

# The Parish Visitor



**“All power comes from union with God.”**  
– Servant of God Mother Mary Teresa Tallon

# The Parish Visitor

In this issue we will look at the life of prayer and contemplation that is at the heart of our Parish Visitor vocation. From the beginning Mother Mary Teresa described her new community as contemplative-missionaries. Contemplation was first because God is first.

The Chapel in each of our convents is the primary place where we live out our life of prayer, but it is not the only place. Our Constitutions urge us to “foster an atmosphere of contemplative silence in the (convent)” so that the spirit of recollection can pervade the whole day. It is not an empty silence, but one that is filled with an awareness of the presence of God.



*Our Chapel in the formation house in Lipa, Philippines*



# Love ~ the Fruit of Prayer

**By Mother Maria Catherine, PVM**

So many women desire to be “June Brides”! I had the privilege of attending two June weddings! As I reflected on the persons and the events leading to the sealing of their love by a sacramental covenant of matrimony, I realized there was a common thread linking both couples: to each other, and both couples!

The first couple, married on the feast of Saint Anthony of Padua, had both lost their spouses of many years. Both had been faithful parishioners of Sacred Heart-Saint Patrick Parish before moving to Florida. Prayer was an essential aspect of each of their lives: daily Mass, when possible; Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament; praying the Rosary, as well as service in the Church. Though I have not spoken to either of them about my next statement, I would bet that when they met and began a friendship rooted in faith and prayer, they were drawn to a deeper love for one another. I say that because of two things that occurred on the day of their wedding. Nine days prior to the wedding





day, Jonelle and John began a Novena to prepare for their special day, and the Novena ended on their wedding day, as they prayed their final Novena prayer before the statue of the Blessed Mother. The second thing that struck me was the beautiful witness of their love rooted in the Eucharistic Presence of Jesus! Immediately after receiving Holy Communion, kneeling side by side, Jonelle and John held hands – a symbol for me of their desire to be united in their love by Jesus alone! He was to be the center of their life of loving commitment: and THAT is a fruit of their life of prayer.

The second couple had been dating for a short time when they realized they were meant for each other! Adrian, a new dental surgeon, at 29 years old had been so busy with his studies that he did not have time to date. Coming from a Polish family of great faith, he, also, is a man of faith and prayer. One evening, his Mom decided to kneel and pray the Rosary that her son would find a good woman. She and her husband knelt down to pray the Rosary and Mom called Adrian and had him join in the prayer. The next day Adrian went to a dental convention and there he met his future bride! Not a Catholic herself, Jiaxi, his wife of Chinese origin, was beaming with such love for her husband at the wedding that I knew this love was the fruit of prayer and God's design for them! Both of them realized the power of prayer and were intensely grateful for the prayers of Violetta and Andy (the groom's parents) and the prayers of the Parish Visitors of Mary Immaculate!



*Adrian and Jiaxi, with Fr. George Schommer, O.P.  
in St. Dominic Church, Washington, DC.*

Love *IS* the fruit of prayer!

What is the one thing that Jesus has asked of us? "Love God with all your heart, all your mind, all your soul and all your strength." (Mk. 12:30) He also calls us, constantly, to live in communion with Him! "Whoever loves me will keep my word and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our dwelling with him." (Jn. 14:23)

Jesus was not speaking of great and exceptional moments – He was speaking of the everyday moments – the moments when we pause and listen for His "still, small voice". There is such a thin veil which separates us from God! It is possible to have communion with Him, to speak to Him, to hear His voice! He speaks in so many ways: through nature, through His Word in the Scriptures, through His priests in homilies and spiritual talks, through the reception of the Sacrament of Reconciliation, through the comforting words or gestures of a friend, through perfect strangers, in song and verse and, oh, so many and varied ways! He is constantly seeking to reach our hearts so that we may know His unconditional love!

Servant of God, Father John Hardon, SJ, said once that if we want to grow in love for God, we must grow in gratitude! Gratitude is a prayer! We express our gratitude to God for His many gifts, for the graces He sends us throughout the day, for the Crosses we are carrying. Gratitude opens us to deeper wellsprings of love for the God Who created us, redeemed us and sustains us throughout our lives.

I have often heard people say: “Oh, I don’t want to bother God with my troubles, He has so much to take care of!” Have you ever heard that said – or said it yourself? I have learned that God cares for EVERYTHING that you and I care about! Saint Peter said: “Place all your cares upon Him for He cares for you.” (1 Peter 5:7) He is God: that means He is infinite and has infinite love, infinite patience, infinite time! We can’t “bother” God – He is always waiting for us to turn to Him and “ask, seek, knock”!

My friends, if you haven’t prayed in a while, NOW is the time! Make much of Him! He is waiting for you to say the first word. Won’t you? If you desire to be loved beyond all telling, PRAY – because Love is the fruit of prayer!



## Reflections on Prayer

*“God and I in love, speaking together in love, for God’s greater glorification, for my greater sanctification, and for the salvation of other souls.” (Servant of God, Mother Mary Teresa, Spiritual Directory, p. 9)*

*Dear Brothers and Sisters: Today we begin a new series of catechesis on prayer. Prayer is the breath of faith, a cry arising from the hearts of those who trust in God. We see this in the story of Bartimaeus, the beggar from Jericho. Though blind, he is aware that Jesus is approaching, and preserves in calling out: “Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!” (Mk 10:47). By using the phrase “Son of David”, he makes a profession of faith in Jesus the Messiah. In response the Lord invites Bartimaeus to express his desire, which is to be able to see again. Christ then tells me: “Go; your faith has saved you” v. 52). This indicates that faith is a cry for salvation attracting God’s mercy and power. It is not only Christians who pray but all men and women who search for meaning on their*

*earthly journey. As we continue on our pilgrimage of faith, may we, like Bartimaeus, always persevere in prayer, especially in our darkest moments, and ask the Lord with confidence: “Jesus, have mercy on me. Jesus, have mercy on us!” -Pope Francis, General Audience Catechesis on Prayer May 6, 2020.*

*Dear Brothers and Sisters: In our continuing catechesis on prayer, we now consider its essential characteristics. Prayer involves our entire being yearning for some “other” beyond ourselves. Specifically Christian prayer is born from the realization that the “other” we are seeking has been revealed in the tender face of Jesus, who teaches us to call God “Father”, and wants personally to enter into relationship with us.” Pope Francis, General Audience Catechesis on Prayer, May 13, 2020.*

*Prayer belongs to everyone: to men and women of every religion, and probably also to those who profess none. Prayer arises in our innermost self, in that interior place that spiritual authors call “heart” (cf. Catechism of the Catholic Church, 2562-25630.)*



Healing of the Blind Man by Carl Bloch, c. 1871

# The RHYTHM of the HEART



By Sister Mary Emmadoña, PVMI

I realized that when one listens to music or to a song long enough, one can't help but get that rhythm in their heads. I think that's why some people tap their fingers, or feet, or even move their heads to the music – the music and rhythm have captured them.

The heart also has its own rhythm. Some hearts beat normally, others beat erratically. While some hearts beat fast, others beat slow.



But the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus beats in the most beautiful way. It beats with great love, mercy, forgiveness, kindness. Mary listened to His Heart with her whole being. She welcomed the sound of Jesus' heartbeats.

Not long after, Mary got the rhythm of Jesus' heart with that of hers. Why? Because Mary's heart didn't have any noises that drowned the voice of God. Mary perfectly echoed the heartbeat of the Sacred Heart. The beat of their hearts synchronized perfectly so that they were one unified heart.

I am invited to that unity as well --- to be part of the symphony of the Sacred Heart and Immaculate Heart. My heart needs to beat just like theirs so that I don't ruin God's composition. I must focus all my energies on the Great Conductor of my soul and pay no attention to all the noise and distractions of the world. I must study God's "music piece" and try to learn whether I must go up, down, sustain, fade, rest and breathe.

I ask God to make my heart beat a little more like the Two Hearts of Jesus and Mary.





# THE WAY OF THE CROSS – THE WAY OF LOVE

By Sister Debra Marie, PVM I

In the Gospel of Matthew (16:24) our Lord gives us the job description of a Christian. He tells us, "If anyone would be My disciple, he must deny himself, take up his cross and follow Me."

It's simple enough to understand: deny yourself, take up your cross, follow Me – but it's not that easy to live out is it?

Who likes to deny yourself? Me, neither. But we do it. Why? Because we have to. No, we don't. God gave us free will so why do we do it? Ultimately for love. Think about it for a moment, when are the times in which you have denied yourself? Isn't it true – for love of a child, for love of a parent, out of love for my country, out of love for God.

We are programmed to respond from love. God is love. We were created in His image so when we act in love, we are doing what we were created to do. Each time we let go of our selfishness and choose to place another's needs before our own we are becoming more like God. For that's exactly what God did coming down from heaven and "taking the form of a slave, being born in the likeness of men." Jesus doesn't want us to deny ourselves for the sake of making ourselves miserable but rather for the sake of becoming like Him, true children of our Heavenly Father, and loving as He loves.

However, it's not easy. After original sin, our desires are not always properly ordered nor are the desires of those around us and so the cross presents itself. What is the cross Jesus asks us



to carry? Any and all of the struggles which we encounter in faithfully living out our vocation as children of God. Our crosses may come from our own vices, from the imperfections of those around us, or from God Himself to help us to grow in the virtues in which we're lacking.

Jesus had no need of a Cross. He was God. The 33 years He lived among us as a man He was always perfectly obedient to the plan of His Father. Yet, Jesus redeemed us through the Cross. Why? He's God, He could have come up with an easier way, couldn't He? But He didn't. He didn't just overlook our sins but redeemed them in his own flesh, showing us the horror of each sin and the destruction which it causes in our relationship with God. Calling upon our hearts to show pity on Him and repent of our sins and return to communion with Him.

Each of us has a cross to bear – the perfect cross designed by God's loving hand. There's a joke about a man who told God that his cross was too heavy, and he wanted to turn it in for a different one. So, God brought him to where all the crosses were and after hours and hours or trying the various crosses, finally he found one that he could carry and he showed it God, saying this is the one. And God said to him with a smile, "My dear child, that's the cross you walked in with."

Last year I was listening to a conference by the late Fr. Benedict Groeschel, CFR. He was talking about the need to bear our cross and he commented that we like our crosses to be of the Styrofoam variety, with a cushion on the shoulder and wheels on bottom of it. It's a good laugh but isn't it true. Yet that's not the kind of cross that will help us to get to Heaven. Another image that comes to my mind is a cartoon with men carrying their crosses and one of them decides to saw off pieces so that

it's smaller and easier to manage. Then the group reaches a large ravine, and all of the people lower their crosses over the ravine and walk across it to the other side but that poor man's was too short to reach.

As St. Rose of Lima said: *"Apart from the Cross there is no ladder by which we may get to heaven."* Yet God is all love. He doesn't allow us any evil without bringing out from it a greater good. Even original sin – our first rebellion against Him, He repaid not only with a redemption to our former state but with the gift of being able to receive Him - God Himself - into our own bodies in the Holy Eucharist. He gives us the opportunity to be co-heirs with Christ to the Heavenly Kingdom and He brings this about through the Cross.

Our crosses, carried with love and acceptance, in some mysterious way, transform us into beloved sons and daughters of God. The suffering I endure under its weight is for my own good and through the wonders of the communion of saints, for the good of others. But a lot of times our crosses are heavy, aren't they? They can even seem too much to bear. That's why Jesus tells us to follow Him.

Our God is so kind and merciful that He goes before us to give us the example. What better way to learn how to carry our cross as Christians than to meditate on how Jesus carried His. In meditating upon our Lord's Passion, I find that every complaint I could make to our Lord about how much I'm suffering under my cross, evaporates as I see Him suffering even more for my sake.

Am I being rejected or treated unjustly? I just need to look up at the first Station. Jesus never committed a single sin and yet He was condemned to death by the people whom He had created, the people whom He humbled Himself to live among, by the people for whom He would die. Could anything on this earth ever be so unfair?

Does my cross make me stumble? The Church has given us three Stations to encourage us to persevere. I look at Jesus, lying on the ground under the heavy Cross, His body broken from the torments of the night before, His soul crushed with the weight of all the sins mankind would ever commit, and yet He

risers again, picks up His Cross and continues up the hill to be crucified.

Do I feel like God has left me alone? I think of Jesus's words from the Cross, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me." Yet we, after having heard the whole story, know that Jesus wasn't at any moment forsaken, nor will He forsake us.

I could go through every station in this way. As I was praying, I realized that my whole spiritual journey could be summed up in the Stations of the Cross. Does that sound odd? Maybe. But I'd challenge that if you think about it, it's true for each one of you - it's true for every Christian for we are all called to carry our own Cross (in one of the gospels it even specifies DAILY) after our Lord.

Does that mean that our lives are going to be a sad tragedy? By no means. The Way of the Cross isn't a tragedy but a testament of love, that ends not in death but in the Resurrection. In his 2010 meditations on the Way of the Cross, Pope Benedict tells us that *"His Cross cannot be separated from His Resurrection. Only by believing in the Resurrection can we meaningfully advance along the Way of the Cross."* The Way of the Cross is not the destination but the means of arriving there and not all of the Stations are wrought with sorrows. Imagine the comfort Jesus received from His mother's presence, the help He received from Simon, the kindness that was shown to Him by Veronica, the love of the women who mourned to see Him suffer so. In the same fashion, if we carry our Crosses after our Lord, we'll see that God always provides us with what we need – whether it be physical help, encouragement, love, and ultimately the road will lead us to our heavenly homeland.

Let's turn now to our Lord. Let's open our minds and hearts to meditate on His love for us, on the suffering he endured to redeem us. Let us walk with Him, uniting our own crosses to His great Cross and offer it all up to our Heavenly Father in the perfect sacrifice of love.





*“The Sign of the Cross has enough meaning in it to fill a library of books. By the words we honor the Unity of God and the Trinity of Persons; by the Cross which we trace we signify that the Second Person of the Most Holy Trinity, God-Incarnate, died for us, for the redemption of mankind. The Sign of the Cross, therefore, shows our faith in the Incarnation and the death of Christ on the Cross, and this Cross, drawn on one’s person, is like a coat of mail, clothing one with an invincible armor. There could not be anything holier than the Sign of the Cross when we stop to think of it seriously.”*

*Servant of God Mother Mary Teresa Tallon, PVMG*



*Sr. Jhoan Marie taking her oath as an American citizen*

On June 13, Sister Jhoan Marie traveled to Middletown, NY to take her oath as a United States Citizen. Born in the Philippines and having served there for some time, Sister Jhoan Marie has been in the U.S. for several assignments, including teaching religion in the Wilmington, DE Diocese.

She was recently appointed assistant superior at Marycrest where she will help care for our senior Sisters.





# On Prayer



By Servant of God Mother Mary Teresa Tallon PVMI

The subject of prayer might fill volumes and libraries, yet still be reduced to the least paragraph. The Parish Visitors of Mary Immaculate should love to see extended writings on prayer; to read the definitions of prayer in elaborate forms, because all this emphasizes and magnifies a subject so glorious as prayer is. But after all is written and read, we may be convinced that there is but one definition of prayer, namely, the speaking of spirit to Spirit with the Beloved. Prayer is a spiritual intercourse between my Divine Lover and me. I set my mind toward God according to any good inclination that predominates at the time, and I love Him, bless Him, thank Him. I make much of God. I magnify the Lord. I try to realize more vividly what *Infinity* connotes, in beauty, majesty, purity, goodness. "My Beloved to me and I to Him." This is prayer.

[...] The habit and spirit of prayer should be earnestly developed. No one can save her own soul or the souls of others without prayer, and the more active a missionary is, the more need

she has of prayer. *The life of prayer*, then, is the condition that each member must aim to acquire. The Sisters ought to grow in prayer. This means that to be employed in developing the holy life in prayer is not so much the length of the periods spent in its vocal exercise, as it is in the interior cultivation and development, in general, of the spirit of faith in the soul. That frequent realization of some Christian truth or mystery in thoughtful perception, as one does in mental prayer or meditation, is more helpful; and with this practice should be also constant recollection in God. This Heavenly exercise of soul may be practiced anywhere, and at all times. The Sisters must come to that degree where they live and breathe in God alone, by holy love and perfect union of their will with His. This attitude of soul will keep them in perpetual renewal of their whole-hearted consecration to their Spouse and Love, Jesus Christ.

*(Excerpted from "The Spiritual Directory."  
Pp 9, 11, 15, 16.*



# All for the Glory of God



By Sister Mary Roberta PVM

My life began in Southwestern Wisconsin. I was raised in a normal rural setting; my parents lived an active faith-filled life. All the way through our upbringing we took part as a family in anything and everything the Church held. I am the first of five children and have four younger brothers.

After college I moved to Milwaukee, as a Nanny, while attending the Milwaukee Business Institute for one year and stayed there following school. My first job was as a Secretary to the purchasing agent of a large manufacturing company. Later I moved to St. Catherine's Home for Working Women. I was happy, had a safe Catholic atmosphere with friends and a roommate who was instrumental in changing my life. I was longing to do something good with my life beyond my love of fashion. My roommate went to daily Mass, I thought if she could go then so could I and continued to do so until I entered religious life years later. In our shared room, we had a bookcase

of Catholic literature. The first Catholic book I read was "Theology and Sanity" by Frank Sheed.

About this time, during my rosary novena, for a good Catholic husband, one of the Sisters from St Catherine's Home, tapped me on the shoulder and said, "Pray for a Vocation!" I said, "Who me?" I never spoke to her about it again, but I thought about it. At some point, we had a weekend retreat at St. Catherine's. During the retreat, I made a visit to see the priest and asked him about my idea to become a Sister, he said, "Well, maybe so."

In 1954, after four years of working, longing to do something good with my life, I picked up a magazine featuring a story about Parish Visitors of Mary Immaculate. In and around this time, I told the Maryknoll Sisters who lived with us while attending Marquette University, how I enjoyed being a member of the Legion of Mary. They suggested that I go and see the Parish Visitors Convent, up the street, and so I did. At this point in my life, I was very fashion conscious with expensive tastes despite a limp purse. However, I also held high ideals in the realm of the Spirit. It was the visit to the Parish Visitor's convent that showed immediately what priority held my heart.

I walked in to see a life-size statue of Our Lady bedecked with cheap artificial flowers standing before a dark wainscoting below a gaudy flowered wallpaper. Everything about it almost repulsed me. On leaving the convent I passed the lighted lamp I noticed it was small and cheap. It was then that the light struck with a surge of tremendous excitement, "Oh God, this is where I want to be. I want to surrender everything and live poor like this. I want to work among the poor and destitute of large cities. The decision was made to enter the Parish Visitors of Mary Immaculate.

Within one month I was on my way to a new life of such love and adventure that I could never explain. I entered religious life at 23 years old on December 30, 1954. It so happened, that year I was the only one who had entered, that persevered. It was the same year our Foundress, Mother Mary Teresa Tallon, died.

In the beginning of my religious life, I began my formation as a postulant for about 6 months in Manhattan. Then I went up to Marycrest Convent, in Monroe NY, where I became a novice. During my religious formation, I was introduced to the spiritual and religious life, wondrous insights of how the vows help the religious to abide in God.

After two years I was assigned to Kingston PA in the Scranton Diocese. This is where I had my first experience of our missionary apostolate of doing door-to-door visitation.

I met Joseph at his front door, and he was ripe for the harvest. The day was cool and sunny, perfect for door-to-door visitation. I introduced myself explaining that I represented the parish and that I was taking the Catholic census information. "Sister, I haven't been to church in 29 years," he explained. He had been married outside the Church and was now divorced. We talked a short time about God's love and how it is only right for everyone to try to return love by doing God's will. Joseph was pleasant but did not say too much. I left him in God's hands. Some weeks later I saw him sitting in a chair on his porch as I was walking past his home. We greeted each other and then he announced, "I think you might like to know that since you came to my door, I've been going to Mass at Saint Anthony's every Sunday." We rejoiced and then discussed his next step, which would be to go speak to the priest about putting his life in order. I gave him the name and telephone number of the pastor.

A few weeks later, as I was walking down his street again, I noticed that his door was open. God moved me to change my immediate plans and see how things had progressed. Joseph came to the door beaming with joy and brought his 26-year-old son with him to introduce him to me. I asked him if he had been successful in reaching the priest. "Have I." He exclaimed, "Yes, Sister!" He had gone to the pastor and made a lifetime confession. With exuberance he continued, "that was great but even more wonderful was the experience I had when I received Holy Communion. I got a kind of warm shock like feeling when I received the Lord. Now I can hardly wait for Sunday to come each week." I said, "You really don't have to wait until Sunday; you can go to daily Mass." He hadn't thought of that. And a broad smile came

on his face as the realization settled in. Then he told me how he had shared his joy and happiness with his son who had been reared without any religion. Witnessing the profound change in his father and wanting to share in the new life his father had obviously received, the son had decided to begin taking classes to enter the Catholic Church. God had done mighty things in the months following.

During the parish carnival, Joseph kept pointing me out to his friends and anyone else who would listen, saying "That's the nun who turned my life around," but you and I know who really set Joseph and his son in the right direction, don't we? It was all God's doing. God's ways are certainly interesting, not like our ways. We are more organized; we plan it all, or so we think. He seems to have no rhyme nor reason in His providential arrangements for each of us, but in the end it all turns out perfectly; that is because He's God. This is what Parish Visitors can do, this is only one of many hundreds of homes I have visited.

Another time, when I was walking down a street, I heard some inappropriate language, "Excuse me, boys, but I overheard a boy say something indecent." The boy and his five friends stood there wearing their caps backwards and baggy pants. Stopping in front of them I said, "You know boys, I feel there's evil in the air, so let's pray," The boys gathered around me and bowed their heads. Then, to my surprise, they joined me in making the Sign of the Cross and listened intently to my prayer. After we talked a while, the boy said, "It's getting dark; we'll walk you home." The people driving by must have wondered what happened.

It is Jesus who has carried me throughout my religious life - 70 glorious years. I am entering the last phase of my life, and due to my blindness after battling glaucoma for the past 20 years, I have time to contemplate, reminisce and daydream about the adventures of my life as a Catholic Sister in the Congregation of the Parish Visitors of Mary Immaculate. Many memories of the children I spent time with come into my mind in a celebratory way, flooding my thoughts with the wonderful children I have sponsored. I think of the hundreds of families I have visited in their homes and the thousands of children I have touched with God's help.

I learned *being* was more important than *doing*, it was not so important that we did but rather that whatever we did it was for love of God. With religious consecration whatever we do with love under obedience we give glory to God. My love, my life, my great gratitude for all that God has given me in my lifetime is being used to lead souls to the knowledge and love of God. As a young woman, I imagined myself leading many people to the Lord. I never really ended up doing that in the way I envisioned, but rather by surrendering, by doing whatever God was asking me to do at any given time.

Now, I continue to do my apostolate on the telephone since I no longer go out. I continue listening with love to people in dire distress in many ways, all for the glory of God. Like St. John, at the end of the Gospel, I can honestly say. "There are still many other things Jesus did, yet if they were written about in detail, I doubt there would be room enough in the entire world to hold the books to record them."



*Mother Maria Catherine with Sister Mary Roberta*

On July 2<sup>nd</sup> our Community gathered to celebrate Sister Mary Roberta's seventy years as a Parish Visitor of Mary Immaculate. We were joined by Father Charles Connor, a priest of the Diocese of Scranton, who was the principal celebrant and homilist for the Mass of Thanksgiving, Father Tom Byrnes, pastor of St. Anthony Parish, West Harrison, NY and Parish Visitor Priest Associate, and Father Joseph Meagher, pastor of St. Antoninus Parish, Newark, NY. Among the guests were friends from the Bronx, NY and West Haven, CT who Sister Mary Roberta met when assigned to those missions.

In her article, Sister did not mention that she served as local superior in the Bronx, and Scranton and as a member of the General Council for five years. At Marycrest, she was the infirmarian, caring for the needs of our senior Sisters. She has done everything from planning menus, cooking for fifty Sisters, cleaning, painting, decorating for feast days, caring for general maintenance, including plumbing and auto repair. There is not much that she hasn't put her hand to quietly, and often behind the scenes.



As she was leaving the chapel, several of her guests took the opportunity to greet her and wish her well. The celebration continued with a festive dinner which was enjoyed by all.



Sister Mary Roberta keeps in touch with her family back in Wisconsin and in other parts of the world. She also checks in on former Associates from time to time and the many people she has met in and through her apostolate. It is said that fidelity is remembering. If that is true, Sister Mary Roberta is a faithful friend, willing to listen, counsel, and pray for those she holds in her heart.

During the Mass, Sister Mary Roberta renewed her vows of chastity, poverty and obedience; vows that she professed for the first time in 1957. Mother Maria Catherine received her renewal.





Later in the day there were refreshments and entertainment. It was a time filled with the joy of being together as Sisters.



# Let The Children Come to Me



By Sister Maria Arlene, PVM

Do you remember the first prayers you learned? Or who first taught you to pray? I have heard some people share with me the first prayer they learned and who taught them. Sadly, I cannot recall mine. The earliest that I can possibly remember praying to God was during my very first airplane ride. I was 5 years old. Somehow, the thought of being so high up in the air scared me and the only thing that comforted me then was to tell God about it. I don't exactly recall the words I used but I reminisce about the good feeling that I need not be frightened.

Come to think of it, prayer is so powerful. It can change anything and turn things around that are beyond man's ability. It reaches places that our feet are not able to tread. It is no wonder that Jesus taught His disciples to pray, and He Himself gave us the example of the necessity of prayer.

Recently, my family came to visit our Motherhouse. And one of the things that gave me joy during their visit was gathering the little ones, and the adults too, in the Chapel to pray. This time we prayed the entire rosary with my grandnephews and nieces taking turns to lead a decade. I was most especially struck with one of my grandnieces, age 4, who knelt the entire time with her little fingers moving from bead to bead of the Rosary, and she didn't seem to mind the time spent. Later that afternoon, I asked her if she wanted to go back to the chapel and pray. She nodded her head with her eyes gleaming at me. I took her back in the Chapel, this time with the Blessed Sacrament





*Sister Carole Marie with some of Sister Maria Arlene's family members in Marycrest chapel.*

exposed. Upon entering the Chapel, I quickly noticed her eyes fixed on Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament. We genuflected and made our way to the front pew, but her eyes were still looking at our Eucharistic Lord. I gently put her hands together in a posture of prayer and it remained that way the entire time we were there. We didn't stay that long but I knew in my heart that my grand-niece, in her serenity, was praying. I cherished that moment and have a clear picture of it in my heart.

Jesus said, "Let the little children come to Me." Let us make every effort to teach the little ones to pray.



# Teaching Children To Pray

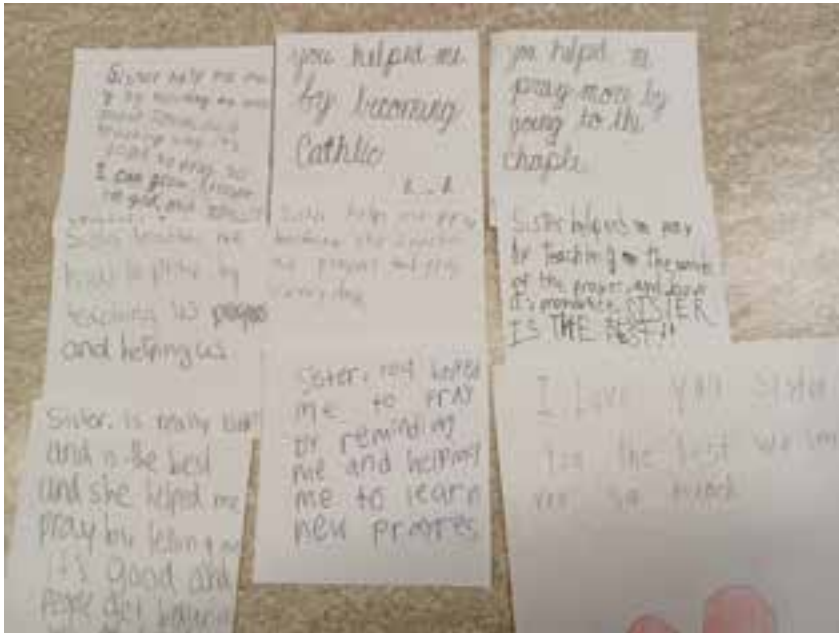


By Sr. Jhoan Marie, P.V.M.I

It's a beautiful privilege to teach children. Their pure and innocent minds are open to know and learn more about the love of God for them. Once they learn how much God loves them, they want to love God more and find ways to please Him.

For the past 3 years I've been blessed to teach the 2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> graders religion at a Catholic school. Prayer, our conversation with the God who loves us, is one of the things that I really emphasized. There are many ways in which I introduced them to prayer but my most memorable experience was taking them to adoration on Mondays. Some of them would kneel down before the Blessed Sacrament exposed in the monstrance, close their eyes and talk to Jesus. Afterwards I would take them to the cemetery next to the Church and we would pray for the repose of the souls of the faithful departed. Those are precious moments that will always be in my heart.

At the end of the year, I asked the students to write down what was the most important thing that they learned about prayer and their responses were beautiful. Some of them are in the picture below. I pray that as they grow, their faith and love will also continue to grow and that they will now introduce others to God's love.



*"Sister helped me by teaching me more about Jesus and teaching it's good to pray, so I can grow closer to God, and Jesus."*

*"You helped me by becoming Catholic."*

*"You helped me pray more by going to the Chapel."*

*"Sister teaches me to pray teaching us prayers and helping us."*

*"Sister helps me pray because she teaches me prayers and pray every day."*

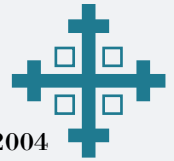
*"Sister helped me pray by teaching the words of the prayer, and how it's pronounced. SISTER IS THE BEST!"*

*"Sister is really kind and the best, and she helped me pray by telling me it's good and people get better if they pray."*

*"Sister, you helped me to pray by reminding me and helping me to learn new prayers."*

*"I love you, Sister. You(re) the best. We love you so much."*

## We are joined by our Sisters ....



- July 5 Sr. Mary Rosa Zimbisky, 2004
- 12 Sr. Jane Marie McCormack, 2007
- 14 Sr. Marie Therese Beaulieu, 1977
- 16 Sr. Mary Regina Brockhaus, 1996
- 19 Sr. Mary Veronica Powers, 1994
- 22 Sr. Joan Germaine Riley 2023
- 26 Sr. Mary Inez Sexton, 1970
- 26 Sr. Mary Valeria Laurich, 1994
- 28 Sr. Margaret Sylvia Noonan, 1986
- 29 Sr. Mary Anna Mullin, 1953
- 30 Sr. Jean Marie Furr, 2006

- August 4 Sr. Mary Clarita Buonomo, 2006
- 12 Sr. Mary Kathleen O'Neill, 1994
- 15 Sr. Mary Lucy Lent, 1938
- 18 Sr. Mary Bernadette Hogan, 1980
- 19 Sr. Yvonne Therese LaRocque, 2008
- 22 Sr. Mary Celestine Shea, 1952
- 23 Sr. Mary Agnes Westlake, 1964
- 26 Sr. Mary Felicia Beckmann, 1976
- 27 Sr. Mary Vivian Brand, 1992
- 29 Sr. Avita Bridget Moran, 1987

- September 1 Sr. Mary Margaret Smith, 1978
- 2 Sr. Mary Claver Dobie, 1946
- 2 Sr. Mary Virginia Davies, 1957
- 2 Sr. Mary Laurian Buitrago, 2000
- 10 Sr. Mary Eymard Corcoran, 2006
- 14 Sr. Margaret Mary Duffy, 1955
- 19 Sr. Mary Thecla Baljay, 1966
- 20 Sr. Mary Magdalen Frank, 1933
- 21 Sr. Mary Gervase Krieter, 1974
- 22 Sr. Mary Lawrence Crowley, 1945
- 23 Sr. Mary Benita Carey, 1985

**.... In Praying for You.**



Before Parish Visitors go out and engage people face-to-face and heart-to heart, they spend time in communion with Jesus. Their meditation, Mass and Holy Communion, Eucharistic Holy Hour, communal Morning and Evening Prayer and daily Rosary have fueled them with the love of the Sacred Heart to Whom they desire to draw those they meet.



Mother Mary Teresa Tallon told her Sisters that contemplation is first because God is first, and that the life of recollection would ensure that with each encounter, they would be able to share the overflow of their contemplation.

**Contact us:**

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*Please consider passing this magazine on to a friend or relative.*