily lives, we can begin to think about the power of Scripture in prayer.

There is power praying God's Word, the Scriptures, and in giving thanks in JESUS' NAME when we pray. Returning to John Gillespie, John tells us that there are keys which are quotes or phrases from Scripture that God has provided to help us but we need to use the right key for our prayer to be effective.

We need to incorporate the scriptural keys into our daily prayer so that our prayer becomes more powerful before God. We begin by picking an appropriate quote from scripture and repeating it a few times a day, saying it with confidence and giving thanks in Jesus' name.

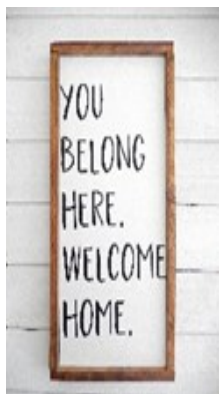
John gives us some statements adapted from scripture that we can use, for example:

For POOR HEALTH: Jesus took my infirmities and bore my sickness. Therefore, I refuse to allow sickness to dominate my body. The Life of God flows within me bringing healing to every fibre of my being, IN JESUS' NAME – Matthew 8:17; John 6.63.

For HEART AND BLOOD: Thank you Jesus that I have a strong heart. My heart beats with the rhythm of life. My blood flows to every cell of my body restoring life and health abundantly, IN JESUS' NAME – Proverbs 12:14; 14:30.

For GROWTHS AND TUMOURS – Jesus bore the curse for me; therefore, I forbid growths and tumours to inhabit my body. The life of God within me dissolves growths and tumours, and my strength and health is restored, IN JESUS' NAME – Matthew 16:19; John 14:13; Mark 11:23.

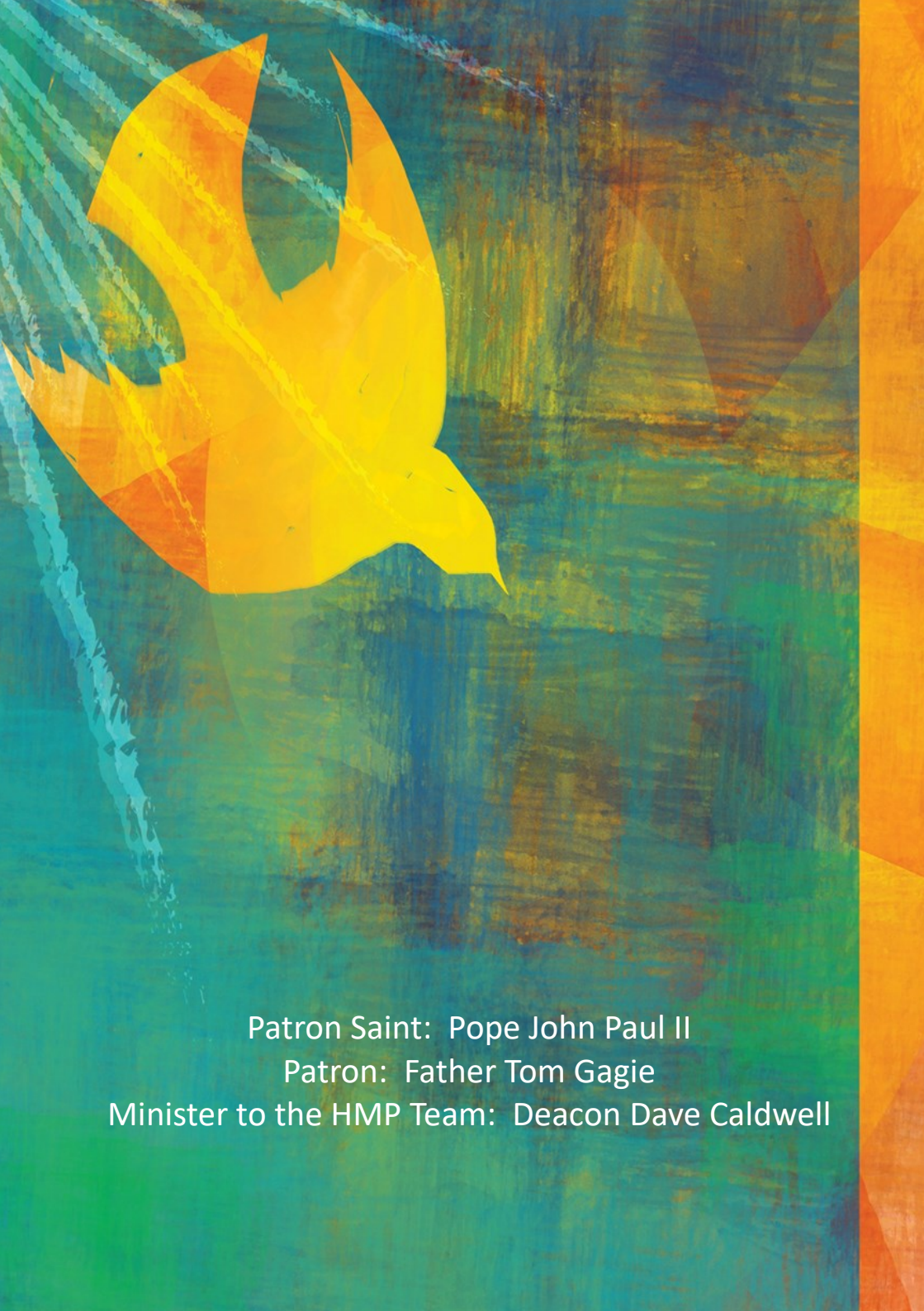
So, start getting to know your way around Scripture, use the five steps to include Scripture in your prayer and begin to use the keys from Scripture to pray, praying with great faith, with confidence and giving thanks, in Jesus' name.



A message from Medjugorje, August 2nd 1987, adapted and said as a prayer to welcome people home—people who want to return to the faith.

"We pray for those who do not believe; those who have not yet come to know the love of God, who do not feel the Church as their home and God as their Father. We do not call them unbelievers because even by saying that, we judge them; we think of them as our brothers and sisters.

We cannot consider ourselves true believers if we do not see Jesus Christ in every person we meet."



Patron Saint: Pope John Paul II

Patron: Father Tom Gagie

Minister to the HMP Team: Deacon Dave Caldwell