

## From the Classics

"He has chosen her (Mary) to be the dispenser of all He possesses, in such wise that she distributes to whom she wills, as much as she wills, as she wills, and when she wills, all His gifts and grace."



From *True Devotion to Mary*  
By Saint Louis de Montfort

## Wisdom of the Saints



The devil strains every nerve to secure the souls which belong to Christ. We should not grudge our toil in wrestling them from Satan, and giving them back to God."  
~ Saint Sebastian ~  
Feast January 20

**SECOND SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME**  
January 16, 2022 ~ Bulletin No. 3 Vol. XXXVIII

## CALENDAR ~ January 1-9, 2022

Sat 15	5:00pm	Mass for the Parish
Sun 16	9:00am 11:30am 7:30pm	Mass for ROS Amy Behler by Brandon, Lisa & CJ Higgins Mass for ROS Bob Thomas by the Knights of Columbus AA Meeting, call Floyd Kunkle at 289-6336 for information
Mon 17	9:00am 7:00am	Deceased Members of the Cilone Family Men's Prayer Group
Wed 18	7:00pm 10:30	Mass for Jim Brooks, Happy Birthday! By Molly & Meghan Brooks Prayer Group, Parish Hall
Thurs 20	12:10pm 1:00pm 7:00pm	Mass for ROS Lois Tessneer by John & Jeannette Land Eucharistic Adoration, Chapel Rosary and Benediction, Chapel
Fri 21	12:10pm 7:00am	Mass for ROS Loretta Stieber by Walter Orzechowicz Men's Prayer Group
Sat 22	5:00pm	Mass for Kim Smith, Happy Birthday by Mark & Peggy Fetsko
Sun 23	9:00am 11:30am 7:30pm	Mass for Samantha Harbort, Happy Birthday by Kate Johnson Mass for ROS Al Urban by Barbara Urban AA Meeting, call Floyd Kunkle at 289-6336 for information

### For Annulment Information Contact:

Rachel Harrill 1-828-447-1908 or Email: [reharrill@rcdoc.org](mailto:reharrill@rcdoc.org).

## RETRouvaille

A LIFE LINE FOR MARRIED COUPLES

### You can help your marriage!

Do you feel alone? Are you frustrated or angry with each other? Do you argue or have

you just stopped talking to each other? **Retrouvaille** helps couples through difficult times in their marriages. For confidential information or to apply to attend the program beginning with the weekend of Feb. 11-13, 2022, call 434-793-0242 or email [retrouvaillenc@msn.com](mailto:retrouvaillenc@msn.com) or visit website at

**SECOND COLLECTION THIS WEEKEND** For the Combined Missions

## COLLECTION CONTRIBUTIONS

Parishioners have the option of making their contributions online through the following link:

<https://giving.parishsoft.com/app/giving/immaculateconceforestcity>

### Contributions from January 9, 2022

Regular Collection: \$7,229.00

**January 17:** Join in the **Prayer Shawl Ministry**. 10:00am in the Parish Hall. So far, 22 shawls and lap-ropes have generously been made and given to parishioners and friends. For questions, call Betsy

The 18th (English) **Emmaus of the Carolinas Weekend Retreat for Men** is an exceptional event and opportunity to grow in spirit, and will occur on the weekend of February 18-20, 2022, at the YMCA Blue Ridge Assembly Center in Black Mountain, NC. Why should I attend? Men who have attended have experienced a closeness to God, and other effects. For more information or to sign up contact Tom @ 908-783-5414 or [femmaus@gmail.com](mailto:femmaus@gmail.com)

**Saturday, Jan. 22, marks the 49th year since Roe v Wade**, and well over 64 million abortions in the US, an incomprehensible horror. You may ask, "What can one person do?" Do something hidden and powerful. Come to church and spend an hour in adoration and reparation on the 22nd. "For our struggle is not against flesh and blood....but against the spiritual forces of evil." *Ephesians, 6:12.*

DIOCESE of CHARLOTTE



50<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY

## THE CORD OF SAINT THOMAS

According to tradition, St. Thomas Aquinas' family tried to tempt him to renounce his religious vocation by locking him in a room with a woman of ill repute. When he fended off her advances without hesitation, two angels came and girded him around the waist with a cord. From that moment, he was supernaturally protected from all temptations against chastity. From this event, there developed the custom of wearing a blessed cord to guard the virtue of chastity, which later became the Angelic Warfare Confraternity under the auspices of the Order of Preachers



(Dominicans) to which St. Thomas belonged. Individuals of any state in life, having received their Confirmation, can enroll in the confraternity and wear a blessed cord around the waist (or a medal around the neck) while praying two special prayers and 15 Hail Marys daily for the protection of one's own chastity and for all those in the world enrolled in the Angelic Warfare Confraternity. Given the fragile nature of chastity in an increasingly coarse world, there is a need for Catholic youth and adults, single and married, to fight daily and with intention the temptations against purity, and the Angelic Warfare Confraternity is an effective means for doing so. For more information on Prayers for this special Anniversary Year, go to our Diocesan website.

Submit information for the bulletin to Penny Watkins, at [pjwlmg@gmail.com](mailto:pjwlmg@gmail.com); Deadline: 12:30pm, Wednesday before the bulletin comes out.

## Prayer is Important Because.....

... Prayer is the expression of our personal relationship with the living and true God. (Catechism of the Catholic Church, CCC)

Think of it this way. "Eating keeps your body alive, and prayer keeps your soul alive. Praying is more important than eating because your soul is more important than your body. You will get a new body after death, in the resurrection at the end of the world. But you will not get a new soul; you will only purify and sanctify the old one. It is through prayer that we continue to build/rebuild our relationship with God." (Kreeft)

In his book *Prayer for Beginners*, Peter Kreeft gives us ten reasons to pray. Some may strike to the heart, and others might seem odd, but all point to the importance of prayer in our lives. Here are his reasons:

1. Because only prayer can save the world.
2. Because God commands it.
3. Because God commands prayer for good reasons. Prayer gives truth to the mind, goodness to our will, and beauty to our heart.
4. Because God's honor deserves it.
5. Because we do not have an infinite amount of time.
6. Because prayer is delightful. Brother Lawrence of the Resurrection said "There is not in the world a kind of life more sweet than that of a continual conversation with God."
7. Because prayer is the way to know God.
8. Because prayer and its effect-knowing God-is the essential pre-requisite for all religious teachers, catechists, and preachers.
9. Because prayer is the only way to spiritual progress. Brother Lawrence also says "Not to advance in the spiritual life is to go back."
10. Because prayer is the way to attain the meaning of life, the end and purpose of our existence.



These are Kreeft's reasons, and all of them make sense, but each of us may have other reasons like...The day just doesn't seem complete without taking time out to pray...I can't start the day right without morning prayer...The day isn't finished unless I say "Goodnight" to God. Whatever the reasons we pray, when we pray we grow closer to God.

As to how to pray, that perhaps is the easiest of all. "Can you talk to a friend? Then you can talk to God, for He is your friend. And that is what prayer is." (Kreeft) What method of prayer is best for you? That depends. The Catechism points out three ways to express our prayers: "The Lord leads all persons by paths and in ways pleasing to him, and each believer responds according to his heart's resolve and the personal expressions of his prayer. Christian Tradition has retained three major expressions of prayer: vocal, meditative, and contemplative. They have but one basic trait in common: composure of heart." (CCC ¶2699)

Let's look at vocal prayer first. When the Apostles asked Jesus to teach them how to pray, he taught them a specific prayer...words to the Father in heaven. These words are with us still. "Words" are important. Think about it... Jesus, as a 1st century Jewish man, prayed daily using the Psalms. They were prayed aloud and were memorized in the heart of all who prayed them. Jesus also prayed with spontaneous words to His Father in heaven. He taught His apostles to do the same. Between what Jesus did and what He taught, he gave us a format for vocal prayer.

"If we are going to talk to God the Father the same way that Jesus did, we need to pray using our own words. On the other hand, if we never pray the words of the Psalms or the Lord's Prayer, then we are choosing not to pray as Jesus himself prayed. If Jesus is truly the master of Christian prayer, then we should follow His example by writing the words of the Psalms and the Lord's Prayer into our heart so that they can teach us how to pray and what to say...Whatever words we use, we should always strive to speak from the heart. In other words, we need to say what we mean, and mean what we say." (Brant Pitre, *Introduction to the Spiritual Life: Walking the Path of Prayer with Jesus*)

Pitre points out two steps in speaking to God from the heart. Step 1, begin your prayers by taking a moment to place yourself in the presence of God. Step 2, remember that you are not just saying words. You are actually speaking to Someone...God!

Some folks minimize vocal prayer and want to move quickly into meditative and contemplative prayer, thinking that they are higher forms of prayer. Don't skip over vocal prayer. After all, Jesus used vocal prayers. He taught His disciples vocal prayer. And His prayer is a serious part of our Tradition.

Plus, it puts us on the path to the other two expressions of prayer-meditative and contemplative prayer, which will be the subject of upcoming bulletins.