

# FMA

# FOCUS



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Franciscan Mission Associates  
Mt. Vernon, N.Y. 10551

Missions in Guatemala - Honduras - El Salvador, Central America

## Virtue: I BELIEVE

"What do you believe in?" It is an important question, for faith and belief can change lives.

St. Thomas Aquinas and St. Augustine, each chose a simple prayer to summarize their teaching about belief. It is the prayer of a desperate parent in St. Mark's Gospel.

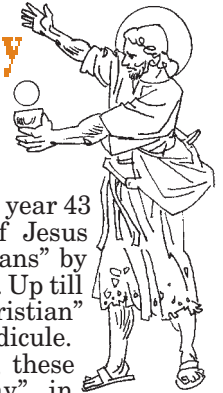
Having tried all else, and with his boy in tow, he pushes through a crowd to reach Jesus. He asks "if" Jesus can help his son, demon-possessed since birth. "If?" Jesus asks, quietly answering, "...everything is possible to a man who trusts."

"I do believe!" The young father cries. "Help my unbelief."

The compassionate Jesus commands the demon to leave. Then, shielding the exhausted boy from curious onlookers, Jesus gently helps him to his feet, sound and healthy. (Mark 9: 16-27)

Why not make this powerful prayer a daily "must" – ***I believe. Help my unbelief.*** ■

## Teaching the Way in Early Days of the Church



It was not until the year 43 AD that followers of Jesus were labeled "Christians" by the pagans of Antioch. Up till then, the term "Christian" was spoken only in ridicule.

So who were they, these people of "The Way" in Antioch, in Damascus, and Greece and Rome?

Originally from the mother Church in Jerusalem, they were Jews who found fulfillment of their faith in Jesus, God and Man. Along with local people who asked for baptism.

Clearly pagan leadership saw them as more than fools. They were viewed as a menace to civic order and control. They were:

- People who insisted on living out their beliefs in the world, the marketplace.
- Preaching beliefs like "love... forgiveness" as actual power in life?
- Stepping in with food for the hungry, shelter for the homeless, care of widows and orphans...attending to and even curing the sick?

• And those Sunday gatherings where they worshiped a Jewish carpenter whom they believed rose from the dead, and moreover, was still with them?

People of The Way, to be sure, were considered very dangerous.

And as for these Christians, back home, in the mother church based in Jerusalem – things were much the same.

How then, did the Church survive, how did it find a way to instruct newcomers and sustain the faith and belief of its baptized members?

It all happened during teachable moments of the great continuous Easter Sunday – the weekly Sunday gathering for liturgy, the Mass.

✽ Most already knew the ritual. As Jews, these people memorized many of the Bible stories. But now they began to see in such Scripture treasures earlier prophecies referencing Jesus.

✽ They were anxious to listen to the Letters from the Apostles, as the Gospel spread to all parts of the known world.

✽ They longed to hear once again teachings of Jesus from the Gospels – by force of habit, committing many of these to memory. Often, the Gospel stories would be first-hand, since the Apostles and Disciples could give eyewitness.

✽ They would surely share the Lord's Prayer – the perfect prayer Jesus Himself had taught them.

✽ Reverently they obeyed the Lord's command to do as he did – in the blessing, the breaking of the bread, and reception of the Communion Cup. The Mystery of receiving the Risen Lord in

the bread and wine, now the Body and Blood of the Savior.

✽ There would be hymns and prayers of praise at appropriate points in the service. Sung prayers that reviewed older beliefs tracing back thousands of years in Covenant with God, plus the new Mysteries, as revealed by Jesus.

✽ Then, with a blessing, the People of the Way would be dismissed to go back out into the world – to their homes, their work, their business. There, by their example in living their own lives, to bring others to The Way.

✽ Likewise, they were commissioned to bring the spirit of this celebration to those unable to attend: the sick, the imprisoned.

Their goal always: To Remember, To Celebrate, and To Believe.

Our great prayer of belief which we pray at Mass on Sunday comes from these early efforts to define faith and beliefs. It is the Nicean Creed, approved by the Ecumenical Council of Nicea in 325 AD. Short and simple, it is easily memorized.

***We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is seen and unseen ...***

Take a moment to pray this ancient prayer. Especially when you wonder how much we, too, need to be people of "The Way" today. ■

**Visit us on the web**  
**[franciscanmissionassoc.org](http://franciscanmissionassoc.org)**

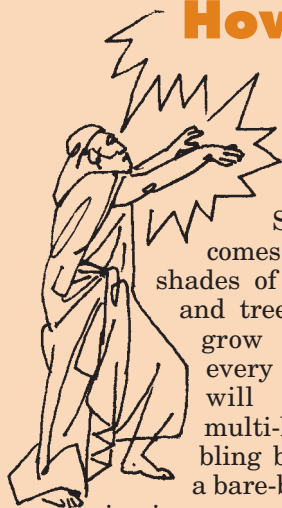


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# How Paul Saw the Light



A tinge of double-edged sadness glazes the mind as September comes. For all those shades of green in grass and trees and hillsides grow more muted every day. Soon they will all drift into multi-layers of crumbling browns. Leaving a bare-boned landscape in view.

Yet, this too is welcome. For that stark view offers the first clear vision of the neighborhood, the hills, the riverside, the world itself — as it really is.

Saint Paul must have experienced similar tinges, many times multiplied, following his famous fall, blinding, and rebirth — his conversion.

The Acts of the Apostles describe the scene. Then named Saul, a zealous and powerful pharisee, journeyed full speed along the road from Jerusalem to Damascus. Warrants in his hand from the high priest, and “breathing murderous threats,” Saul was determined to arrest and bring back anyone he might find, man or woman, living according to “The Way” (converts to Christ and the Gospel).

And in an instant, just outside Damascus, life changed forever. For Saul, for the world. A brilliant “light from the sky suddenly flashed about him.” As he fell to the ground, a voice loud enough to leave Saul’s followers speechless with fear, addressed him by name, asked piercing questions, and gave an identity: “I am Jesus, the one you are persecuting ...”

Saul the fanatical pharisee, stood up a blind man, ready to do the will of God — and became Paul, Apostle to the Gentiles (Acts: 9: 1-19).

Following three days of prayer and fasting, his vision was restored by a terrified Damascus follower of the Jesus named Ananias. He had been commanded by Jesus in a vision, to get over his fear, to go and pray over Saul.

Later that same day, Paul emerged from baptismal waters, a man who now saw the world through new eyes.

That historic tale reminds us that we need Jesus to help us keep focused on our goals, and to understand our mission as Christians.

One good exercise: Open your eyes the next time you go to Mass. Give yourself time to look around. Pray and meditate on one place in the building: the Baptismal Font, the Table of the Lord, the Crucifix, the Statues or Icons of the saints.

Chose one each time you go to church. The only norm: Look with the eyes of faith. See the Icon or Crucifix beyond the wood or paint or metal. Look deeply, to see the belief that each represents.

Jesus will help you, as he helped Paul. He will guide you to see with new eyes what God wishes for you and the world today. ■

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**In every time and place, the Church is called to grow in unity through constant conversion to Christ, whose saving work is proclaimed by the Successors of the Apostles and celebrated in the sacraments.**

**Pope Benedict XVI**

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# BELIEF IN THE SCRIPTURES: ST. JUDE

Most of us are very aware that Jesus was well versed in Scripture. Countless times, Jesus quoted from the Jewish Bible as he preached, wove parables, dined with friends, celebrated and mourned.

Undoubtedly as a youth, the young Jesus accompanied Joseph as he walked to his local synagogue. There, he would listen and learn, as the rabbis and men of the community read and commented on the verses from the Bible. And sang the Psalms.

As would Jesus' playmates and cousins, youngsters like him, who also accompanied their own fathers and brothers on the Sabbath.

For the reading of the Bible, the Word of God – in large, hand-scripted scrolls – was the center of Jewish worship. As it was the heart of Jewish prayer life at home.

And at home, prayer and hymns had to come from memory. The sacred scrolls were kept in the synagogue, with the rabbis.

So Jesus the God-Man grew to manhood, with head and heart and song well-tuned to the Word of God.

Most of us are haunted by Jesus' outcry as he hung from the cross, a prayer we hear at least on Good Friday: "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" These are the first lines of Psalm 22. Like most of the Hebrew Scriptures, these words would have been etched into Jesus mind, heart and soul – just by years of repetition and frequent prayer. It is not surprising, then, that such a prayer cried out of Jesus' brutalized body and broken heart, with his last breath.

What we often fail to realize, however, is how much like him the Apostles must have been. They, too, could

breathe with the very words of Scripture, the Word of God. It was part of their heart and soul, their upbringing, their family life, their life as Jewish men.

St. Jude, Apostle and Martyr, may well have been among the young boys who walked to and from Sabbath services with the child and adolescent Jesus. For Jude is believed to have been a cousin of the Lord, from the same family as St. James (called "the Lesser" and identified as a son of Alpheus).

And along with knowledge of the Old Testament, Jude and the other Apostles preached the Good News of Jesus' Gospel – with much committed to memory as they listened to and helped the Messiah with his ministry.

Today we can imitate these great saints by believing in their power to intercede for us at the throne of God. These friends, these apostles, as well as the other saints and martyrs are heroes – men and women to follow and believe in through our Scriptures, the Old and New Testament we hear proclaimed at Mass. ■

## REMEMBRANCE

**You can continue to carry on your own good work for the missions and the people they serve by remembering them in your will. To do so, simply make a bequest of whatever you wish to: FRANCISCAN MISSION ASSOCIATES, Mount Vernon, NY 10551. If you wish additional information about how to do this, please feel free to contact:**

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Franciscan Mission Associates  
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# To Whom Did St. Anthony Listen?

The gift of faith is nurtured in us by listening; a creative, prayerful and active discipline. This is the listening skill that God worked hard to bring to the Hebrew people, as they were invited to make a Covenant with the Almighty. It was the same skill which allowed them (and their Prophets) to hear God's promise of the Messiah.

We recall that before his Ascension, Christ instructed his followers to "go... and make disciples of all nations... Teach them to observe everything I have commanded you." (Matthew 28: 19-20)

We are all living proof that the Disciples did just that – but first, they were schooled by the God-Man himself in the art of listening. They had to listen if they were to learn in those three historic years of Christ's ministry on earth.

Recall the rule of silence, that classic "quiet" hallmark of monastic life. Not quiet for quiet's sake. Rather, it is silence as respect for and courtesy to others, as well as one's self. The result: silence frees the monk to hear the voice of God speaking in his heart.

True listening, as the Church teaches, is far from the paused, passive politeness that we call "listening" in our culture. Prayerful listening clears the way for us to "hear" others, up to and including God Himself.

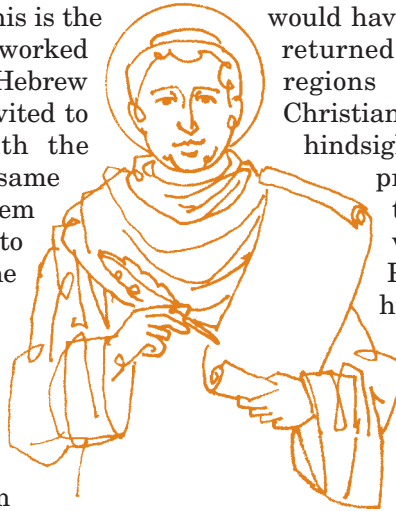
Even in the 13th Century, St. Anthony of Padua was acclaimed

as a great preacher. He converted thousands, settled arguments that would have grown into wars, and returned whole cities and regions to the practice of Christian peace and justice. In hindsight, we can see how God prepared Anthony for these ministries even while a young cleric in Portugal. There God led him to seek greater solitude and quiet, the better to hear and understand God's promptings in his heart, mind and life.

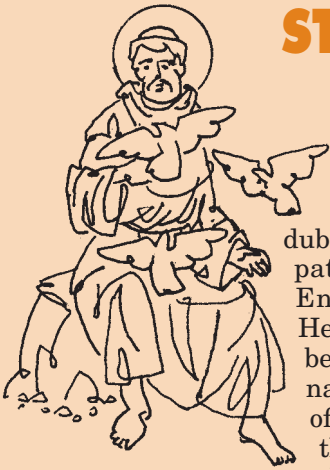
Anthony brought these monastic skills to his Franciscan vocation. Once settled in as a friar, how did Anthony, hear the will of God for him? Certainly by listening to his life's great love, the Holy Word of God, in the Bible. And surely by listening to his superiors, his friends, other preachers - and to Jesus speaking to Anthony in the quiet of his own soul.

We can best learn to find the will of God for ourselves by imitating Anthony and developing our own prayerful listening skills.

This fall, try putting it at the top of your life-long learning list. Ask St. Anthony's help. And don't hesitate to ask your pastor or some other trusted guide for help and direction. Then, you too will be able to be more aware of the voice of the Holy Spirit. The better to share your faith and speak up for it, when the time presents itself. Perhaps beginning in your own family life around the dinner table. ■



# ST. FRANCIS - PATRON OF THE ENVIRONMENT



Today, popular acclamation dubs St. Francis patron of the Environment. He had earlier been formally named Patron of Ecology by the late Pope John Paul

II. However you look at it, there appears to be plenty of work ahead for St. Francis.

It may well be among the saint's greatest challenges, simply because most of us will be calling on him.

When we speak of the environment, we are talking about respect for and love of God and all creation, as well as responsible stewardship.

Addressing these issues in the most simple words some 800 years ago, St. Francis was not just ahead of his time. He was a leader for all times.

As recently as the April 2008 visit by Pope Benedict XVI to the United States, we and the whole world were reminded of just what is at stake.

Speaking to the General Assembly of the United Nations on Friday, April 18, Pope Benedict cited "protection of the environment, of resources and of the climate" among the issues of peace and justice screaming out for long overdue worldwide action.

At the basis of any such "international action to preserve the environment and to protect various forms of life on earth," Pope Benedict said, is the rediscovery of "the authentic

image of creation." He added, "This never requires a choice to be made between science and ethics." Rather, he said, all international leaders should "act jointly and... show a readiness to work in good faith, respecting the law, and promoting solidarity with the weakest regions of the planet."

Again, because God has entrusted stewardship of His creation to us. With the Lord's help, it is not too big a task. And with the prayerful intercession of St. Francis, we will find it easier.

In the two-year period between 1224-1226, St. Francis, while in declining health, composed "The Canticle of the Creatures." A poem he liked to sing, its simple words were written in the Italian language of his day, with no hidden meanings. Among his insights:

All praise be yours, my Lord,  
in all your creatures,  
especially Sir Brother Sun...  
for Sister Moon and the Stars...  
for Brother Wind and the Air  
and every kind of weather...  
for Sister Water...for Brother Fire...  
for Sister Earth, our mother who  
feeds us, rules us  
and produces all sorts of fruit  
and colored flowers and herbs...  
Praise and bless my Lord.

In this fall season, you may want to pick up a copy of St. Francis' writings and read the whole "Canticle." It is short enough to be read aloud, indeed, prayed at the dinner table. An easy way to talk with the family about stewardship of the environment. ■

# Director's Letter

Fr. Robert, O.F.M.

FRANCISCAN FRIARS/P.O. BOX 598/MOUNT VERNON, N.Y. 10551-0598

TEL. AREA CODE: 914 664-5604



Dear Friend,

Pope Benedict came to the United States for two reasons, he told us:

1) To visit the Church in America, 200 years since the first diocese in the country, Baltimore, Maryland, was founded. He called the occasion “a time of reflection on the past and above all of reflection on the future, on how to respond to the great challenges of our time, in the present and in view of the future.”

2) To visit to the United Nations where 60 years have passed since the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. This he called a “time for reflection, the time to resume awareness of this important stage in history,” when various different cultural traditions converged and recognized man as a subject of rights above all.

So there was more to this pilgrimage than appeared in the general press and on TV which discussed, security, pageantry, and pomp. There was a spiritual reason.

How did he accomplish both? Much the way Christ did in the beginning. He spoke to the crowds and he listened to the spirit.

He encouraged the Bishops at the shrine with a challenge to their preaching when he said: “People today need to be reminded of the ultimate purpose of their lives. They need to recognize that implanted within them is a deep thirst for God.”

Then twice he spoke to us: the citizens of America.

In Washington he spoke of our future:

*I pray that all Catholics will reaffirm their unity in the apostolic faith, to offer their contemporaries a convincing account of the hope which inspires them and to be renewed in missionary zeal for the extension of God's Kingdom. The world needs this witness!*

In New York he challenged us:

*To pray fervently for the coming of the Kingdom; being constantly alert for the signs of its presence, and working for its growth in every sector of society. It means overcoming every separation between faith and life, and countering false gospels of freedom and happiness.*

He came as the spirit of the Lord to urge us to look to the future with confidence and welcome the new age.

May God bless you, your prayers and sacrifices for peace.

Gratefully yours,

*Fr. Robert, OFM*  
Fr. Robert, O.F.M.

# FRANCISCAN INSTITUTE FOR THE BLIND

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*A happy story from Central America by Fr. Francis, O.F.M.*

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You see lots of smiling faces here, at the Franciscan Institute for the Blind which next year will celebrate 20 years of help for the rehabilitation of the blind and visually impaired in Tegucigalpa and Comayaguela in Honduras, Central America.

Founded by the friars, in particular Fr. Nery, O.F.M., in 1989, it serves not only the big cities but also the rural areas of Olancho, El Paraiso and Choluteca.

There were lots of happy smiles last December when the cornerstone for the new building of the Institute, called Infracnovi, was inaugurated with blessings and a party afterwards. Funds for the new building were donated by a benefactor in memory of his mother and sister.

First let me tell you what they do, then I'll introduce the characters who were present. But the pictures tell you more than I ever could about the results they get.

Perhaps the best picture is a teacher teaching a little boy or girl. Because there you see the future. A smiling child, a happy teacher, and at the end of the day a happy parent. There are some 51 volunteer teachers from 6 Schools who give precious time to the students.

For the very young - between the ages of 0 to 6; pictures and blocks they can feel and know about... even before they learn to talk. There is professional help for teachers to learn early detection. For these children are handicapped because they don't see very well - not because they don't think too well.

Music is one of the best ways to grab a child's attention. So you hear songs, hymns and the lilting voices of many who use song to communicate with the world outside.

For older ones we offer bakery tasks and knitting classes to which parents are invited so the children can work with their families

and sell things by themselves to others in their neighborhood.

Something unique is learning to transcribe school and university texts into Braille, using "tactile image" machines, typewriters, speaking books, tape recorders - as they are introduced to all the great things there are now for those who need help to see.

In just one year almost 4,000 children took part in prevention and detection of eye problems; 252 got glasses; 100% of the users have at least one teaching aid and half have professional assistance with specific disabilities.

But I almost forgot about the celebration (you can see the happy pictures).

Oh, it was a great day. A band. Speeches. Laughter. Songs. A representative for the mayor was there and thanked the Franciscans for all the help they gave to his citizens. And especially how much it means to have the services of this great institution.

Fr. Robert, O.F.M., the provincial joined with Fr. Nery, O.F.M., who is there almost every day, to bless and lay the cornerstone. Fr. Raphael, O.F.M., and Fr. Patrick, O.F.M., joined in the festivities. ■





# A BLESSING FOR A PRIEST

*Fr. Guy, O.F.M., tells of a surprise blessing he received*

It was about one week before Christmas. I drove up to a filling station in Sonsonate, a city in El Salvador, Central America. As the tank was being filled, a ten-year-old boy came up to me. I was sitting in the front seat.

He held up a bag of candies and said: "Sir, please buy me some candy."

I asked how much; he said three for 20 cents. I was thinking it over and he said: "I haven't eaten all day."

As I reached into my pocket to buy the candy another very poor boy who usually sells me lollipops came up to me too.

Looking at both boys and then at the first one I said: "I hope you're not exaggerating or telling a lie. Lying is sin, isn't it?"

Then I bought the candy and the lollipop. The boy who sold the lollipop asked me if I were a priest? I told him: "Yes."

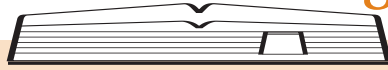
Looking me right in the eyes, with all respect and sincerity he said: "Padre, Dios te bendiga. (Father, God bless you).

That made my day. A poor, working boy giving me his blessing. What a beautiful gift.

Then I remembered another poor, little baby; the infant Jesus, also gave His blessing to all the world when He was born in a manger in Bethlehem. And I smiled. ■



# Words Worth Noting



*Pleasure is short, punishment eternal; suffering is small, glory without measure.*

St. Francis

*Exaggeration is a blood relative to falsehood and nearly as blameable.*

Hosea Ballou

*Let us believe neither half of the good people tell us of ourselves; nor half of the evil they say of others.*

P. T. Barnum

*Humility does not consist in ignorance of truth. If a man is above the average height of men, he cannot help knowing it.*

Cardinal Manning

*Every major question in history is a religious question. Religion has more effect in molding life than nationalism or a common language.*

Hillare Belloc

*There is no peace without justice and no justice without forgiveness.*

John Paul II

*God save all here, barrin' the cat.*

Irish Blessing

*Liturgy is like a strong tree whose beauty is derived from the continuous renewal of its leaves, but whose strength comes from the old trunk, with solid roots in the ground.*

Paul VI

*I have one rule – attention. The students give me theirs and I give them mine.*

Sr. Evangelist RSM

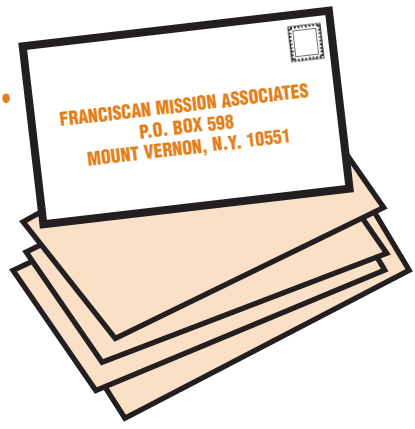
*Surgery is always second best. If you can do something else, it is better.*

Dr. John Kirkland, surgeon

*To question a wise man is the beginning of wisdom.*

German Proverb

# Our Readers gladly write...



Dear Father,

I wish to thank St. Jude for answering my prayers again and for favors received again. St. Jude is truly a great, powerful and understanding saint. He will have my devotion always.

Thank you again,  
D. E.  
Birmingham, AL

Dear Father,

All the years I've been devoted to the Franciscans; I've been meaning to tell you why! Many years ago (30) our son who was 10 was hit by a car in our neighborhood and died then and there; but not before something wonderful happened, in this terrible event. There were 3 Franciscan priests returning from summer classes at La Salle college here in PA.

They came upon the accident and stayed with Kevin (our son) right in the middle of police and ambulance, etc. They called us right away and told us. It made us feel better and special in God's eyes. They said Mass at our request. We did keep in touch but they transferred and we lost touch. Our faith in the Franciscans and St. Anthony has never ceased. God Bless all of you.

B. C.  
Philadelphia, PA

Dear Fr. Robert,

Thank you for the medallion and Scroll of Father Pamphilus Da Magliano.

Enclosed is \$50.00 for the works of the mission.

Sincerely,  
A. R.  
Sumter, SC

Dear Father Robert,

I prayed to Our Lady of Lourdes to intercede for me and ask her beloved son, Jesus, to help a relative of mine sell his house and get the price he needed and let the act of sale go smoothly. I am so grateful to Our Lady of Lourdes for answering my prayers. Don't ever get discouraged if your prayers are not answered immediately, as she hears you and your prayers will be answered in due time. Thank you again, Our Lady of Lourdes and Jesus her Son.

S. D.  
River Ridge, LA

Dear Fr. Robert:

I've just completed your June issue of FOCUS. How valuable it is to my spiritual life. As a cursillista, evangelization is a real commitment... so your articles fit like a glove. Thank you and I shall pray with you for Fr. Guillermo and the people who must miss him.

In Christ,  
A.S.  
Jacksonville Beach, FL

# BACK TO THE BIBLE: A USEFUL PROJECT

Adults of all ages are acknowledging that education is a life-long process. One that seems to be explosive. There are courses, seminars, and just plain fun sessions for everything. Anything from tours of historic buildings in the community, to opportunities to learn oil painting.

And isn't the fall season the perfect time to consider returning to school as an adult, in particular to the school of faith? For the Church tells us repeatedly, faith is indeed a life-long partner.

You may already have your textbook, perhaps sitting on a bedside table. Namely, your Bible. As for school grounds, you often need look no further than your parish. Today many parishes offer bible study in one form or another, because so much of our prayer and liturgy make frequent reference to the Bible.

And while the parish may not have a sign on the grounds advertising a "Bible Study" session, as some other Christian churches do, don't be discouraged. What you're looking for may go by a different name. For example, Preparation for the Readings for the following Sunday.

In many communities that host a religious congregation provincial house, Scripture Study may well be one of the programs advertised for the fall season, and open to the public.

Opportunities also abound on the home front, with help from your Catholic press. Magazines and newspapers, increasingly carry columns that help readers deepen their knowledge of the Bible, one topic at a time.

Most such programs will take no more than an hour of your time. So if there is a study group in your parish, why not drop in for a few sessions,

just to see if it meets your needs. You can bet that the pastor or whoever is facilitating the session will want to know what you are looking for and how you may be "served."

Think of the Bible as your inheritance, - because it is. The Bible is far more than a book to be left on the shelf for reference now and then. The Bible is God's Holy Word, inspired by the Holy Spirit, and gathered carefully by the Church under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. The living Word of the living God, who nurtures us in Word and Sacrament.

Especially important for Christians: the Bible has preserved the Gospels - the story, mission, and history of the God-Man Jesus Christ who came to teach us personally about the mysteries we could never know on our own... Our Lord who lived and died and in Resurrection, dwells with us still, in Word and in Sacrament.

How well do you know him? How much more can you learn about him?

The Bible will help you answer those questions. Begin this fall to upgrade your faith life with this Holy Book. ■

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**As this year also marks the bicentenary of the elevation of the founding see of Baltimore to an Archdiocese, it gives me an opportunity to recall with admiration and gratitude the life and ministry of John Carroll, the first Bishop of Baltimore - a worthy leader of the Catholic community in your newly independent nation.**

**Pope Benedict XVI**

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# TIME TO REVIVE THE ROSARY?

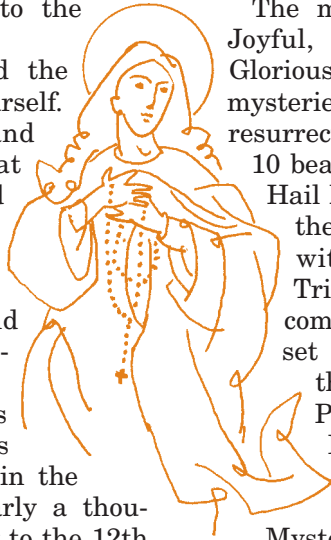
Whatever happened to the Rosary?

You may have heard the question, or asked it yourself. The answer is short and sweet: The Rosary, that combined mental and vocal prayer dealing with the mysteries of the Lord's life, is still here, for almost a thousand years now. And still growing.

Often referred to as the Holy Rosary, this prayer has been in use in the Western Church for nearly a thousand years, surely dating to the 12th Century. The format used today has been in almost continuous use since the 15th Century.

For the ordinary people of the Middle Ages, when the Rosary began to take root as a popular devotion, their ideal was monastic prayer. This was a prayer centered on the Divine Office - a celebration of all 150 Psalms. But very few people could read. Fewer still would ever have access to a Bible. But the basic prayers of the Church were easily committed to memory, and thus formed the framework of the Rosary. There were three:

- The Lord's Prayer, the Our Father or "Pater."
- The Hail Mary, or "Ave" which begins with the salutation of the Archangel Gabriel to Mary at the Annunciation.
- And the doxology of praise to God, popularly known as the "Glory Be to the Father."



The meditations looked to the Joyful, the Sorrowful, and the Glorious Mysteries - keyed to the mysteries of Jesus life, death, and resurrection. Each decade or set of 10 beads, allowed for praying 10 Hail Mary prayers, preceded by the Lord's Prayer, and closing with the Doxology of the Trinity. Each set of mysteries completed 50 "Ave's." All three set of mysteries totaled 150, the same number as total Psalms prayed in the Divine Office.

The late Pope John Paul II expanded the Mysteries, based on Scripture texts celebrating the Lord's ministries. He also encouraged the faithful to dig deep into the Bible and pray other such themes. He popularized the Luminous Mysteries.

And so the Rosary is richer as a form of prayer today.

Remember: Even if one cannot always pray the Rosary with others, this prayer is easily adapted to daily life - as it was in the Middle Ages. People of that era had no measuring cups or clocks, so they used the time it took to pray a succession of "Ave's" or "Pater's" as a way to mark the passing of time. For example: the time it took to cook an egg (2 Pater's, 3 Ave's).

Perhaps as the microwave clocks away the steaming of your vegetables some night, you might say your own Our Father and Hail Mary, this time offering them for the hungry, the sad, or the distressed people in today's world. ■

# VOCATIONS - A WEEK OF SAINTS

Take a look at a Catholic calendar when you have a chance. Surely in any given week, you will find at least one saint, or one Feast Day that will speak to you in ways that will be important to your own faith pilgrimage.

For example, the 24th week of Ordinary Time, this year September 14 through 20. Each saint or Feast Day celebration has much to teach us about life-long growth in faith. Included:

- September 14 - The Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross, sometimes called the Triumph of the Cross. Since this is a major Feast of the Lord, it takes the place of the 24th Sunday of the Year liturgy. Celebrated in some form for 1800 years, this Feast dates back to the completion of the Basilica of the Resurrection in Jerusalem, 335 AD.

- September 15 - The Memorial of Our Lady of Sorrows. The Gospel is taken from St. John 19: 25-27, painting a moving portrait of Mary, steadfast at the foot of Jesus' Cross. There she understood at last the prophecy of Simeon, that a sword would one day pierce her own heart.

- September 16 - Memorial of St. Cornelius, Pope/Martyr, and St. Cyprian, Archbishop of Carthage in North Africa, and Martyr. Both worked together, struggling to steer the Church through turbulent times of severe persecution, superstition and the darkness of pure evil. St. Cornelius died in exile outside of



Rome when the population blamed Christians for the outbreak of plague. St. Cyprian was martyred in the presence of his own people.

- September 17 - An optional memorial of St. Robert Bellarmine, a 16th Century Jesuit who was created a Cardinal and Archbishop of Capua in Italy. This priest was a gifted scholar, known all over Europe as a theologian and defender of the faith.

- September 19 - An optional memorial of St. Januarius, Bishop and Martyr who led the Diocese of Benevento during the persecutions of the Roman Emperor Diocletian. He was beheaded during that emperor's reign, and is the patron of Naples.

- September 20 - Memorial of the Korean Martyrs, Andrew Kim Taegon, priest and martyr; Paul Chong Hasang and Companions, Martyrs. They were among 103 martyrs who gave their lives for the faith in the 19th Century. Records tell us most were laity: men and women, children, youth, and even the elderly. They were descendants of a largely laity-founded church dating back to the 17th Century. Fr. Andrew was their first Korean-born priest and pastor.

All of these saints and martyrs inspire us to pray for vocations to the priesthood and religious life. And to a fuller realization of the vocation of lay Catholics in spreading the good news of the Gospel in today's world. ■

# Solemn Novena Schedule Fall 2008

All year round Franciscan Mission Associates conducts a regular schedule of spiritual and devotional exercises in which benefactors are invited to take part. During early Fall the Solemn Novena schedule is:

September 2-10/11-19 .....	St. Jude the Apostle
September 21-29 .....	St. Michael the Archangel
September 26-October 4 .....	St. Francis of Assisi
September 29-October 7 .....	Our Lady of the Rosary
October 7-15 .....	Our Lady of the Rosary
October 28-December 23 .....	9 Tuesdays before Christmas in honor of St. Anthony of Padua

All Franciscan Mission Associates, sponsors, and benefactors are asked to join in prayer for the intentions and petitions of those taking part in the exercises. Please pray also for peace, for our Franciscan missionaries, for the people they serve, for an increase in vocations and for all our associates. Holy Mass is offered each day for all benefactors and for the intentions they request. Kindly forward your petitions for the Novenas scheduled to:

**Father Robert, O.F.M., Franciscan Mission Associates  
PO Box 598, Dept 184, Mount Vernon, NY 10551-0598**

**SPECIAL NOTE: In honor of St. Peregrine**

**Mass and Healing Service - Monday, September 15, 2008 at 7:00 PM**

**Mount Alvernia Retreat House Chapel**

**De Lavergne Ave., Wappingers Falls, NY 12590.**

**TEL# 845-297-5706 — Refreshments following Mass.**

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## VOCATIONS

**The world beckons with Wealth == The Franciscans offer Poverty**

**The world beckons with Sex == The Franciscans urge Chastity**

**The World beckons with Power == The Franciscans say Obedience**

**There is no special requirement but a call from the Lord. In the missions many young people need the special courage to hear God's call and to answer Him.**

**Perhaps you can make a difference, be a new symbol to the World. Certainly, you can pray daily for God's grace to reach those hearts He is calling and help provide devoted brothers, sisters, priests, deacons and religious for Christ's work in today's world.**

**For further information please write Fr. Robert, O.F.M. at  
Franciscan Mission Associates, P.O. Box 598, Dept. 182, Mount Vernon, NY 10551-0598**

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