



Newsletter

The Personal Ordinariate of
Our Lady of the Southern Cross
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Trinitytide



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Retrieval and Trial of the Three Crosses - Agnolo Gaddi 1385-87

The Ordinary's Message

Mid-month, 14 September, is the Feast Day of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross, which many of us grew up simply calling "Holy Cross Day."



Here at the end of August, I'm looking ahead to the first Sunday in September, the Gospel for which is Luke 14:25-33, which includes the *hard saying* of Jesus, "Whoever does not bear his own cross and come after me, cannot be my disciple." Which should make us think of that which He also said earlier, in Ch. 9, "If any man would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me." Quite naturally therefore, the theme of the Cross is forefront in my thoughts as I anticipate the Sunday ahead.

The painting above by Agnolo Gaddi depicts only part of a sequence. As presented by Web Gallery of Art, "*The chancel chapel of Santa Croce, constructed along with the transept at the beginning of the fourteenth century, received its fresco decoration relatively late, probably between 1385 and 1387. The patron was Benedetto degli Alberti, member of a major political family in Florence. The author of the frescoes is Agnolo Gaddi, but opinions are varied with regard to the role of his assistants.*

In keeping with the dedication of the church, scenes from the Legend of the True Cross are depicted in the chancel. The scenes appear in the large picture fields on the side walls, four scenes per wall. This is the earliest surviving monumental painted cycle in Italy dedicated to this subject. Besides the large narrative paintings that make up the main part of the pictorial program, numerous depictions of saints and prophets, both full-length figures and busts, appear in the framing elements: between each window three saints are depicted; in the vault, the four evangelists, John the Baptist and Francis; on the inner sides of each entry pier, three Franciscan saints, and on each of the outer sides, three saints holding crosses; in the intrados of the entrance

arch, half-figures of the apostles with the articles of faith of the Creed; and two prophets each in the spandrels of the entrance arch and in the upper section of the front wall.

The literary source on which the depiction of the Legend of the True Cross is based is the Golden Legend by Jacobus de Voragine. The narrative tells the story of Christ's cross which, according to tradition, was made from a tree planted over Adam's grave by his son Seth. The sequence of scenes begins in the lunette of the south wall and then extends over the other three image field on the same wall. The frescoes continue on the north wall, beginning again in the lunette.

Having to combine several episodes into one image field presented the painter with a rather difficult task and inevitably brought with it an inconsistency in the pictorial arrangement. The compositional and narrative qualities of the frescoes are, nevertheless, considerable. This is particularly true of the frescoes on the north wall, where foreground and background, figures and settings, work together more effectively than in the frescoes on the south wall.

The particular painting I've chosen from the Gaddi sequence, of the retrieval and trial, depicts the time at which St Helena rediscovers three crosses – but which is the one on which Christ was crucified? As the story has come down through history, the crosses are held over a corpse; with the third Cross, the dead is revived.

Did that actually occur? If we recollect how that sick people were healed, not just by touching the hem of Jesus' garments, but also how that, in Acts Ch. 5, it is recorded that sick were healed even if Peter's shadow passed over them, perhaps we should not doubt. We might also recall how that St Paul in his First Letter to the Church in Corinth said, "Christ did not send me to baptize but to preach the gospel, and not with eloquent wisdom, lest the cross of Christ be emptied of its power. For the word of the cross is folly to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God."

Even devout Christians, under the pervasive influence of the need for tangible, empirical proofs for things to be believed are always at the risk of losing the innocent, trustful belief of a child, and becoming as cynical as secular society. Keep that thought in mind when you come to the article later in the newsletter, "Visiting Jesus: Take Little Ones to Adoration" in which we see an infant sitting in front of a monstrance. There might be a tendency to argue that the baby is simply staring at the bright, shiny monstrance. As Christians, should we not rather give thanks that the power of the Presence of the Lord has touched the little one?

The Right Reverend Monsignor Carl Reid, PA
Ordinary



Now What?

Last month, we announced the appointment of Bishop Steven Lopes as Visitor Apostolic to the Personal Ordinariate of Our Lady of the Southern Cross. The Visitation Team was also comprised of Bishop Anthony Randazzo of the Diocese of Broken Bay, and Mr Josue Vasquez-Weber who is Executive Secretary to Bishop Lopes and Chancellor of the Personal Ordinariate of The Chair of Saint Peter in the United States and Canada.

After being subjected to a slight delay, thanks to the tardiness of Australian visas being issued for the visit, Bishop Lopes and Mr Vasquez-Weber arrived in Australia just after mid-month, with their departure back to the United States on 31 August. While here, and along with Bishop Randazzo, their busy schedule included meeting with our clergy at the annual retreat at Mount



Carmel in Varroville NSW. They also visited our two largest communities in Perth and Melbourne; met face-to-face with three Archbishops of the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference (ACBC); met via Zoom with Ordinariate clergy who for health reasons were not able to attend the retreat; met via Zoom with the other ACBC bishops in whose dioceses are located Ordinariate communities.

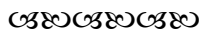
(To the left: Mr Josue Vasquez-Weber, Bishop Steven Lopes, Bishop Anthony Randazzo, and Fr Ramsay Williams of the Ordinariate community in Melbourne of St Edmund Campion.)

(To the right – at St Ninian and St Chad in Perth [from the back of the altar, left side] Nigel McBain, Fr Ted Wilson, Mgr Harry Entwistle, Josue Vasquez-Weber [kneeling], Bishop Steven Lopes and Bishop Anthony Randazzo.)



And, what now? Stated simply, they will be submitting a report to Rome. As none of us, myself included, is part of the Visitation Team, may we all resist the temptation to hop on various blogs and speculate about what the report will say; and further to speculate that we know what Rome might (or might not) do with the report.

The best, most important thing we can do is, as says St Paul, “Pray without ceasing.”



Fr Stephen Hill posted this earlier on the St Bede’s Facebook page; many of our readers therefore may already have seen it. If not...

Why the Ordinariates?

August 18, 2022 Charles Coulombe

This column first appeared in Crisis Magazine (www.crisismagazine.com) Copyright 2022.

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In good Pope Benedict’s golden days, when after a somewhat mixed start the then-pontiff seemed to revel in tossing good things at the faithful—from calling them together to pray for the persecuted Church in China, to reclaiming lost papal regalia and symbolism, to liberating the Latin Mass from the *ultra vires* shackles placed upon it in 1974 (and replaced in the same invalid manner over the past year)—he did something that struck many as odd at the time.

On November 4, 2009, Benedict XVI issued the Apostolic Constitution *Anglicanorum Coetibus*, which envisaged the creation of new diocese-like Church structures—Personal Ordinariates—to smooth the way for various groups of Anglicans to enter the Catholic Church in a corporate manner. Moreover—and this was what appeared to be peculiar to quite a large number of people—they would be encouraged “to maintain the liturgical, spiritual, and pastoral traditions of the Anglican Communion within the

Catholic Church, as a precious gift nourishing the faith of the members of the Ordinariate and as a treasure to be shared.”

To understand why the pope did this, we first have to understand a bit of the history behind this move, in order to see why he considered Anglican traditions “a precious

recited are correct, they are far from complete.

The first thing to understand is that despite American independence from the British Crown, the cultural and religious dynamics of not just the United States, but Canada, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa—and



[Photo Credit: The Cathedral of Our Lady of Walsingham website]

gift” and a “treasure to be shared.” After all, as every Catholic English-speaker knows, Henry VIII and Elizabeth I created the Church of England in revolt from Rome, while persecuting and martyring Catholics who refused to join it.

Even after the bloodshed stopped, Catholics still laboured under restrictions in the British Empire until a later date. And even after that time, in both the Empire and the United States, Catholics have continued to socially play second fiddle to the Anglicans—this remaining, of course, while in recent decades the Anglican Communion has collapsed doctrinally and is a major vehicle of wokery. Add to all of the Anglophobia that of many of Irish descent due to the Emerald Isle’s horrific history and it became very difficult indeed for many English-speaking Catholics to understand why Benedict would feel that way. But although the unpleasant facts just

even India and elsewhere—are still heavily marked by the 17th-century religious and political struggles that made the British Isles what they are: the last battle in the Civil Wars between Cromwell and the Stuarts was fought in Maryland, even as that of the American Revolution was fought in India. Had New England been settled by Anglicans rather than Puritans, our history would have been very different—as it would have been had Henry not broken with Rome. By the same token, there is a reason why so many of our national civic observances take place in D.C.’s Episcopal National Cathedral.

One thing to be remembered is that before the Protestant Revolt, English Catholicism—as with Scots, Irish, French, and every other national expression of the Faith—had its own character, its own saints and shrines, and its own liturgical customs: the “uses” of Sarum, York, and elsewhere.

After Henry broke with Rome and then died, his Archbishop of Canterbury composed the *Book of Common Prayer* in large part out of Protestantized translations of the Sarum Missal and Breviary. After the brief Marian restoration, Elizabeth I renewed the break, and she turned the C of E into a national institution that was simply intended to unify her subjects behind her crown, regardless of their personal beliefs—whether subsisting Catholic, Calvinist, or nothing in particular. From these currents emerged the so-called “High Church,” “Low Church,” and “Broad Church.”

Those who refused, the so-called “Recusants,” kept the Faith alive in the Three Kingdoms of England, Scotland, and Ireland. They fought Cromwell for King Charles alongside the High Church Anglicans, and they supported the Jacobites until the pope recognized George III as King in 1766. Under persecution and defeat, their liturgical and intellectual life suffered. Rather than much outward display, they instead reflected an intense and private piety. This would have a marked influence on the Catholic Church in America.

With the 19th-century Oxford Movement, a revitalized “High Church” emerged, which has come to be called “Anglo-Catholicism.” From these folk—starting with such as Newman and Manning—came a steady stream of converts to Rome. But those who remained saw their role as “re-Catholicizing” the Church of England and her daughter churches (those among them called “Papalists” saw corporate reunion with the Holy See as their goal; the others did not).

Under their aegis all sorts of things returned to Anglicanism in the 19th and early 20th centuries: religious life in various orders (several of which would come into the Catholic Church *en masse*); a liturgy which was basically the Catholic Mass in Prayer Book English; prayers to Mary and the saints, and for the dead; and the revival of such ruined shrines as Walsingham and Glastonbury. Several of their number were imprisoned for short periods for “Romish”

worship, but the Anglo-Catholic priests opened up slum parishes in Britain and sent out missionaries across the Empire (paralleling our own Catholic orders who were also using Britain’s strength as a shield in the mission field).

At the same time, the movement inspired an amazing number of writers, from C.S. Lewis to T.S. Eliot to Dorothy Sayers. All of this convinced many of them that Anglicanism was a branch of one “Church Catholic,” alongside Rome and the Orthodox. The condemnation of Anglican Orders had little effect on them, other than angry denials on the one hand and the securing of indisputably valid Old Catholic bishops to co-consecrate their hierarchs on the other.

Since the 1960s, however, with the Anglican Communion being in doctrinal free fall—especially as regarded the Ordination of women and sexual immorality—it has become a more and more difficult place for many Anglo-Catholics. Ever since, there have been wave after wave of converts. But it is important to remember that such folk have not joined the Church simply to escape such drivel; rather, they came to realize that their own beliefs had been merely opinions as well; only in the Catholic Church were they dogmas.

The first attempt to bring such in was in the United States in the ’70s—and it was only partly successful. This, of course, was because we Catholics were knee-deep in our own troubles. The Ordinariate scheme was an improvement upon the Pastoral Provision—not least because it would allow its beneficiaries to live without answering to local Catholic bishops who were in many cases closer in tacit behaviour to the local Episcopal bishop than to the Rome of either John Paul II or Benedict XVI. Moreover, as that latter pontiff declared in *Anglicanorum Coetibus*, by this time the Anglo-Catholics had gifts the Church as a whole needed.

So now let’s look at those gifts—and we may start with Liturgy. As we know, the average offering of the Mass in most Catholic

parishes is rather uninspiring; as Benedict put it, “where there is applause, the spirit of the Liturgy has fled.” It was to redress this problem that the pontiff gave us *Summorum Pontificum*: partly to address the terrible injustice of the abrogation of the Traditional Mass but also to reinvigorate Catholic worship everywhere.

The strengths of the Anglican Missal were in large part those of the Traditional Mass: reverence and sacrality derived from an *Ad Orientem* positioning of the priest; gestures ritualized—often following Fortescue; and sacred language—albeit Prayer Book English rather than Latin. Of course, in such circles there is often an openness to Latin unknown in many Church locales today.

Added to this is an incredible musical tradition that, while often encompassing our own plain chant and polyphony, has its own unforgettable hymns and incredible composers, from Tallis to Willan. There is also an appetite for such public demonstrations of the liturgy as public processions, which while still popular in “ethnic” American parishes tend to be less so in more assimilated ones—due in part to that earlier tradition of persecution under which the Catholics of the British Isles lived for so long.

In the spiritual and devotional realm, the Anglo-Catholics early on sought to establish a connection with the Pre-Reformation Church in Britain. So, they became enamoured of such Medieval English writers as Walter Hilton, Richard Rolle, Dame Julian of Norwich, and the author of *The Cloud of Unknowing*. During the 17th century, the Caroline Divines and the Cavalier and Metaphysical Poets attempted to uphold the “High Church” against the Puritans, and they created a backdrop from which the later Oxford Movement could borrow a great deal of ammunition—some of which Catholics as a whole today may find useful. We may also find useful the more modern writings of later Anglo-Catholics, such as the ones earlier mentioned, as well as Ralph Adams Cram,

Eric Mascall, Gregory Dix, and a host of others.

In a word, it reflects a deeply literate Faith that is not afraid of modernity. Moreover, private devotions are a huge part of Anglo-Catholic life; the recently published *St. Gregory’s Prayer Book*, produced under Ordinariate auspices, reflects the best of the many such volumes they produced in their heyday—and this writer finds it enormously useful.

The last gift is pastoral; for the Anglo-Catholic, his parish is truly the centre of his life. For American Catholics this is an experience generally reserved to ethnic or Eastern Catholic parishes. Of course, like them, Anglo-Catholic (and so Ordinariate) parishes tend to be much smaller and family-like. As a result, members of Ordinariate parishes tend to be very active indeed, and they are at home with each other and with the Faith in a way that is hard to describe. To put on such events as the annual “Festival of Lessons and Carols,” a Christmas-time treat many Ordinariate parishes have brought over lock, stock, and barrel, usually requires all hands!

But there is more to it than that. Our ancestors kept the Faith in the Isles during Penal Times and were driven from their parishes; they lived, as it were, in the shadows—even as many Traditionalists do in my time. But in those days, the parish was in fact the centre of everyday life for everyone, as it had been throughout Catholic and Orthodox Europe; it was the smallest unit of temporal as well as ecclesiastical governance, and the same committee that kept the church fabric in repair also kept the peace and fed the poor.

This did not stop at the Protestant Revolt; the Catholics were simply put out. But the parish churches continued as they had; as the centre of social life as well as of religious. So it was and is in the Church of England, and in many places in America it remains so with the Episcopal Church (as well as in Catholic Europe—as in my little village in Austria).

Thus, the pastors and members of such congregations often take an active place in local activities—and host everything from Maypoles to Boar’s Head Feasts to blessings of the Hounds. But in such hands, these things are little more than memorials to a glorious past. In Catholic hands—at least in the hands of Catholics dedicated to evangelizing their neighbours—they could be so much more.

Ultimately, it is not really a question of merely preserving Anglican customs as though they were museum pieces. One of the major problems the Faith has always faced in the Anglosphere is the perception that it is foreign. Just as the Ordinariates allow Anglicans to share the same Church as Sts. Thomas More, John Fisher, and John

Newman, they also can provide a means of rebuilding or recreating a Catholicism as natively English-speaking, as culturally tied to its countries while retaining its universality, as anything in Catholic Europe or Latin America.

It is ultimately as vehicles for the conversion of the Anglosphere that we must look at them. If, due to the same factors that appear to restrain every movement for growth today throughout the Church, that possibility looks remote, we must remember one important thing. This moment shall pass sooner or later; because of Benedict’s foundational efforts in this and other areas, a future pope interested in the Salvation of Souls shall find in the Ordinariates—and other things—very useful tools indeed.



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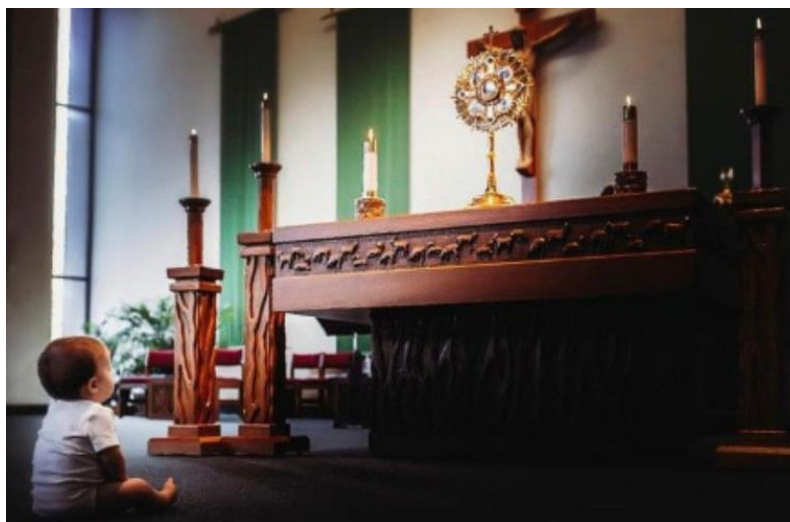
Visiting Jesus: Take Little Ones to Adoration

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‘Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these.’

[Alyssa Murphy Blogs](#) August 14, 2022



A toddler stares intently at the Blessed Sacrament. (photo: Courtesy photo / Alisann Shetler Elpers)

A baby looking at Jesus.

Fewer things are more precious.

Images of babies staring intently at the Blessed Sacrament, basking in the Real Presence, Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ, have gone viral of late.

Perhaps this blessed trend is due to the National Eucharistic Revival taking place right now, or maybe it is the witness of the youthful holiness of Blessed Carlo Acutis.

As Jesus himself said, “Let the little children come to me” (Matthew 19:14).

In the holy footsteps of St. Gerard Majella, who went to Mass with his mother as a young child, there is always an opportunity to introduce even the youngest of Catholics to Our Lord. Most likely, the Child Jesus won't climb down from the Blessed Mother's arms to give Bread to my toddler like St. Gerard experienced, but little ones should be shaped and guided to understand this blessed reality: Jesus is real and only asks us to come.



*A toddler stares intently at the Blessed Sacrament.
(Photo: Courtesy photo)*

To reiterate Jesus' words:
Do not *hinder* them. Their innocent hearts are drawn to Christ.

Seeing my young daughter recognize and love Jesus warms my maternal heart.

Speaking with Register contributor Msgr. Charles Pope, who is a pastor in the Archdiocese of Washington, about the importance of taking even our youngest into the Real Presence of Our Lord, he said there is so much we can learn from children when it comes to faith and, in particular, prayer. Recounting his own experience praying as a 5-year-old, he spoke fondly of that childhood faith memory:

“I must have been about 5 or 6, and there was a Sacred Heart statue on the dresser. I would see that statue and start talking to God in the freest way, and God would speak to me, simply and in a way a child could understand. But it was very real. And then the memory shuts off. It is just a small window into my early childhood, one of the few, and it was filled with God.”

And it is this Friend who shapes our understanding of the eternal from our youngest years. I can still recall the first time I prayed for a child in the third grade, imploring Christ to help a classmate being teased and thinking, “How does her heart feel?” We should not lose the heartfelt voice of a child finding a true friend in Jesus.

Catholic author Lisa Hendey frequently visited Jesus at the altar as a young girl. She recalled to the Register, “One great gift my parents gave me was a love for Jesus truly present in the Blessed Sacrament and a desire to be close to Jesus in my heart.” And, oftentimes, Hendey said, “It was just to say ‘Hi’ to Jesus.”

Parents have a blessed task in working to instil a fervent faith into our children, and she says the Real Presence should be at the heart of family life:

“Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament is a perfect gift for young children. At adoration, Mom can gather close to the altar, snuggle with her little ones, and gently offer her love for Jesus and her family. There is an awe and stillness in adoration, whether it is a formal service or an informal visit during perpetual adoration, that can soothe and entice a young one's attention.”

Learning how to be quiet seems like a heavy task these days, given the social-media saturation of our times, but it is vital to cultivating an interior life, even for the littlest hearts.

A young girl was led to deep prayer after taking her first Communion, Msgr. Pope recounted, and her parents noticed her quiet contemplation. They asked her after Mass what she was praying about, and it is such a beautiful reminder of Jesus being our first real friend:

“A young girl received her first Holy Communion, and, when she returned to her pew, she was noticed by her parents to be in rather deep prayer. After Mass they asked her, ‘What were you praying about after your first Communion?’ ‘Well,’ she said, ‘I prayed for Mommy and Daddy and my brother, too. And then I sang Jesus a song and told him a story.’”

Prayer doesn’t have to captivate or inspire — it requires us to be captivated — inspired by our own love and knowledge of God.

Listening to my almost-3-year-old chime in during a prayer at the dinner table is so touching; her intentions are so sweet, as she prays for Grandpa and thanking God for her new doggy and George the monkey.

As a mother of a bubbly toddler who starts her first year at preschool at our local parish in September, I am always looking for ways to make Jesus more real to her. And pictures of babies looking at the monstrance holding the Most Blessed Sacrament flooding my social feeds remind me to take my daughter to visit Jesus often.

Parishes, too, are opening their doors to this devotion in thoughtful ways. A Vacation Bible School in the Diocese of Venice, Florida, offers adoration for young children.

For all the parents and godparents, aunts and uncles, grandmas and grandpas out there who want to cultivate this Christ-focused relationship in little ones, Hendeby offers this advice:

“Start small! Even a few moments of quiet prayer in adoration can establish a beautiful desire to be close to Our Lord. When entering the chapel, remember to ask your children to pray for you, their parents. Jesus hears and loves the prayers of our little ones!”

And in the midst of all of our efforts to teach these important lessons to our young, let us also be moved to learn from them. Listen to the voice of children learning to pray as they talk to Jesus. It will renew your prayer time, too.

Just as Msgr. Pope yearns to speak to God as he did when he was 5 years old, perhaps this video of prayers from children will inspire us to be more childlike when we seek the face of Christ amid our own daily duties: *(Unfortunately, I cannot imbed the video in the newsletter. Said video is a series of notes from children to God. They read, with spelling mistakes intact:*

“Dear God, I went to this wedding and kissed right in church. Is that OK?” Neil

“Dear God, I think about you sometimes even when I’m not praying.” Elliott

“Dear God, I am Amearican. What are you?” Robert

“Dear God, Thank you for the baby brother but what I prayed for was a puppy.?” Joyce

“Dear God, I bet it is very hard for you to love all of everybody in the whole world. There are only 4 people in our family and I can never do it.” Nan

“Dear God, Please put another Holiday between Christmas and Easter. There is nothing good in there now.” Ginny

“Dear God, If you watch in Church on Sunday I will show you my new shoes.” Mickey D

“Dear God, If you give me genie lamp like Alladin I will give you anything you want except my money or my chess set.” Raphael

“Dear God, Please send Dennis Clark to a different camp this year.” Peter

“Dear God, I do not think anybody could be a better God. Well I just want you to know but I am not just saying that because you are one God.” Charles

“Dear God, Are you really invisible or is that just a trick.” Lucy

“Dear God, I want to be just like my Daddy when I get big but not with so much hair all over.”

Sam

“Dear God, Instead of letting people die and haveing to make new ones why don’t you just keep the ones you got now?” Jane

Mark 10:14 Jesus said to them, “Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these.”

Amen, I say to you, unless you receive the kingdom of God like a little child, you shall not enter it (Mark 10:15).



Alyssa Murphy is the Register's Managing Editor of Digital Assets. Starting her career on the airwaves in San Francisco, she has worked in all facets of media. Alyssa enjoys writing and covering stories that inspire and uplift. Register readers may be familiar with her voice from EWTN radio's Morning Glory. Alyssa currently lives in New Jersey just outside Manhattan with her husband Andrew and young daughter, Annabelle.



Reflections on the Rosary

21 August 2022 Fr. James B. Lloyd, CSP, Ph.D.

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When I was a child, I knew nothing of the glorious cathedrals dedicated to Our Blessed Mother. I never heard of Notre Dame de Chartres or the more famous Notre Dame on the Ile de la Cité de in Paris. I never knew of the towering music of Mozart and Schubert and Gregorian chant which incarnated the love of the BVM (Blessed Virgin Mary) into sensible, exalted forms. I never heard of the *Alma Redemptoris Mater* or the *Salve Regina* or the *Tota Pulchra Est, Maria*.

I never heard of Wordsworth’s famous line, “Our tainted nature’s solitary boast,” which he, a Protestant, applied to Mary, this Mother of the Lord. I never saw the magnificent statuary in the Metropolitan Museum of Art concretising the Catholic love of Mary. I never heard of the *Pietà* of Michelangelo depicting the beauty of the Mother of God.

Whatever I learned about devotion to Mary, I received from my Irish Grandmother whose formal education ended with the third grade. She taught me, for example, that when I die, should they not allow me to enter by the front gates of Heaven, I should go around to the

back and Our Lady, the Blessed Mother will let me in. This is because she has great love for me and will help me always.

Grandmother told me that Jesus set this up when he was dying a terribly painful death on a great Cross. That just before He died, He made me and everyone else Mary’s children, and that she would always be there for me. She would always love me – no matter what! And I should love her back!

Such childlike devotion has been of enormous help to me in my life – particularly in times of overwhelming life difficulties. I did not develop this view from the many formal obstacles I have encountered, such as ponderous professors who took themselves very seriously and who insisted that I plow through boring and sterile tomes written by academics who lived in metaphorical and real ivory towers.

I was amazed how quickly I was able to jettison the cumbersome balderdash of academe. How quickly and gratefully I reverted to the joy of my youth as I

continuously recited and applied the first prayer I ever learned: “*Pray for us now and at the hour of our death.*”

For example, I recall being on a slow-moving, coal-burning night train, trudging across the Great Karoo of South Africa. The windows wouldn’t close. The lights wouldn’t work. The soot poured in through the open windows. I felt lonely and dirty and afraid.

So, I did my beads, i.e., my Rosary, and prayed as I envisioned the mysteries of Christ’s life, which were the main events of His death and redemptive sacrifice. I saw her there, He and my Mother, sharing His pain and His meaning. As the beads passed through my fingers I felt release, both emotional and physical and found, even with tears streaming down my cheeks, a calm and peace entering my being.



Madonna of the Rosary by Caravaggio, 1603
[Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna]

This is not the security blanket of the *Peanuts* comic strip. This is the presence of my heavenly Mother who has always been there for me at critical times. No amount of modern mockery or secular demolition can outweigh that.

How many millions of Catholics over the years have had the same experience? Yet there have been all kinds of clever or cute attempts, by parties of various stripes, to make nice with devotion to the BVM. In order to counter uncomfortable feelings that devotion to her is somehow detracting from devotion to Him, who is all and above all, some skittish Catholics have come up with fanciful stories and devices.

But I recall the story about the schoolboy rebutting a scoffing college professor who claimed that there is no difference between His (Jesus’) mother and my mother. The kid jauntily replies: “Yeah, but there is a big difference between the sons.” Touché.

Or then there’s the little kid, with his prayer for a bicycle unanswered, yelling at the statue of Jesus, “I’m gonna tell your mother!” The implication is clearly that the Mother of the Lord has great influence with the Divine One and will properly castigate the unresponsive Jesus. Okay.

And there are astronomical metaphors like He, being the sun, and she, being the moon, who shines only by reflection from Him – very true and very intellectual.

But none of this is sufficiently affective for me.

Like David fighting Goliath with a mere slingshot and some stones rather than with the fancy armour of Saul, each of us must choose our own weapons in this struggle called life. I choose the notion of a celestial mother loving me with profound and pervasive love.

And I find that love in my prayer: “Now and at the hour of my death.”

The “now” of this prayer is enormously important to me. I personally focus my

spiritual life on the great now. Spirituality to me must be pragmatic and helpful.

For me, the academic tends more to irritate than to inspire. All my life I have been able to intuit or (without articulating the “why” of it) depend on the Blessed Mother for her immediate and ever-present assistance.

Since, similarly, I am deep into the existential indwelling of the Holy Spirit and the

presence of the Lord, this approach – devotion to the loving Blessed Mother – is exceedingly meaningful to me.

Certainly, yesterday and tomorrow have some effect on my life, but the dominant dimension is now.

Which I find each time I say to her: “Pray for us (me) now.”



Fr. James B. Lloyd, CSP, Ph.D. is a Paulist priest living in New York. He is the author of [Addressing the Unmentionable: Catholicism and Same-Sex Attraction](#). His collection of essays, [Reflections of a Dinosaur Priest](#), is now available. At the age of 101 (now 102!), Fr. Lloyd is the oldest living Paulist priest.

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Anniversaries This Month



- ORDINATIONS** Fr Ramsay Williams – 8 September
Fr Richard Waddell – 8 September
Fr James Grant – 8 September
- BIRTHDAYS** Fr Tony Iball – 3 September
Fr Joe Yamaoka – 4 September
Fr Neville Connell – 27 September

O Jesus, Eternal Priest, keep Thy priests within the shelter of Thy Sacred Heart, where none may touch them. Keep unstained their anointed hands, which daily touch Thy Sacred Body. Keep unsullied their lips, daily purpled with Thy Precious Blood. Keep pure and unworldly their hearts, sealed with the sublime mark of the priesthood. Let Thy Holy Love surround them from the world's contagion. Bless their labours with abundant fruit, and may the souls to whom they minister be their joy and consolation here and their everlasting crown hereafter.

Mary, Queen of the Clergy, pray for us: obtain for us numerous and holy priests. Amen.



September - The Month of the Seven Sorrows



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1 September OUR LADY OF THE SOUTHERN CROSS	2 September Feria of Trinity 11 <i>(Votive of the</i> <i>Sacred Heart</i> <i>of Jesus)</i>	3 September St Gregory the Great, Pope & Dr
4 September TWELFTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY	5 September Feria of Trinity 12	6 September Feria of Trinity 12	7 September Feria of Trinity 12	8 September NATIVITY OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY	9 September Feria of Trinity 12 <i>(St Peter</i> <i>Claver, Pr)</i>	10 Sept Feria of Trinity 12 <i>(St Mary on</i> <i>Saturday)</i>
11 Sept THIRTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY	12 Sept Feria of Trinity 12 <i>(The Most</i> <i>Holy Name</i> <i>of Mary)</i>	13 Sept St John Chrysostom Bp & Dr	14 Sept EXAL- TATION OF THE HOLY CROSS	15 Sept Our Lady of Sorrows	16 Sept Ss Cornelius, Pope & Cyprian, Bp; Mtrs	17 Sept Feria of Trinity 13 <i>(St Robert</i> <i>Bellarmino,</i> <i>Bp & Dr)</i>
18 Sept FOURTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY	19 Sept Feria of Trinity 14 <i>(St Januarius,</i> <i>Bp & Mtr)</i>	20 Sept St Andrew Kim Tae- gon, Pr & Comp.; Mtrs	21 Sept ST MATTHEW APOSTLE	22 Sept Feria of Trinity 14	23 Sept St Pius of Pietrelcina, Pr	24 Sept OUR LADY OF WALSING- HAM
25 Sept FIFTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY	26 Sept Feria of Trinity 15 <i>(Ss Cosmas</i> <i>and Damian,</i> <i>Mtrs)</i>	27 Sept St Vincent de Paul, Pr	28 Sept Feria of Trinity 17 <i>(St</i> <i>Wenceslaus,</i> <i>Mtr)</i>	29 Sept Ss MICHAEL, GABRIEL & RAPHAEL	30 Sept St Jerome, Pr & Dr	

The Holy Father's Intention for September: "We pray that the death penalty, which attacks the dignity of the human person, may be legally abolished in every country."