BY KATY BEEDLE RICE

This past week I was sitting in my rocking chair by the fireplace and typing away on my laptop. My daughter, Jessica came up to me, “I’m bored, Mom. I want to help you.” “Well,” I told her, “I’m writing an article about motherhood for Mother’s Day. Would you like to help me?” She quickly grabbed pen and paper and began to write. Here is her reflection on motherhood:

“For Mother’s Day we usually bring you breakfast in bed, but that isn’t what Mother’s Day is all about. It’s about celebrating what mothers do. Your vocation as mothers is keeping children in touch with God. That’s what Mary did. When they went to the Temple in Jerusalem, when they figured out Jesus was missing. She worried so much. But when she saw what was happening in the Temple, she saw Jesus sitting in the Temple listening to the teachers, listening and asking questions. She thought, he has a special gift! I sometimes wonder what he was asking. She explains how to have a good relationship with children. She understood him well. She had no idea what would happen next, but she knew God knew and God had planned a path for Jesus.

In the Opening Prayer of the 5th Sunday of Easter, there is a line which caused me as a mother, woman, and disciple of Jesus, to catch my breath: “Almighty and ever-living God, constantly accomplish the Paschal Mystery within us.” As Christians is this really our prayer—to experience the Passion, death and Resurrection in our lives constantly?

(Left) Children of Holy Name parish in Ketchikan participate in a traditional ‘crowning of Mary’ on May 1st, 2013. The Christian custom of dedicating the month of May to the Blessed Virgin arose at the end of the 13th century.

“During this month Christians, both in church and in the privacy of the home, offer up to Mary from their hearts an especially fervent and loving homage of prayer and veneration” (Paul VI: Encyclical on the Month of May, no. 1).

(Right) River Saint Gabriel of the Cathedral of the Nativity parish holds flowers she arranged in preparation for the children’s Liturgy of the Light held April 3rd in Juneau.
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John Michael Doogan  
(1921-2013)

John Michael Doogan was welcomed into the Lord’s embrace on April 11, 2013 at the age of 92. He joined his beloved wife Delores six months to the day after her passing.

John was born January 26, 1921 in Juneau, AK to Theodore and Mary Doogan. With his 11 siblings, John was raised in Douglas, AK. He attended St. Ann’s School in Juneau for several years prior to taking an absence to help support his family. John served in the Pacific Theater during World War II (1942-1946). Upon returning to Juneau, he finished school and received his diploma from Juneau-Douglas High School.

John had many jobs throughout Alaska. He worked at mining sites in the interior of Alaska, on the Alaska State Pipeline and the Conservation Corps. John helped with the construction of Glacier Highway and the Federal and State Office Buildings in Juneau. He owned his own janitorial business, and was a member of Local Operating Engineers 302.

In June of 1948 he married Eileen Ryan-Hellen, who passed early in her life, leaving John with daughters Cecelia & Linda. In 1959 John met and married Delores E. Wickstrom, who became the love of his life on October 17, 1959.

John was a devoted husband and father, sharing the blessing of 13 children in a Catholic home. He could always be counted on to be very present in his children’s lives, whether it was in the instruction of Catholicism, visiting the schools regularly, or simply having a spontaneous beach outing with the family. The home John built with Delores brimmed with love, discipline and the noise of children, both their own and those of the neighborhood. He embraced the idea that there was always room for one more at the dinner table. Charity for others often prompted John to volunteer himself and his kids to better the community and church. John is survived by his brother, Hugh Doogan and his children and their spouses: Cecelia, Mike, Merina (Ronald Metz), Neil(Alma), John (Laura), Charlotte (Michael Kair), Kevin (Son-Mi), Kitty (Edward Hoch), Joseph, Christine (Gerrit Allen), Joy (Richard Sheridan), Andy (Josh Hamilton); 23 grandchildren and 2 great grandchildren.

Preceding John in death are his parents Theodore and Mary Doogan, wife Delores Doogan, Eileen Doogan, daughters Mary-Rose and Linda Doogan, brothers: James, Neil, Theodore, Dennis, Frank, and Dennis William Doogan, sisters: Sr. Anna Marie, Sr. Marjorie Loretta, Sr. Theresa Frances Doogan and Rosemary Navarre.

A funeral mass will be held Saturday May 11th at 1:00 p.m. at St. Paul’s Catholic Church with a Celebration of Life reception following at the parish hall. All are welcome.
The Gifts of the Holy Spirit

Our life truly changes when we exercise the gifts of the Holy Spirit – trust me! Or rather, trust in the Lord! Over the past couple weeks I have been conferring the sacrament of Confirmation upon a good number of people in various parishes. This Sacrament of “confirming” our faith is a grace-filled moment as the Church bestows the gifts of the Holy Spirit upon those who seek to be faithful disciples of the Lord.

While these gifts may lie dormant in a person’s life, it is the hope of the Church that these gifts will be exercised. The seven gifts of the Holy Spirit are: wisdom, understanding, counsel, fortitude, knowledge, piety and fear of the Lord.

We have to acknowledge that the early disciples were actually quite timid and fearful of witnessing to the Lord. They gathered behind locked doors soon after the Lord’s resurrection and feared venturing out. It was not until the descent of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost that they had a full grasp of what they were called to do – witness to the world about the love, mercy and fullness of life rooted in Jesus Christ.

The gifts of wisdom and understanding go hand in hand. Wisdom is the ability to value the truths of the faith and it helps us order our lives in relationship to those truths. In seeking wisdom we desire to contemplate these truths. Understanding is our ability to grasp the importance of these truths in our lives and in our world.

Counsel is the fulfillment of the virtue of prudence. While we hope to exercise prudence in our lives, counsel is the ability to be enlightened by the Holy Spirit in choosing what is right. As men and women of faith, we should always acknowledge that God calls us to act as his children and in doing so, we seek to give him glory and strive for our own salvation – through our prayer, words and actions.

Fortitude is often referred to as courage. However, fortitude is directly related to the supernatural and to the Holy Spirit as it is the gift of strength to live out the right counsel (decisions) we make as Disciples of Christ. It keeps us focused on doing God’s will here on earth as it is in heaven.

Knowledge, although it may seem to be similar to wisdom and understanding, is the ability to judge things according to the eyes of faith – to see and ascertain things as Christ would. Pope Francis has mentioned many times that we should be aware of evil intent in this world. Knowledge is the ability to judge what is good or evil and then proceed in the path of holiness.

Piety, the sixth gift of the Holy Spirit, is the internal desire to love God and the external expression of that love. This is seen through our worship and our reverence for the sacred – all that comes from God and leads us to God. We pray that our hearts, filled with reverence and piety, will always express our love for him.

Fear of the Lord is our desire never to offend the Lord. One of the familiar versions of the Act of Contrition states, “I detest all my sins because I dread the loss of heaven...” With a healthy respect and adoration of the Lord, we are able to live in the hope of heaven. Fear of the Lord turns our hearts away from sin and evil and helps us look with wonder and awe at the majesty of God. We then live in the fear of ever separating ourselves from God.

As these gifts of the Holy Spirit are given to those who celebrate the Sacrament of Confirmation, they may lie dormant within a person. It is the hope of the Church that the gifts given to us will be exercised and utilized. By living these gifts, our lives are changed. We have only to look at the Apostles and the early disciples. They were transformed from being paralyzed by fear behind locked doors to giving their lives completely to witnessing to Jesus Christ.

It is my hope and prayer that those who are confirmed will make use of these gifts and truly live the fullness of life promised to us by Christ.

End of school year brings farewells to long-time staff

After almost twenty years of ministry at Holy Name parish in Ketchikan, Linda Kelley is moving on to new ventures in ministry—loving daughter and busy grandmother. Linda, her husband and their family (3 of their 4 children) moved to Ketchikan in 1991 from California. She began work for Holy Name in 1994 as Youth Minister/Director of Religious Education, and remained in the position with the exception of 4 years as Holy Name parish secretary. In recent years, with Youth Minister Nicole Miller on board, Linda was content to focus more of her ministerial time on Religious Education. Linda viewed the position of DRE and full-time ministry a ‘calling,’ and met and ministered with many wonderful Ketchikan families and friends over the years—all of whom she will greatly miss upon leaving.

Her husband Dan is also retiring from his position with the Ketchikan Gateway Borough. Their immediate plans involve heading south to Northern California to be closer to Linda’s parents, and to be closer to children and grandchildren on both sides of the country. Grandkids across the country in Virginia? No problem. Dan and Linda are experienced motorcyclists, and are looking forward to many more cross-country adventures together to visit their family and see the world.

Thank you, Linda, for your many years of dedication and ministry to the youth of Holy Name parish and to the Diocese of Juneau. It does take a calling, and we are so thankful you were called. Peace and blessings on your coming years of retirement and new adventures.

Holy Name will also be expressing their gratitude to Gerard (‘Jerry’) Hildebrandt, their indispensable maintenance supervisor. He retires at the end of this school year in May as well. Jerry has been working for Holy Name in this capacity for about a dozen years, faithfully plugging leaks, changing lights, re-flooring bathrooms, and (perhaps his first love) barbecuing hamburgers for the school children. Thank you, Jerry, for your service and care for the Holy Name community.
Shrine Lodge Repairs Underway

The Shrine of St. Therese Lodge will receive major repairs and upgrades

Under the leadership of general contractor John Gitkov, volunteers and workers have begun much-needed renovations and improvements on the Shrine of St. Therese lodge in Juneau. The 80-year old log structure on the shoreline of beautiful Lynn Canal has been used as a retreat and event facility, operated by the Diocese of Juneau, for many years and is the oldest and largest log structure in Juneau. The lodge has been rented to any and all groups, regardless of religious affiliation, who respect the purpose and sacred nature of the Shrine grounds.

Although building improvements before the busy summer season are already underway, the Shrine Board of Directors is still seeking donations to help defray the cost of these necessary upgrades. Some of the projects to be included will be: foundation work; a second floor emergency egress; new flooring throughout; a remodeled kitchen; and, new plumbing and electrical systems.

Renovation work will continue through May, but cease for the summer to allow for pre-existing summer rental bookings. Work is expected to begin again in August and continue through completion.

Please consider making a donation toward the restoration of this beautiful facility and place of retreat!

In order to pay for the renovation, we will need your assistance. A donation of any amount will be much appreciated. Let’s work together so that our children and grandchildren can enjoy the lodge in the years to come.

Please send your donation to:

Help Save the Lodge
Shrine of St. Therese • 415 6th Street, Suite 300
Juneau, Alaska 99801

Donate online at www.shrineofsainttherese.org

An Alaskan Cruise

with BISHOP EDWARD J. BURNS
SEPT. 6-13, 2013
Experience the beauty of S.E. Alaska and support the mission Church—
The Diocese of Juneau, Alaska

“Without a doubt the Diocese of Juneau is one of the most beautiful in the United States.”

You are invited to join BISHOP BURNS on this fund-raising cruise through the “inside passage” of Southeast Alaska. Celebrate daily Mass on board, in a parish, and at the Shrine of St. Therese.

Prices from $1982 per person • Space limited

World Hopper Travel
Cheryl Hopper at: 724-747-0220
Advocating and praying for the rights of workers

35 years ago when I lived in San Francisco Chinatown the parish I attended was mostly made up of women who worked at garment factories and their families. They did piecework and worked long hours behind locked doors and barred windows. Many women took their preschool age children with them to work because they couldn’t afford any other care for them.

I remember a weekday evening mass, I think it was All Souls Day, that was packed with garment factory workers who had come straight from work to church. During the homily, the pastor, Father Donald McDonnell, noticed that some of the workers had fallen asleep. He also noticed that their friends or family members were trying to wake them up, embarrassed that they’d fallen asleep while the priest was speaking.

Father McDonnell stopped preaching, came away from the lectern and walked over to where the assembly was sitting. I remember him saying in a very quiet voice, not to wake those who were sleeping, to let them rest. Then he spoke about how Jesus, Mary and Joseph, although not working in a factory, were also workers and how exhausted they must have been at the end of a day that began at sun-up and didn’t end until late at night. He talked about how Jesus, who was himself a worker, understood them and their lives and he reminded them of Jesus’ and the Church’s love for each of them and their families.

I thought about those garment factory workers this last week upon hearing the news of the collapse of the Rana Plaza, an enormous multi-story garment factory complex in Dhaka, Bangladesh. Over the past 30 years the factories in San Francisco where those immigrant neighbors of mine worked long hours behind the sewing machine assembling garments, have been moved overseas to countries like El Salvador, Honduras, Cambodia, and Bangladesh.

As I write, 420 workers, mostly women, are confirmed dead in the collapse and another 1000 are missing and yet to be accounted for. Hundreds have been injured. Survivors have testified that even though the day before the collapse they reported to the company and safety inspectors that they feared for their safety because of cracks in the walls, they were ordered to either report for work or risk losing their pay for the month of April. Some say they were driven into the building by truncheon wielding guards working for the factory owners.

Like sweatshop workers 100 years ago in our country, garment factory workers work long hours in unsafe conditions for inadequate wages. Union organizers report that the workers who died at the Rana Plaza factories were only being paid 14 to 26 cents an hour. Even working 13-14 hours a day, 6 or 7 days a week, that is not a living wage, even in a desperately poor country like Bangladesh.

This race to the bottom pits some of the poorest people in the world against the power of giant multi-national corporations and the thousands of smaller, local factories that make up the supply chain for garments or shoes or consumer electronics marketed in the United States and elsewhere.

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This race to the bottom pits some of the poorest people in the world against the power of giant multi-national corporations and the thousands of smaller, local factories that make up the supply chain for garments or shoes or consumer electronics marketed in the United States and elsewhere.

This means engaging the political, social and economic realities of developing societies. In most poor nations, even the poor wages paid in garment factories are an improvement over life in the countryside. Impoverished peasants in countries like Bangladesh migrate to the cities to find better paying factory work to support their families. But like anyone else, they don’t want to work under conditions that endanger their health or safety. And they know that the best way to improve their pay, hours, treatment and working conditions is by belonging to a labor union. This often puts them in direct conflict with industrialists and government officials whose export manufacturing model (and profits) rely on the cheap labor of a readily available and non-union workforce.

After China, Bangladesh is the number two garment manufacturer and exporter worldwide. A lot of what we wear comes from factories where the workers, mostly women, make $37 a month (up from $21 a month because of nationwide protests organized by trade unions there.)

We can support Bangladesh workers, not by boycotting the clothing they make – that just puts them out of a job – but by demanding that our government require a link between better and safer factory conditions, a living wage and the right to create and belong to trade unions with access to American and European markets. Such linkages can be quite effective (as was demonstrated in Cambodia in the 1990’s) and they uphold the dignity and rights of workers while promoting the common good.

Mary’s month of May is a good opportunity for us all to pray for the millions of young women in the developing world who work long hours in unsafe and inhumane working conditions for less than a living wage and to advocate for their right to a better and happier life.

Deacon Charles Rohrbacher is the Office of Ministries Director for the Diocese of Juneau. Phone: 907-586-2227 ext. 23 Email: charles@gci.net
His mother kept all these things in her heart: Continued from page 1

She tried to understand, though no one can know everything. But she tried to understand her son.”

Personally, I hadn’t thought much about the finding of Jesus in the Temple as a model for parenthood. It seemed to me more like an episode in the Bible that showcases the humanness of Jesus’ parents—to lose your child is about the most dramatic way you can fail as a parent or caregiver. The basic requirement of motherhood is to at least know where your children are. My recurring parenting nightmare is that I’ve forgotten one of my three children somewhere: at the church, at their schools, at home, at the store . . .

Surprisingly, the only time I have lost a child was at a playground and I didn’t even know she was lost until she came up behind me sobbing. She’s currently writing a story about it for her 2nd grade class. It will be shared on Author’s Day for all the 2nd grade parents to hear—I can’t wait.

How embarrassing and terrifying to find you’ve lost your child in a big city and then how maddening to find him 3 days later, sitting in the Temple like nothing had happened. Parents of teenagers can add their own story to Calvary and death on a Cross. It seems to me more like an episode in the Bible that showcases the humanness of Jesus’ parents—to lose your child is about the most dramatic way you can fail as a parent or caregiver. The basic requirement of motherhood is to at least know where your children are. My recurring parenting nightmare is that I’ve forgotten one of my three children somewhere: at the church, at their schools, at home, at the store . . .

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She tried to understand, though no one can know everything. But she tried to understand her son.”

Personally, I hadn’t thought much about the finding of Jesus in the Temple as a model for parenthood. It seemed to me more like an episode in the Bible that showcases the humanness of Jesus’ parents—to lose your child is about the most dramatic way you can fail as a parent or caregiver. The basic requirement of motherhood is to at least know where your children are. My recurring parenting nightmare is that I’ve forgotten one of my three children somewhere: at the church, at their schools, at home, at the store . . .

On the day of the finding of Jesus, he was three years old. “Are you telling me it’s three years old?” I think my heart literally stopped. In the account of the finding of Jesus, the parents would have been appalled; Jesus was not in the company of criminals. In the Opening Prayer of the 5th Sunday of Easter, there is a line which caused me as a mother, woman, and disciple of Jesus, to catch my breath: “Almighty and ever-living God, constantly accomplish the Paschal Mystery within us.” As Christians is this really our prayer—to experience the Passion, death and Resurrection in our lives constantly?

I would like my children to grow old, have satisfying and useful careers, embrace a vocation of marriage, single or consecrated life. I would like them to know all the days of their lives and (if I’m being really honest) to always live within a few miles of me. Despite the good will behind any parent’s wishes, we may be disappointed by our children’s uncertainty—the important work that we all must do of discovering who we are and who God calls us to be. This is not work that comes easily. Sometimes it is cut tragically short or changed forever by violence or accident, disease, mental illness, or addiction.

Jessica reminds me that Mary did not know what God’s plan was for her son. She knew he was a precious gift, and yet he is a gift that is hers and profoundly not hers at the same time. God’s plans for this child, for all children, go far beyond the narrow dreams of their parents. And God’s plan for Jesus led both him and his mother to Calvary and death on a Cross

“Why were you looking for me? Did you not know that I must be in my Father’s house?” (Luke 2:49) The Gospel continues, “but they did not understand what he said to them” (Luke 2:50). The account concludes, “He went down with them and came to Nazareth, and was obedient to them; and his mother kept all these things in her heart” (Luke 2:51).

As mothers, there is so much we can hold in our hearts—our children’s triumphs and defeats, their joys and sorrows, their loves, and their bitterness, but maybe the hardest thing to hold within our hearts is our children’s uncertainty—the important work that we all must do of discovering who we are and who God calls us to be. This is not work to be taken lightly, and it is not work that comes easily. Sometimes it is cut tragically short or changed forever by violence or accident, disease, mental illness, or addiction.

Jessica reminds me that Mary did not know what God’s plan was for her son. She knew he was a precious gift, and yet he is a gift that is hers and profoundly not hers at the same time. God’s plans for this child, for all children, go far beyond the narrow dreams of their parents. And God’s plan for Jesus led both him and his mother to Calvary and death on a Cross.
The historical Mary

ROBERT P. MALONEY, AMERICA MAGAZINE

What do we really know about the woman we call Mother of God and Mother of the Church, the first of all the saints, the model believer? What do contemporary Scripture studies, archaeological research and analysis of the literature of her time reveal to us about Mary? I invite the reader to reflect with me on the “historical Mary,” whose life is so intertwined with the mystery of Jesus. Focusing on Mary’s Jewish roots, writers like Raymond E. Brown, S.S., in The Birth of the Messiah, John P. Meier in A Marginal Jew and Elizabeth A. Johnson in Truly Our Sister have carefully examined the religious, economic, cultural and political circumstances of her daily life. The scene they reconstruct is quite different from the idyllic portraits of medieval artists and the serene rhapsodies of musicians and poets.

Mary was actually called Miriam, after the sister of Moses. Most likely she was born in Nazareth, a tiny Galilean town of about 1,600 people, during the reign of Herod the Great, a violent puppet-king propped up by Roman military might. Nazareth was of little consequence for most Jews: “Can anything good come out of Nazareth?” (John 1:46). It is never mentioned in the Hebrew Scriptures, nor in the Talmud. Mary spoke Aramaic, with a Galilean accent (see Matt 26:73), but she also had contact with a multilingual world. She heard Latin as it slipped from the tongues of Roman soldiers, Greek as it was used in commerce and educated circles and Hebrew as the Torah was proclaimed.

She belonged to the peasant class, which eked out its living through agriculture and small commercial ventures like carpentry, the profession of both Joseph and Jesus. This group made up 80 percent of the population and bore the burden of supporting the state and the small privileged class. Their life was grinding, with a triple tax burden: to Rome, to Herod the Great and to the temple (to which, traditionally, they owed 10 percent of the harvest). Artisans, who made up about 5 percent of the population, had an even lower median income than those who worked the land full time. Consequently, in order to have a steady supply of food, they usually combined their craft with farming.

The picture of the Holy Family as a tiny group of three living in a tranquil, monastic-like carpenter’s shop is highly improbable. Like most people at that time, they probably lived in an extended family unit, where three or four houses of one or two rooms each were built around an open courtyard, in which relatives shared an oven, a cistern and a millstone for grinding grain, and where domestic animals also lived. Like women in many parts of the world today, Mary most likely spent, on the average, 10 hours a day on domestic chores like carrying water from a nearby well or stream, gathering wood for the fire, cooking meals and washing utensils and clothes.

Who were the members of this extended household? Mark’s Gospel speaks of Jesus, “the carpenter, the son of Mary, the brother of James and Joses and Judas and Simon, and are not his sisters here among us?” (Mark 6:3). Were these “brothers and sisters” children of Jesus’ aunt (see John 19:25) and therefore cousins? Were they Joseph’s children by a previous marriage? We do not know their precise relationship to Jesus and Mary, but it is probable that they all lived in close proximity within the same compound.

In Palestine at that time, women ordinarily married at about 13 years of age in order to maximize childbearing and to guarantee their virginity, so it is likely that Mary’s espousal to Joseph (Matt 1:18) and the birth of Jesus occurred when she was very young. Luke indicates that Mary gave birth to Jesus during a census required by the Romans around 6 B.C., in a cave or stall where animals were stabled. A feeding trough served as his crib, as today poor refugees use cardboard boxes and other homemade artifacts as makeshift beds for newborn infants.

It would be a mistake to think of Mary as fragile, even at 13. As a peasant woman capable of walking the hill country of Judea while pregnant, of giving birth in a stable, of making a four- or five-day journey on foot to Jerusalem once a year or so, of sleeping in the open country like other pilgrims and of engaging in daily hard labor at home, she probably had a robust physique in youth and even in her later years. We also err when we picture her as Fra Lippo Lippi’s gorgeously dressed, blue-eyed, blond-haired Madonna, who often adorns Christmas cards. Whether she was beautiful or not, she would have had features like those of Jewish and Palestinian women today, most likely with dark hair and dark eyes.

It is doubtful that she knew how to read or write, since literacy was extremely rare among women of the time. The culture was highly oral, with public reading of the Scriptures, the telling of stories, the recitation of poems and the singing of songs.

A Jewish culture permeated Mary’s life. One might legitimately ask: Did she keep a kosher kitchen? Was there a mezuzah on the doorpost of her family’s modest home in Nazareth? Continued on page 16

‘Living out our Baptismal Promises’

Wrangell-Petersburg Parish Mission audio recordings available online

Parishes in Wrangell and Petersburg held missions at the end of April, led by Fr. R.B. Williams OP — shown here with a statue of St. Rose — both in Dominican robes.

Fr. Williams is a Dominican Priest of the Southern Province currently living in Houston, Texas. He has been leading parish missions for over 25 years and has served 20 years in campus ministry.

Links to the audio and video recordings of his presentations are available at any of the websites listed below:

www.dioceseofjuneau.org
www.sempergumbyinalaska.blogspot.com
www.YouTube, ‘Juneau Catholic’ channel
(At top) Bishop Edward J. Burns and Diocese of Juneau Chancery staff member Peggy Mattson were among the many Juneautes who took part in the Governor’s March 28th ‘Choose Respect’ rally and march against domestic violence.

(Above) Children in the Cathedral of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary’s Catechesis of the Good Shepherd program prepare for the ‘Liturgy of the Light.’

(At right) Youth from the Cathedral of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary’s Catechesis of the Good Shepherd program in Juneau plan, prepare for and take part in the ‘Liturgy of the Light’ – a liturgy for children which celebrates the resurrection of Christ.

(Above) Holy Name School 6th graders traveled to Juneau in April, and among other activities were able to visit with iconographer and Deacon, Charles Rohrbacher, at his studio in Douglas.

(At left) First Communion recipients at Easter in St. John-by-the-Sea parish in Klawock. From left to right: are Colin Rice, Martin Guthrie, Ben Moots, Justina Swetzof, Rogan Hanson, Cael Koentopp, and Shayla Swetzof.
Three months to go and almost ten thousand dollars to raise! This was the dilemma that Jake Coffman, Diocesan Youth Ministry Coordinator, and two St. Paul the Apostle Parish teens, Julia Smith and Carl Uchytil, had to face. When the two teens decided to go to World Youth Day in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil this year they had no idea how they would raise ten thousand dollars before the deadline, but they were determined to raise every cent. And they did just that. For the past few months the WYD group has had numerous fundraisers and events all focused on a final goal of ten thousand dollars for travel expenses to WYD 2013.

The teens spent many hours on the preparations to go to World Youth Day, setting up for fundraisers, cooking fry bread to sell after mass at St. Paul’s, and organizing different events all to reach their goal. And, they weren’t the only ones making sacrifices to raise the money. Many adults donated time, items, and some even gave up a little hair. For the last major fundraiser Elisha Thibodeau and Jacob Coffman offered to shave their heads as an incentive to raise the last of the money for World Youth Day. Unfortunately (?) or fortunately for them, the teens raised the money necessary and their heads were shaved.

All this fundraising has been for a wonderful cause. World Youth Day is an opportunity for teens and young adults to be present with thousands of other Catholic youth from around the world praising God, to have an experience they will keep forever, and to see not only thousands of priests, bishops, and other religious, but to see and celebrate with Pope Francis at his first World Youth Day as Pope. World Youth Day is not only a time for the teens to meet the Universal Church, but a time for the teens to grow closer to God.

Please continue to pray for the many youth, chaperones, and clergy from throughout Alaska who will be traveling to Brazil for World Youth Day this coming July.

Thank You!

High School Students
Mark Your Calendars NOW!

Diocesan High School Youth Conference

SEPTEMBER 13—15, 2013

Where: St. Paul’s in Juneau
Facilitators will be ‘5 Thousand’ from South Carolina.
This is a nationally known group that is said to be AWESOME!
Teens, start making your plans to be in Juneau for this event—
It will be a weekend you won’t want to miss!

If you would like to be part of the planning team or help with the retreat in any way contact Jake @ 789-7387 or email: jacobtcoffman@gmail.com

www.dioceseofjuneau.org

Mother and daughter attend an immigration reform rally in Georgetown, Del., May 1. More than 1,000 people gathered in the town, where about 48 percent of the population is Latino or of Hispanic origin, according to the U.S. Census Bureau. Poultry processing, agriculture and the tourist industry of nearby beach resorts are where many of the immigrants work. (CNS photo/Patricia Zapor) A panel of U.S. bishops said April 22 that a comprehensive immigration bill introduced in Congress was on the right track, though they alluded to some aspects they would like changed. For more on the Catholic stand on immigration reform: www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/human-life-and-dignity/immigration/
The 50th anniversary of the Second Vatican Council

Sacrosanctum Concilium — Part II

Part 7 of an 8-part series on the Documents of the Second Vatican Council

A look at the Mass and why it’s the source and summit of our faith


In the previous segment of this short study of the documents of Vatican II we reviewed the document on the Sacred Liturgy, Sacrosanctum Concilium. The primary aim of this document was two-fold – to enable the faithful to rediscover the treasures of the Church’s liturgy, which is the ‘source and summit’ of the Church’s life, and to lead us to a more “full, conscious, and active participation in liturgical celebrations.” The greatest of the Church’s liturgical celebrations is the Mass; therefore, the Constitution on the Liturgy gives a great deal of attention to it.

The Unchanging Liturgy

In order to bring about “full, conscious and active participation” during the Mass, Sacrosanctum Concilium introduced several revisions in the Rite of the Mass that have affected the way in which the Mass is celebrated. It is important to stress, however, that the Second Vatican Council did not change the essence of the Mass. The Mass celebrated today is the same Mass celebrated by the Apostles; it is the sacramental re-presentation of Jesus’ sacrifice on the Cross – allowing us to participate in these saving events by making them present to us. The essence of the Mass can never change, because Our Lord Himself instituted it. However, the way in which the Mass is celebrated is subject to revision.

What is Participation?

Before we take a closer look at the revisions instituted by Sacrosanctum Concilium, we must try to gain a better understanding of this “full, conscious, and active participation” to which the Church is inviting each one of us. Many have misinterpreted this phrase to mean merely external displays of participation such as vocal responses, physical gestures, reading at Mass or carrying the gifts to the altar. However, these external forms of participation should lead to a deeper internal participation, by which one is conscious of the mysteries that are being made present at the Mass. The Church recognizes that we are both body and soul, and authentic worship requires the use of both. Therefore, what we do with our bodies, whether it be through our voices, our postures or actions, should reflect the engagement of both mind and heart in the mysteries taking place in the liturgy.

Changes in the Celebration: The Constitution’s Decrees

In order to foster the internal and external participation necessary for us to fully reap the fruits of the Mass, the Constitution issued some important decrees:

Simplifying the rituals: The Rite of the Mass was revised, omitting those rites which “with the passage of time came to be duplicated, or were added with little advantage,” while restoring other rituals which had “through accidents of history” been lost. (SC 50)

More Scripture readings: “The treasures of the Bible are to be opened up more lavishly so that a richer fare may be provided for the faithful at the table of God’s word.” (SC 51) This resulted in a three-year cycle of readings, rather than a one-year cycle, a second reading before the Gospel, and the introduction of the responsorial psalm.

Greater emphasis on the homily: The homily is the means by which “the mysteries of faith and the guiding principles of the Christian life are expounded from the sacred text during the course of the liturgical year.”

Reinsertion of the prayer of the faithful: This ancient Christian custom takes place after the homily and just before the Liturgy of the Eucharist. Here, the faithful pray for the needs of the Church, civil authorities, the salvation of the world, all those in need, and the special needs of the local community.

Eucharist: “... the faithful should receive hosts consecrated at that Mass.” This is “a more perfect form of participation in the Mass.”

One single act of worship: The Mass is made up of two parts – the Liturgy of the Word and the Liturgy of the Eucharist. These two parts are “so closely connected with each other that they form one single act of worship.” Therefore, there is an emphasis on the importance of being present for the entire Mass, especially on Sundays and holy days.

The primary purpose of all these decrees was to encourage us to participate more fully and to be actively engaged, both internally and externally, in the Mass, which is the supreme act of worship and the “source and summit of Christian life.” By reading this beautiful document, may we be inspired to participate in this great

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Sacrosanctum Concilium:  
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act of worship in such a way that we give perfect praise to our Father.

How to live a more liturgical life

The Church calendar is a wonderful mixture of feasting and fasting, marked by changing seasons. The colors of the liturgical vestments and the altar cloths indicate which season we are celebrating. Through our active participation at Mass, reading daily scripture along with the Church calendar and being aware of the rhythm of the liturgical year, we can live more liturgical lives.

Our lives comprise times of joy, times of sorrow and a great number of ordinary times. We can live in sync with the liturgical year by cultivating awareness of the Church’s calendar and adjusting our lives accordingly. For example, during Advent, when we prepare our hearts with expectant joy to receive our Savior, we could abstain from some favorite food or enjoyment to make our longing for Jesus more keen, and undertake a spiritual practice or work of mercy to serve Him in our neighbor. Lent is a time of prayer, fasting and almsgiving, leading us to the beautiful liturgies of Holy Week and Easter. The Easter season lasts until Pentecost – a great celebration of the Resurrection – and then the Church re-enters Ordinary Time. Sprinkled throughout are beautiful holy days dedicated to Our Lady and the saints.

The celebration of the Mass through the centuries

While the appearance of the liturgy has changed a great deal, the essential elements remain intact. Generally, the development of the liturgy from the Last Supper to its present form may be divided into five stages:

Early Church:
33 A.D. – Christ celebrated the Last Supper with His Apostles. The entire liturgy of the Church is derived from this simple meal at which Our Lord fulfilled the Jewish Passover by instituting the Eucharistic sacrifice.

100 A.D. – The Jewish custom of reading Scripture on the Sabbath was soon added to the sacrificial meal. By the end of the first century, all the essential elements of the Mass were present: the liturgy of the Word grew out of the reading of Scripture, and the liturgy of the Eucharist from the breaking of the bread, blessings and prayers.

A diversity of practices grew up around the major ecclesiastical sees, such as Rome, Jerusalem, Constantinople and Antioch. This variety was always in non-essential things, however, while the essential core of the celebration, deriving from Christ Himself, remained unchanged.

270 A.D. – The liturgy was translated into Latin, the official language of the Roman Empire.

St. Gregory the Great:

6th century – Pope Gregory the Great enacted large-scale liturgical reform, giving definitive wording to liturgical formulas and to the chants of the Mass, the latter of which came to be known as Gregorian chant. The Roman rite became gradually more widespread, replacing or assimilating local rites wherever it was introduced. For example, in the 8th century, Charlemagne made the Roman liturgy the official form of worship in his realm, and other rulers did the same.

Middle ages:

9th to 13th centuries – This was a time of great diversification in liturgical practice. Many dioceses and religious orders devised a variation of the Roman rite for use in their region or religious houses. Many poetic and dramatic elements were added to the liturgy.

The reforms of the Council of Trent:

16th Century – The Council of Trent standardized the celebration of worship by preparing and publishing definitive and official liturgical books, such as the Roman Missal, based on the ancient texts.

20th century:

Liturgical reform took the form of a “liturgical movement” at the beginning of the century, culminating in the reforms of the Second Vatican Council.

Next month: Part 8 — the conclusion of this review of the documents of Vatican II
Human evolution: Science, faith explore the mysterious emergence of man

BY CAROL GLATZ, CATHOLIC NEWS SERVICE

VATICAN CITY (CNS) -- Evolutionary science is still grappling with understanding how the human species, with its unique capacities for language, culture, abstract reasoning and spirituality, may have emerged from a pre-ape ancestor.

While the Catechism of the Catholic Church teaches that God, “in a plan of sheer goodness freely created man to make him share in his own blessed life,” the church still considers the scientific investigation of the origins of humanity to be a valuable contribution to human knowledge.

In its continuing dialogue with world-renowned scientific experts, the Pontifical Academy of Sciences brought together evolutionary biologists, paleoanthropologists, archaeologists, neuroscientists, theologians and philosophers to discuss the major physical and cultural changes that occurred during mankind’s evolution.

The working group on “The Emergence of the Human Being” met April 19-21 to discuss topics such as the mastery and use of fire, the beginning of burial and funeral rites and the emergence of language, culture and conscience.

Bishop Marcelo Sanchez Sorondo, the science academy’s chancellor, told the group that scientific truths are part of divine truth and “can help philosophy and theology understand ever more fully the status and future of the human person.”

Science investigates the external world and how it works, while religion is concerned with “the internal world of the self, which belongs to the spirit present in his being and to his relationship with God,” the bishop said.

As such, theology and philosophy “must not engage in a losing battle to establish the facts of nature that constitute the very scope of science,” he said.

“Philosophy and theology should ask themselves how they can find a meeting point with and become enriched by the naturalist viewpoint of science, starting from the assumption that the human being is already a speaking, questioning being,” he added.

How that speaking, questioning being emerged from a 5 million-year-long lineage of other primates is still a matter of much debate.

Along that evolutionary path, no species turned out to be more unlike its ancestors than the human species, said Ian Tattersall, a British-American paleontologist and former curator of the anthropology division of the American Museum of Natural History in New York City.

What’s so unusual in humans ended up with such “special and unique properties” even though they followed a pre-ape ancestor.

Gay Marriage and the Breakdown of Moral Argument

In his classic text After Virtue, the philosopher Alisdair MacIntyre lamented, not so much the immorality that runs rampant in our contemporary society, but something more fundamental and in the long run more dangerous; namely, that we are no longer even capable of having a real argument about moral matters. The assumptions that once undergirded any coherent conversation about ethics, he said, are no longer taken for granted or universally shared. The result is that, in regard to questions of what is right and wrong, we simply talk past one another, or more often, scream at each other.

I thought of MacIntyre’s observation when I read a recent article on the Supreme Court’s consideration of the much-vexed issue of gay marriage. It was reported that, in the wake of the oral arguments, Justice Elena Kagan remarked, “Whenever someone expresses moral disapproval in a legal context, the red flag of discrimination goes up for me.” Notice that the Justice did not say that discrimination is the result of a bad moral argument, but simply that any appeal to morality is, ipso facto, tantamount to discrimination. Or to state it in MacIntyre’s terms, since even attempting to make a moral argument is an exercise in futility, doing so can only be construed as an act of aggression. I will leave to the side the radical inconsistency involved in saying that one has an ethical objection (discrimination!) to the making of an ethical argument, but I would indeed like to draw attention to a very dangerous implication of this incoherent position. If argument is indeed a non-starter, the only recourse we have in the adjudication of our disputes is violence, either direct or indirect. This is precisely why a number of Christian leaders and theorists, especially in the West, have been expressing a deep concern about this manner of thinking. Any preacher or writer who ventures to make a moral argument against gay marriage is automatically condemned as a purveyor of “hate speech” or excoriated as a bigot, and in extreme cases, he can be subject to legal sanction. This visceral, violent reaction is a consequence of the breakdown of the rational framework for moral discourse that MacIntyre so lamented.

A telltale sign of this collapse is our preoccupation, even obsession, with poll numbers in regard to this question. We are incessantly told that ever-increasing numbers of Americans—especially among the young—approve of gay marriage or are open to gay relationships. This is undoubtedly of great interest sociologically or politically, but in itself, it has nothing to do with the question of right or wrong. Lots of people can approve of something that is in fact morally repugnant, and a tiny minority can support something that is in fact morally splendid. For example, if polls were taken in 1945 concerning the rectitude of dropping atomic bombs on Japan in order to bring the war to a rapid conclusion, I am quite sure that overwhelming majorities would have approved. And if a poll had been taken in, say, 1825, concerning the legitimacy of slavery, I would bet that only a small minority of Americans would have come out for eliminating the practice. But finally, in either case, so what? Finally, an argument has to be made. In the absence of this, the citation of poll numbers in regard to a moral issue is nothing but a form of bullying: we’ve got you outnumbered.

Still another indication of the breakdown in moral argumentation is the sentimentalizing of the gay marriage issue. Over roughly the past twenty-five years, armies of gay people have come out of the closet, and this is indeed welcome. Repression, deception, and morbid self-reproach are never good things. The result of this coming out is that millions have recognized their brothers, sisters, aunts, cousins, uncles, and dear friends as gay. The homosexual person is no longer, accordingly, some strange and shadowy “other,” but someone I know to be a decent human being. This development, too, is nothing but positive. The man or woman with a homosexual orientation must always be loved and treated, in all circumstances, with the respect due to a child of God. Nevertheless, it does not follow that everything a decent person does or wants is necessarily decent. Without a convincing argument, we cannot simply say that whatever a generally kind and loving person chooses to do is, by the very nature of the thing, right. This is why I am never impressed when a politician says that he is now in favor of gay marriage, because he has discovered that his son, whom he deeply loves, is gay. Please don’t misunderstand me: I am sincerely delighted whenever a father loves and cherishes his gay son. However, that love in itself does not constitute an argument.

The attentive reader will have noticed that I have not proffered such an argument in the course of this article. That will have to be matter for another day. What I have tried to do is clear away some of the fog that obfuscates this issue, in the hopes that we might eventually see, with some clarity and objectivity, what the Catholic Church teaches in regard to sexuality in general and the question of gay marriage in particular.

Father Robert Barron is an author, speaker and theologian. He is also the founder of the global media ministry Word on Fire (www.WordOnFire.org). He currently serves as the Rector/President of Mundelein Seminary University of St. Mary of the Lake.
**questions & answers**

**RIGHT TO CHURCH BURIAL**

**Q** Recently, a local priest refused to bury a resident of his town because the person did not go to church. The priest was told that the deceased had confessed and received Communion on his deathbed, but that did not seem to matter. Fortunately, a neighboring priest was willing to celebrate the funeral Mass. What should we do with regard to the first priest, except to pray for him (which I am doing)? (Wisconsin)

**A** Sometimes in cases like this, the story contains elements of hearsay and the facts become clouded. But if it really happened as you describe, then I would disagree with the first priest’s determination.

According to the Code of Canon Law (No. 1176), Catholics have the right to a church funeral, and this is generally true even if the deceased was not regularly practicing his faith at the time of death. In certain situations, Catholic funeral rites may be refused, but only by exception -- notably (in No. 1184) for “manifest sinners who cannot be granted ecclesiastical funerals without public scandal of the faithful.” Notorious members of crime syndicates would be an example of this.

No matter how openly sinful a person’s life has been, a Catholic funeral is never to be denied if the person has manifested repentance before dying. When opera star Luciano Pavarotti died in Italy in 2007, some expressed surprise that a funeral Mass was celebrated in his hometown cathedral with messages of condolence from an archbishop and even from Pope Benedict XVI, since it was commonly known that, following a divorce, he had conceived a child with his secretary, whom he later married in a civil ceremony.

According to several news sources, Pavarotti’s pastor stated that the singer had been reconciled to the church before his death.

In the case you mention, if the pastor had any doubt as to the proper course of action, Canon No. 1184 states that he should have sought the advice of his bishop. In such situations, I believe that the presumption should normally favor the deceased -- a presumption only to be overridden in extreme situations.

Simply being a sinner does not render one unworthy of a Catholic burial -- in fact, it’s precisely because we are sinners that we need the funeral Mass.

---Questions may be sent to Father Kenneth Doyle at askfatherdoyle@gmail.com and 40 Hopewell St., Albany, N.Y. 12208.

**DOES FORGIVENESS HAVE LIMITS?**

In Matthew 18:21-22, we are given a standard of forgiveness which I interpret to mean that we are to forgive always (“not seven times, but seventy seven”). I’m at a loss, though, as to how to apply that in my case. For a long time, I’ve had a terrible relationship with my mother, who lost custody of two of her three children (including myself) for continually putting us in unsafe and inappropriate situations.

I’ve never had a problem feeling compassion for my mother and I often pray for her. But I decided a long time ago that when I had children of my own, I would love my mother from a distance and not give her the chance to hurt or influence my children. A few times since then, I’ve tried giving her opportunities to redeem herself only to find out that I was wrong -- to the detriment of my children’s well-being.

Despite this, I am forever being asked by friends and family to give my mother another chance by allowing her some controlled interaction so that she’ll know the blessing of grandchildren. What I’m struggling with is this: Is it enough that God knows I’ve forgiven my mother, or must I show it by giving her another chance with my children? (Rochester, N.Y.)

**A** You are correct in thinking that the mandate for a Christian is to strive to forgive always. From the facts as you’ve explained them, I believe that you’ve done that. (Bringing the person before the Lord in prayer is a good first step to forgiveness, because it reminds us that all of us are flawed and in need of God’s help.)

I hope that your mother knows you’ve forgiven her, and I imagine you’ve been able to communicate that to her.

Forgiveness, though, does not demand that you put your children in peril, and you, as their parent, are in the best position to know what would cause them harm. It is difficult for me to make a clear call here with limited information: I have no idea what your mother’s original missteps were that caused her to lose custody, nor what damage you perceived when you tried giving her the chance to be an active grandmother, nor what sort of “controlled interaction” your friends and family are now suggesting.

In situations like this, you are probably best advised to have a face-to-face discussion with a priest or other trusted counselor where all of the circumstances can be reviewed.

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the same evolutionary mechanisms of genetic variation, adaptation and natural selection as all other species, he said.

That radical transformation “I think was due to culture,” he said, which changed the way early humans responded to their environment. But how that transformation came about is still a mystery, Tattersall told Catholic News Service.

“It’s absolutely mind-boggling: How do you go from a nonlinguistic and non-symbolic creature to a symbolic and linguistic successor?” he said.

Wolf Singer, a neurophysiologist and founding director of the Frankfurt Institute for Advanced Studies and co-director of the Brain Imaging Center in Frankfurt, Germany, said, “The neurons are the same in our (human) cerebral cortices as they are in the mollusk.”

“While we know a lot about the nuts and bolts of the system,” like how neurons work and pass signals to one another, these high-level human brain functions like reasoning, long-term memory and assigning meaning are enormously complex and “resist explanation,” he said.

Brain research has implications for topics that normally concerned only philosophy, such as free will, the boundaries of mind and body, and the nature of consciousness, he said.

Bishop Sanchez said the evolutionary laws of heredity and genetic mutation pose no conflict to the Catholic faith and offer a biological explanation for the development of species on earth.

However, he said, the beginning of the universe, “the transition from nothing to being,” is not a mutation; God is the first cause of creation and being.

“In this first transcendent origin of the human being we should in fact admit the direct participation of God,” which also occurs with each conception of human life, he said.

Human beings are not just biological creatures, but spiritual, too, whose “incorruptible soul,” he said, “requires a creative act of God.”

Msgr. Fiorenzo Facchini, who is an anthropologist and paleontologist, said evolution could have ended at the pre-human stage, but thanks to God’s will, humans emerged with the capacity for self-reflection and knowing the transcendent.

Msgr. Facchini has said that rather than picturing it as humans descending from the apes, humans ascended or rose up from the animal kingdom to a higher level, thanks to the hand of God.
Dear Editor:

Deacon Charles Rohrbacher’s column in the April 2013 issue of The Southeast Alaska Catholic is both offensive and inaccurate. He repeats the falsehood that during the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising of 1943 the Christian population of Warsaw played and sang joyfully on merry-go-rounds as the Nazis were slaughtering the Jewish resisters next door. Nothing could be further from the truth.

Deacon Rohrbacher’s first error is to mistake a poem for an actual historical account. Czeslaw Milosz’s poem Campo de Fiori is a metaphorical comment on inaction in the face of evil, not a historical fact. What is described in the poem did not happen in real life.

Jewish, German and Polish sources paint a far different picture from Deacon Rohrbacher’s falsified account. ZOB member Isak Cukiernicki was outside the Ghetto walls and recalled crowds of Poles: “I saw with my own eyes Poles—standing and weeping.”

Nazi leaders, including the infamous SS General Jurgen Stroop who was in charge of suppressing the Jewish uprising, complained that his troops were under sniper fire from outside the Ghetto walls. The Polish underground supplied arms and ammo to the Jewish Fighting Union (ZZW) of the Betar movement. The Betarim, led by Jewish veterans of the Polish army, raised the blue star of David flag and the Polish national colors over their position at Muranowska Square—which electrified the whole city of Warsaw and threatened to set off a city-wide revolt. Stroop reported to his superiors: “The Square—which electrified the whole city of Warsaw and threatened to set off a city-wide revolt.”

The main Jewish battle group, mixed with Polish bandits, had already retired during the first and second day to the so-called Muranowska Square. There, it was reinforced by a considerable number of Polish bandits. ZZW fighters held off SS and police forces for two days with help from the Poles. Another Polish resistance cell tried to blow up part of the Ghetto wall but were driven off by heavy German fire. While there were certainly Polish blackmailers and criminals (Christian and Jewish) who tried to take advantage of the situation and betray those escaping from the Ghetto fighting, Deacon Rohrbacher’s picture of carefree normal life during the 1943 uprising is not even close to the truth. The area around the Ghetto was the scene of violence and chaos and considerable help and sympathy was extended to the Jewish resisters.

Deacon Rohrbacher then quotes Saul Friedlander’s tendentious claim that “not one social group, not one religious community...declared its solidarity with the Jews.” Under the conditions of the occupation of Poland, it was not possible and would have been suicidal and counterproductive for anyone to make public statements of any sort against the Nazis. Rohrbacher conveniently overlooks the fact that the Germans murdered 2 million Polish Christians between 1939 and 1945, including nearly 250,000 residents of Warsaw during the Warsaw Uprising in August and September 1944 alone when the residents of Warsaw, far from partying with the Nazis as Rohrbacher suggests, fought to liberate their own city. Friedlander’s claim is demonstrably false. In 1942, the Polish government in exile in London published a full report on Nazi extermination of the Jews and publicly called on all Allied and neutral governments to protest this unprecedented crime. That report was compiled by scores of resistance members who risked and sometimes lost their own lives to document Nazi crimes against Jews and smuggle the information to the free world.

While the silence of many Allied leaders to the plight of the Jews (which was by no means a secret) is a distressing fact, many, many social groups and religious communities did more than declare solidarity with the Jews, they showed it. According to historian Steven P. Paulsson’s book Hidden City, by the time of the liquidation of the Ghetto, nearly 30,000 Jews were in hiding in Warsaw outside the Ghetto. It is estimated that it took the active and passive cooperation of as many as 25 people to hide a single Jew. Each of those persons was subject to an immediate death sentence or transportation to Auschwitz if caught. In Poland, when the Nazis uncovered Jews in hiding they executed not only the rescuers but also their families and often all their immediate neighbors. To give a Jew a glass of water was a capital offense. On March 24, 1944, for example, German police raided the home of the Catholic Ulma family in the village of Markowa and found eight Jews in the family’s attic where they had been hidden for almost two years. While the entire village was forced to watch, the eight Jews were shot one by one. Then Jozef Ulma and his wife Victoria, then nine months pregnant, were shot. Finally, the Nazis lined up the Ulma’s six children ranging in age from 8 to 2 and shot them as well.

As to groups that showed solidarity, what of Zegota, the Polish underground organization that was dedicated to rescue Jews? Zegota was the only such organization in occupied Europe. One of its members, Catholic social worker, Irena Sendler, personally rescued over 2000 Jewish children from the Warsaw Ghetto and survived two weeks of brutal Gestapo torture that left her permanently crippled without revealing the hiding place or identity of a single child. And where did Sendler and other rescuers hide many of these children? In orphanages run by the Catholic religious communities.

Near 200 Roman and Eastern-rite Catholic convents in occupied Poland sheltered Jewish children. More than a few Catholic nuns paid the ultimate price for defying the Nazis, including the Blessed Martyrs of Nowogrodek—11 Sisters of the Holy Family of Nazareth murdered by the Germans after they volunteered to take the place of prisoners slated for death—or the Dominican Sister Bl. Julia Rzinska who volunteered to nurse Jewish women dying of typhoid in the Stutthof concentration camp and died of the disease herself.

If Deacon Rohrbacher had bothered to check his facts he could have found many such examples of solidarity with the Jewish victims of Nazism. Of course, no one can ever do “enough” in the face of such evil. Even Irena Sendler insisted she had not done enough. To be clear, not all Christians or all Poles in occupied Europe performed such acts of heroism. Most were passive and a few collaborated with evil. Yet, how many American Christians have turned a blind eye to the scourge of abortion or failed to show solidarity with the victims of vile abortionists like Kermit Gosnell? Yet, the penalty for speaking out against this clear and present evil is mere social stigma, not certain death for oneself and one’s family. Denouncing Christian Poles for failing to do enough to help Jews under the German occupation may make us feel morally superior but in light of the evils we ourselves pass by in silence each day such accusations appear more like stones that ought to have remained unthrown.

John Radzilowski, Ketchikan
Twenty-five years ago, I wrote a column entitled, Guidelines for the Long Haul. Revisiting it recently, I was encouraged that my principles haven’t swayed during the past quarter-century, only taken on more nuance. I still recommend those same commandments, nostalgically revisited, somewhat redacted, but fully re-endorsed:

1) Be grateful...never look a gift universe in the mouth!

2) Don’t be naive about God... God will settle for not less than everything!

3) Walk forward when possible...or at least try to get one foot in front of the next!

Don’t be seduced by the lure of absolute freedom. Freedom and meaning lie in obedience to community: community humbles, deflates the ego, puts you into purgatory, and eventually into heaven.

4) Pray...that God will hang on to you!

5) Love...if a life is large enough for love it’s large enough!

6) Accept what you are and fear not, you are inadequate!

7) Don’t mummify...let go, so as not to be pushed!

8) Refuse to take things seriously...call yourself a fool regularly!

9) Stay within the family...you’re on a group outing!

10) Don’t be afraid to go soft...redemption lies in tears!

There are many kinds of martyrdom. Accept the torture of a life of inadequate self-expression. Know there are strings attached. The journey includes family, church, country, and the whole human race. Don’t be seduced by the lure of absolute freedom. Freedom and meaning lie in obedience to community: community humbles, deflates the ego, puts you into purgatory, and eventually into heaven.

Guidelines for the Long Haul - Revisited

RON ROLHEISER, OMI

Daily Homily Podcast & Sunday Homily Video
by Father Thomas Weise

These homily podcasts are easy to access and play on your computer, iPad, or smart phone. Once at the website, click where it says ‘click here to listen.’

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The historical Mary:
Continued from page 7

Her husband, Joseph, seems to have died before Jesus’ public ministry began. We know that Mary herself, however, lived through the time of that ministry (Mark 3:31, John 2:1-12). Her separation from Jesus as he went out to preach was undoubtedly painful for her. In a passage that has always embarrassed Mariologists, Mark tells us that Jesus’ family thought him mad (Mark 3:21); but what mother, upon seeing her son challenge Roman authority rather dauntlessly (this often meant death), might not have said to him, “Are you crazy?”

John tells us that Mary was present at Jesus’ crucifixion (John 19:25-27), though the other evangelists are silent about this. At that time she was probably close to 50 years old, well beyond the age at which most women in that era died. She lived on at least into the early days of the church. Luke states that she was in the upper room in Jerusalem with the 11 remaining apostles “who devoted themselves to prayer, together with the women... and with his brothers” (Acts 1:14). The lovely paintings and icons of Pentecost that picture the Spirit descending on Mary and the 11 apostles hardly do justice to Luke’s text, which indicates that she was there with a community of 120 persons.

After Pentecost, Mary disappears from history. The rest of her life is shrouded in legend. As Elizabeth Johnson points out, an active imagination easily wonders: What memories, hopes and strategies did she share with the men and women of the new, Spirit-filled Jerusalem community? Did she live on peacefully in Jerusalem as an old woman, revered as the mother of the Messiah? Was she quiet or outspoken? Did others come to her for advice? Did she express her views about the inclusion of the Gentiles? We do not know. It would seem that she died as a member of the Jerusalem community, though a later tradition portrays her as moving to Ephesus in the company of the apostle John.

**Why focus on the historical Mary?** There are three reasons. First, her history brings her nearer to us. While there is an alluring quality to the gorgeous Madonnas depicted by medieval artists, this first-century Jewish woman living in a peasant village was much more like billions of people today than the women in those beautiful paintings. Though her culture was quite different from that of our 21st-century post-industrial society, it was not unlike that of women in thousands of villages as they exist today in Asia, Africa and Latin America. Her daily life and labor were hard. With Joseph, she raised Jesus in oppressive circumstances, struggling to pay the taxes by which the rich became richer at the expense of the poor. As with the vast majority of people in world history, most of Mary’s difficult life went unrecorded.

Second, her holiness lies in persistent, faithful listening to God’s word. Even though in canonizing saints the church has customarily emphasized martyrdom, asceticism, renunciation of family and worldly possessions, lifelong dedication to the poor, today we recognize more and more that holiness consists mainly in persevering fidelity in the midst of everyday life. This is what the “historical Mary” exemplifies. As events unfolded around her, often to her surprise, she had to figure out continually what God was asking of her. She looked for the word of God in people and events, listened to that word, pondered it and then acted on it. She doubtless repeated again and again what she said to Gabriel, “Be it done to me according to your word” (Luke 1:38). Day by day she lived a “pilgrimage of faith,” to use the words of Vatican II. She found energy in her trust in the God of Israel and in her solidarity with the growing community of Christians who experienced the promise of life in the death and resurrection of her son.

Third, today we recognize Mary’s Magnificat as a rousing freedom song of the poor. Mary, the lead singer, epitomizes the lowly of Israel, those marginalized by society, for whom there is “no room in the inn” (Luke 2:7). God is her only hope, and she sings the divine praises with exuberant confidence. While it may be difficult to imagine this revolutionary hymn coming from the mouth of a Madonna painted by Caravaggio, it is easy to envision it issuing from the lips of the historical Mary.

Galilee was the spawning ground for first-century revolts against a repressive occupying power and its taxes. The Christians of Jerusalem, who with Mary were the nucleus of the post-resurrection church, suffered from real hunger and poverty (see Gal 2:10; 1 Cor 16:1-4; Rom 15:25-26). With the members of this community, Mary believed that God can turn the world upside down; that the last are first and the first last; the humble are exalted, the exalted humbled; those who save their life lose it, those who lose their life save it; those who mourn will rejoice, those who laugh will cry; the mighty are cast down from their thrones, the lowly lifted up. She and they were convinced that in God’s kingdom the poor are first, and the prostitutes, publicans and outcasts of society eat at the table of the Lord.

The historical Mary experienced poverty, oppression and the execution of her son. Her faith is deeply rooted in that context. Before the omnipotent God, she recognizes her own “lowly estate.” She is not among the world’s powerful. She is simply God’s “maid servant.” But she believes that nothing is impossible for God. In the Magnificat she sings confidently that God rescues life from death, joy from sorrow, light from darkness.

Dietrich Bonhoeffer, a theologian-martyr executed by the Nazis, spoke these words in a sermon during Advent 1933:

**The Canticle of Mary**

My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord; my spirit rejoices in God my savior. For he has looked upon his handmaid’s lowliness; behold, from now on will all ages call me blessed. The Mighty One has done great things for me, and holy is his name. His mercy is from age to age to those who fear him. He has shown might with his arm, dispersed the arrogant of mind and heart. He has thrown down the rulers from their thrones but lifted up the lowly. He has helped Israel his servant, remembering his mercy, according to his promise to our fathers, to Abraham and to his descendants forever.

*Luke 1:46-55*

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