



The Marian Journal

Keeping members and friends of the
Order of the Most Holy Mary Theotokos informed.

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"The Old Catholic Marianists"

**THE NATIVITY of the LORD – Feast Day December 25.
JOY IS A RESPONSE TO LOVE. In the Christmas mystery,
heaven and earth come together. And although modern Herods
may still confound us, and the Scrooges of the world still oppress
us, we know that love has found us. When we celebrate the birth
of Christ with joy, we can experience a deep centered peace,
renewed courage and a bright vision that makes the year truly
happy.**

Rejoice!

Our Savior has come – Christ the Lord!



The historic record of the birth of Christ can be found in Matthew 1:18-25 and Luke 2:1-20.

Unlike any other baby, the one born that night in Bethlehem was unique in all of history. He was not created by a human father and mother. He had a heavenly pre-existence (John 1:1-3, 14). He is God, the Son—Creator of the universe (Philippians 2:5-11). This is why Christmas is called the incarnation, a word which means "in the flesh." In the birth of Jesus, the eternal, all-powerful and all-knowing Creator came to earth in the flesh.

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Why would God do such a thing? Why would he come as a baby, instead of appearing in power and majesty? Why make himself a true man and live among us, when he knew full well how terribly he would be treated?

It was LOVE! It was necessary, if you are to be saved!

The Bible says:

"This is how God showed His love among us: He sent His one and only Son into the world that we might live through Him. This is love: not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins" (1 John 4:9-10).

"...the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Romans 6:23).

"To all who received Him, to those who believed in His name, He gave the right to become children of God" (John 1:12).

Jesus Christ was God's love gift to the world.

RELIGIONS – Many ways to God? Aren't all religions basically the same?

"When Christians, Jews, Buddhists, and others pray to their god, all of those individuals are actually praying to the same god, but simply using different names for that deity."

—registered opinion of four of every ten American adults (Barna poll)

Are these Americans right or wrong? Mahatma Gandhi of India once said:

"The soul of religion is one, but it is encased in a multitude of forms."

Is this true or false?

"In reality, there is only one religion, the religion of God. This one religion is continually evolving, and each particular religious system represents a stage in the evolution of the whole," claims the Bahá'í faith on its official Web site at bahai.org.

Are the Bahá'ís correct or incorrect? What about the Hindus?

"In whatever way men approach Me, even so do I go to them."
—quoted from the Hindu scripture by Swami Chidananda of Divine Life Society

Is Christianity's claim of uniqueness and exclusivity misleading and baseless? Or is it necessarily true?

Even a cursory examination of comparative belief charts and data quickly reveals that different religions make very different truth claims on a number of even basic issues. And they do so in a definitive manner. In other words, as any knowledgeable student of comparative religions will tell you, every religion—not just Christianity—claims exclusivity.

Here are a few examples:



2014 Feast Days of Mary

***January 1
Solemnity of
Mary, Mother of
God ****

***January 8
Our Lady of
Prompt Succor***

***February 2
Presentation of
the Lord***

***February 11
Our Lady of
Lourdes***

***March 25
Annunciation***

***May 13
Our Lady of
Fatima***

***May 31
Visitation***

***June 27
Our Mother of
Perpetual Help***

***August 15
Assumption ****

Nature of God

- Christianity — Monotheistic, personal
- Buddhism — Monistic, impersonal
- Hinduism — Monistic, polytheistic

Identity of Jesus Christ

- Orthodox Christian — Deity incarnate
- Orthodox Jewish — human only

Dr. Michael Green is an internationally respected author, speaker and scholar. He is currently Senior Research Fellow at Wycliffe Hall, Oxford University, England. He recently authored the text "But Don't All Religions Lead to God?", Navigating the Multi-Faith Maze (Baker Book House, 2002). In this book, Dr. Green writes:

"Jesus is unique among religious leaders in claiming to bring God to our world in His own person and making good that claim by such powerful evidences."

Green says that no other spiritual leader or teacher but Jesus Christ...

1. ...ever claimed to bring God to man
2. ...dealt radically with our wickedness
3. ...broke the final barrier of death
4. ...offers to "live inside" His followers

Apologist and author, C.S. Lewis said that when it comes to the categorical claims of Jesus Christ regarding His Divinity...

There is no half-way house, and there is no parallel in other religions. If you had gone to Buddha and asked him, 'Are you the son of Brahma?' he would have said, 'My son, you are still in the vale of illusion.'

If you had gone to Socrates and asked, 'Are you Zeus?' he would have laughed at you.

If you had gone to Muhammad and asked, 'Are you Allah?' he would first have rent his clothes and then cut off your head."

Sin

- Christian — real moral trespass and condition of indebtedness before a holy, infinite-personal God
- New Age — ignorance; susceptibility to illusion; unprofitable behavior

Crucifixion and Resurrection

- Christian — historic fact
- Islam — deceptive myth

Salvation

- Christian — a gift of God's grace
- Islam — only by observing Pillars
- Scientology — Dianetic counseling

August 22
Queenship of
Mary

September 8
Birth of Mary

September 12
The Most Holy
Name of Mary

September 15 Our
Lady of Sorrows

October 7
Our Lady of the
Rosary

November 21
Presentation of
the Blessed
Virgin Mary

December 8
Immaculate
Conception *

December 12
Our Lady of
Guadalupe

*** Holy day of**
Obligation

The Month of
Mary is May.

The Month of the
Rosary is
October.

The Feast of the
Immaculate Heart
is the Saturday
following the
Second Sunday
after Pentecost.

Again, Dr. Michael Green writes:

“Perhaps the greatest difference of all [among religious views] lies in the Christian assertion that none of us can save ourselves and make ourselves acceptable to God, try as we may: all the other faiths assert that by keeping their teachings a person will be saved, fulfilled or reborn.”

All religions are not the same—Biblical Christianity is absolutely unique among all the religions and philosophies of mankind. Its claim to be necessary for salvation is based squarely on the uniquely powerful evidences for its truth and finality. Actually, true Christianity is not a religion, but a person, Jesus Christ.

“By Him, and for Him, were all things created” (note Colossians 1:16-17).

Thus, Christianity is unique in the following fundamental respects, among many others.

Uniqueness of Christianity

1. Only in the Bible is God revealed as the one eternal, personal Creator, who brought the entire universe into existence by His own Word.

All other religions start with the material universe as the only eternal reality, with their “gods” being essentially personifications of the natural forces which develop the universe into its present form.

On the other hand, the Creator-God of the Bible has all power and is Himself, therefore, not only the One who created the universe but also the One who establishes the basis for human salvation.

2. Christianity alone is centered in the historical events associated with a Person—the birth, death, resurrection, and imminent, glorious return of Jesus Christ.

Other religions are invariably based on the teachings, rather than the acts, of their founders.

3. Jesus Christ alone, of all men in history, has conquered man's greatest enemy—death.

The founders of other religions are all dead and their tombs venerated. The tomb of Christ is empty, and His bodily resurrection from the grave is the best proved fact of all history. The fact that He alone could overcome death demonstrates that He alone has all power. He Himself said,

“I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father but by me” (John 14:6).

4. All other religions of the world are fundamentally just one religion—one of salvation by works. Each religion sets up a particular set of religious rites, of commands and restrictions, and of ethical principles to follow, and then teaches that if a man does these things he will be saved. The human origin of each of these systems is indicated by the fact that each is humanly attainable.

The Bible, however, sets its moral and ethical standard as the very holiness and perfection of God Himself, and demands nothing less than this for salvation. Obviously, no man would invent a standard which was utterly impossible for any man to keep.

***The First
Saturday of each
Month is also
dedicated to
Marian Devotions.***



***The Christmas
Story of the Birth
of Jesus -
Paraphrased from
the Bible:***

***This Christmas
story gives a
biblical account
of the events
surrounding the
birth of Jesus
Christ. The
Christmas story
is paraphrased
from the New
Testament books
of Matthew and
Luke in the Bible.***

References:

***Matthew 1:18-25;
Matthew 2:1-12;
Luke 1:26-38;
Luke 2:1-20.***

***The Conception
of Jesus Foretold:***

5. The man Christ Jesus, alone of all men who ever lived, maintained in every respect a life of perfect holiness and full obedience to the Father, thus demonstrating that He was the God-Man. He then died for the sins of all men and thus can offer full pardon and His own nature of perfect holiness to anyone who receives Him.

Christ alone offers salvation by grace alone, to be received only through faith in Him.

To the one who truly believes on Him, He then gives through the Holy Spirit a new nature, enabling that one to live a life pleasing to God.

There is no mere "religion" in all the world like this. Jesus Christ is the world's Creator, and its only true Redeemer.

"Neither is there salvation in any other; for there is none other name under heaven, given among men, whereby we must be saved" (Acts 4:12).

Mary: More Than a Minor Role in the Christmas Story



By Tiffany P.

In many non-Catholic Christian traditions, the time of year has arrived in which it is deemed acceptable to remember Mary, the woman who gave birth to Christ in a barn and laid him to sleep in a manger. Despite year-round condemnation of the use of statues to remember people and events in Church history, nativity scenes are being put on display in front yards and fireplace mantles, featuring small figurines of angels, the three wise men, Infant Jesus, and even St. Mary and St. Joseph.

As a way of disassociating themselves with what they perceive as an idolatrous focus on Mary, many of our Protestant brethren have retreated to the other end of the extreme, limiting Mary's mention only to Christmastime. Even during, her role is portrayed as minor. Many evangelical Protestant Christmas plays will

Mary, a virgin, was living in Galilee of Nazareth and was engaged to be married to Joseph, a Jewish carpenter. An angel visited her and explained to her that she would conceive a son by the power of the Holy Spirit. She would carry and give birth to this child and she would name him Jesus.

At first Mary was afraid and troubled by the angel's words. Being a virgin, Mary questioned the angel, "How will this be?" The angel explained that the child would be God's own Son and, therefore, "nothing is impossible with God." Humbled and in awe, Mary believed the angel of the Lord and rejoiced in God her Savior.

Surely Mary reflected with wonder on the words found in Isaiah 7:14

focus their attention on the angels, shepherds, and the three wise men as the lead roles, while Mary is portrayed by an actress wearing robes, sitting silently in the barn holding an infant—or sitting at a distance away from the infant who lays in the manger. There is little mention of the events leading up to this birth, such as her visit with Elizabeth, who upon noticing the presence of Jesus with Mary says, "*Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the child you will bear*" (Lk. 1:42); as such, there is little depiction of Mary's proclamation in response, "*My soul glorifies the Lord and my Spirit rejoices in God my Savior, for he has been mindful of the humble state of His servant. **From now on, all generations will call me blessed***" (Lk. 1: 46-48).

However, the small role Mary plays around Christmas time is very generous in comparison to the amount of attention given to the Blessed Mother throughout the rest of the year, despite the focus on other Biblical women who serve as godly examples, such as Esther, Leah, or Sarah. This raises the question for these Sola Scriptura Protestants, where in the Bible is their backing for this purposeful discarding of Jesus' Mother? Though I was taught to back everything up with Scripture alone in my own evangelical Protestant days, it never occurred to me to find in Scripture where it says anything on the lines of "pay no mind to Mary, for she can do nothing for you". Mary was simply associated with "unbiblical" Catholic traditions, and we wanted no part of that.

As the Church Teaches and Scripture confirms, Mary's role in our Christian life begins before and continues beyond her labor and delivery in the barn. Mary, having physically carried Jesus into the world, is the Ark of the New Covenant. Just as the Ark of the Old Covenant was made of pure gold, not to be touched with man's bare hands lest it become blemished (Ex. 25:10-21), the Ark of the New Covenant was also prepared by God to be the personified version of gold and unblemished: born without the stain of original sin. Not through her own power, but through God's preparation for her to carry the New Covenant into the world. This belief does not elevate Mary to a level of worship, but magnifies our deep love for Jesus: would we want any less than perfect for our God?

Mary is not the first to be conceived without sin; as we read in the book of Genesis, Eve was also created without the stain of original sin. However, upon her failure to uphold this pure life, she brought sin—and therefore death—into the world. Mary, having also been born without the stain of original sin, becomes humanity's second chance. In upholding her sinless state through God's power, she brings Jesus—and therefore life—into the world.

The early Church fathers wrote extensively about Mary as the "New Eve": "*the knot of Eve's disobedience was loosed by the obedience of Mary. For what the virgin Eve had bound fast through unbelief, this did the virgin Mary set free through faith.*" –St. Irenaeus, 180 AD

"*For Eve, who was a virgin and undefiled, having conceived the word of the serpent, brought forth disobedience and death. But the Virgin Mary received faith and joy, when the angel Gabriel announced the good tidings to her that the Spirit of the Lord would come upon her, and the power of the Highest would overshadow her: wherefore also the Holy Thing begotten of her is the Son of God; and she replied, 'Be it unto me according to thy word.'* And by her has He been born, to whom we have proved so many Scriptures refer, and by whom God destroys both the serpent and those angels and men who are like him; but works deliverance from death to those who repent of their wickedness and believe upon Him." –St. Justin Martyr, 160 AD

foretelling this event, "Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel."

The Birth of Jesus:

While Mary was still engaged to Joseph, she miraculously became pregnant through the Holy Spirit, as foretold to her by the angel. When Mary told Joseph she was pregnant, he had every right to feel disgraced. He knew the child was not his own, and Mary's apparent unfaithfulness carried a grave social stigma. Joseph not only had the right to divorce Mary, under Jewish law she could be put to death by stoning.

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It may be easier to convince our Protestant brothers and sisters that Mary is the unblemished Ark of the New Covenant and the New Eve than it is to convince them that Mary cares deeply about each one of us and is an active part of our lives. The many visits from Mary and the miracles she performed in Lourdes, Guadalupe, and the others are not readily believed, and many even venture to state that her appearances are demonic spirits under the guise of the Virgin Mary.

The account of St. John in his Gospel, however, makes it plain that Mary is our Mother, given to us by Jesus Himself at His crucifixion:

"When Jesus saw his mother there, and the disciple whom he loved standing nearby, he said to her, "Woman, here is your son," and to the disciple, "Here is your mother." From that time on, this disciple took her into his home." -John 19: 26, 27

In giving His mother to His apostle, He was giving His mother to His Church. Just as John answered Jesus' call and allowed Mary into her home as His Mother, so should we not discard Mary, but allow her into our home. If we as Christians are going to claim Jesus as our brother (Rom. 8:29), then we should start showing respect to our Mother.

I want to end with this note to any Protestants who may be reading this message; I imagine you may be feeling very defensive and perhaps angry or saddened, as you perceive we are encouraging an emphasis on Mary *instead of* Jesus. Please do not have this impression; Mary never points to herself, but only to her son. A relationship with Mary cannot subtract from your relationship with God; it can only enhance it.

"Never be afraid of loving the Blessed Virgin too much. You can never love her more than Jesus did." -Saint Maximilian Kolbe

About Tiffany P

Tiffany P. is a 23 year old wife and Mommy to two babies born 16 months apart. Tiffany's relationship with God began when she was 14, where she was baptized at a large Baptist church in her Texas hometown. She spent the next five years growing closer to God through daily prayer, Scripture meditation, and her active membership in her Baptist youth group, where she made lifelong friendships. At 18, a burden was placed on her heart for the lack of unity in the Body of the Christ, as evidenced through the existence of multiple Christian denominations. Thus began a search for Truth through a re-evaluation of Scripture and history, and she found that the fullness of Truth is found in the original Church established by Christ Himself. On April 11, 2009 at 19 years of age, Tiffany took the next step in her 5 year-old Christian journey by receiving the sacraments of confirmation and Eucharist, entering into full communion with the Holy Catholic Church. Her passion is to see all Christian brothers and sisters reconciled and unified once again.

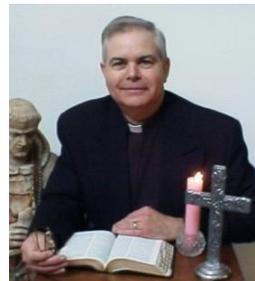
Advent is a time of waiting. This sounds like a boring, stupid thing to do during a time of year when there is so much to be done, until we learn what it means to wait. And we see that by actively waiting, God helps us to become more and more the men and women, boys and girls he meant for us to be: growing into what St. Paul called the fullness of the measure of the stature of Christ. And in the days that lead up to Christmas, I can hardly think of anything better to do!

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Although Joseph's initial reaction was to break the engagement, the appropriate thing for a righteous man to do, he treated Mary with extreme kindness. He did not want to cause her further shame, so he decided to act quietly. But God sent an angel to Joseph in a dream to verify Mary's story and reassure him that his marriage to her was God's will. The angel explained that the child within Mary was conceived by the Holy Spirit, that his name would be Jesus and that he was the Messiah, God with us.

When Joseph woke from his dream, he willingly obeyed God and took Mary home to be his wife, in spite of the public humiliation he would face.

New Seminary Faculty Appointments



We are pleased to announce the appointment of the Very Rev. Dr. Aurore Leigh Barrett and the Very Reverend Dr. David Adams St. John to two senior positions at our O.S.S.T. Seminary. Rev. Aurore has been appointed Dean of Ave Maria School of Divinity and Fr. David has been appointed Chancellor/Director of Vocations.

As **Dean of Ave Maria School of Divinity** (Latin: decanus), Rev. Aurore has been commissioned to develop academic policies and programs, coordinate student activities, and advise students and faculty on personal matters. Her main responsibility will be to maintain our high academic standards and to preserve our academic ethos across the Seminary. Her responsibilities include counseling students and supervising the enforcement of Seminary rules and standards. As the chief administrative official of the Seminary, she will advise the school president on a variety of matters, oversee faculty, determine school policies, and work closely with the Chancellor and other committee members to facilitate and support the success of the Seminary in preparing men and women answering the call to ordained ministry. As a leader in our religious community she will also be a member of the Abbot's Council.

As **Chancellor/Director of Vocations** (Latin: cancellarius), Fr. David has been commissioned to develop, schedule, and carry out Church Vocation discernment programs and activities that will help aspirants to discern their ministerial vocation. He will work and communicate with individuals desiring to study for holy orders and/or incardination into the jurisdiction. Responsibilities include monitoring the studies and works of aspirants during their formation for Holy Orders. As the chief administrative officer of the vocations/formation committee, he will work in consultation with the other committee members to make recommendations to the school president on the appropriateness of a candidate's progress and readiness for ordination to Holy Orders, or for those already validly ordained...incardination. As a leader in our religious community he will also be a member of the Abbot's Council.

Congratulations Rev. Aurore and Fr. David! May the Lord Bless and Keep you.

Profession of Vows, New Postulants, Incardination...commitment to the Lord in 2013

Very Reverend David Adams St. John celebrated his Rite of Blessing and Reception of a Postulant and Incardination as an Archpriest at *The Abbey of Our Lady of the Bright Mount* in Las Vegas, NV on 8 September 2013.

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Father David+



Rev. Aurore+



Dcn. Russ with
daughter Judith and
Dom ++Robert



Brother Hank, O.S.S.T.

Very Reverend Aurore Leigh Barrett celebrated her Rite of Blessing and Reception of a Postulant and Incardination as an Archpriest at *The Abbey of Our Lady of the Bright Mount* in Las Vegas, NV on 8 September 2013.

Deacon Russell Dean Lee, O.S.S.T. celebrated his Rite of Sub Conditione Ordination as a Deacon during the Annual O.S.S.T. Synod/Retreat at the Immaculate Heart Center for Spiritual Renewal in Santa Barbara, CA on 12 October 13.

Brother Wayne Henri (Hank) Silk, O.S.S.T. celebrated his Rite of First Profession and made his monastic vows at *Our Lady Mother of the Church Abbey* in Enola, PA on 12 October 2013. Br. Hank is a student at Ave Maria School of Divinity studying for Holy Orders.

Congratulations!

The Roman Catholic Rosary Beads

By Brother Francis+, O.S.S.T.

The intention of this article is to simply introduce to the reader the venerable tradition of the Roman Catholic rosary beads or the Psalter of Mary. The rosary, because of its one hundred fifty Hail Marys corresponding to the number of the Psalms, is sometimes called the Psalter of Mary.

Catholics have used the rosary for hundreds of years. Each bead of the rosary has its origin in Holy Scripture and Catholic tradition. Roman Catholic theologian Blessed Alan de la Roche (1428 – 1475), noted for his views on prayer said, "The Holy Rosary is the storehouse of countless blessing."

If you were to ask what object is most representative of Catholics, you would probably say, "The rosary." We are very familiar with the images: a person in the front pew of the church silently moving lips while praying the rosary; a family fingering beads; the ladies of the Altar Rosary Society praying the rosary before or after Eucharist; a baby sucking on her mother's rosary beads while praying; the oversized rosary hanging from the waist of an Old Catholic Marianist Abbot Archbishop; more recently, an ornate rosary hanging from the rearview mirror of a 1956 Chevy.

The rosary assists us in engaging our body, mind, and spirit in our prayers. Pope Saint Pius X (1835 – 1914) viewed, "The Rosary is the most beautiful and richest of all prayers to the Mediatrix of all grace; it is the prayer that touches most the heart of the Mother of God. Say it each day" (Cf. Msgr. J. Cirrincione and T. Nelson, *The Rosary and the Crisis in the Faith*, Tan Books and Publishers, p. 34).

The rosary comes from Latin *rosarium*, meaning "crown of roses" or "garland of roses" and the rose being one of the flowers used to represent the Blessed Virgin Mary. The rosary is a biblical form of prayer and all the prayers that are used come mainly from the Bible. It has 59 beads and five decades of 10 beads a piece. A single bead separates the weeks and decades. The rosary is said using beads to count recital prayers while we meditate upon on the biblical mysteries from the lives of Jesus and Mary.

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Perhaps this noble quality is one of the reasons God chose him to be the Messiah's earthly father.

Joseph too must have wondered in awe as he remembered the words found in Isaiah 7:14, "Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel."

At that time, Caesar Augustus decreed that a census be taken, and every person in the entire Roman world had to go to his own town to register. Joseph, being of the line of David, was required to go to Bethlehem to register with Mary. While in Bethlehem, Mary gave birth to Jesus. Probably due to the census, the inn was too crowded,

"The rosary, and rosary-like prayer, focus on the events of Christ's life, the incarnation, redemption, and the promise of eternal life, and on the Virgin Mary's participation in the mystery of Christ. A person praying must be the agent who actively enters into the mysteries, and not simply one before whom the celebration unfolds. The rosary is an accessible reminder of the constant prayer of the Church, the incessant prayer of God's people throughout the ages. The Psalter of Mary, as the rosary is sometimes called, is a remembrance of the Church's deepest nature as a community of continual prayer" (Pope Leo XIII, 1896). Saint Paul the Apostle insists the Christians of first century Thessalonian community to "rejoice always; pray without ceasing" (1 Thessalonians 5:17).

After, the Second Vatican Council (Latin: *Concilium Oecumenicum Vaticanum Secundum* or informally known as Vatican II), the rosary fell into relative disuse. Sadly enough the same is very true for Marian devotions as a whole. But in recent years the rosary has made a comeback, and not just among Catholics but with Lutherans, Methodists, and other Protestant groups.

In "Just Do It: How Practice Makes Catholic" (*U.S. Catholic*, October 2000) Father Robert Barron concludes by "Saying a word in support of the much maligned rosary as a practice." He writes: "First, the rosary is concrete, densely objective--it is something you hold in your hand. Anthony de Mello said that the simple feel of the rosary puts him in a mystical frame of mind. Second, the rosary is a way of disciplining what the Buddhists call the "monkey mind," the mind that leaps impatiently from branch to branch . . . As long as that mind--skittish, superficial, obsessive--is dominating, we never move to the deeper realms of the soul. The rosary prayer, precisely as a mantra, is meant to dull and quiet the moody mind and allow the depths to rise. Third, the rosary slows us down. (Even my Irish grandmother, who prayed the rosary at ninety-five miles an hour, took fifteen minutes to get through it!) The surface of the psyche is in constant motion, hurrying to its next thought, its next objective, its next accomplishment. But the spiritual center likes to see, to hear, to savor . . . Ewert Cousins, a theologian at Fordham University, has said that the genius of Catholicism is that it never threw anything away. How sad that so many Catholics run to the religions of the East and to the New Age to find embodied practices of prayer when we have them in spades in our own ecclesial attic!"

"How to Pray the Rosary" is an article from the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops website that reiterates that "The Rosary is a Scripture-based prayer. It begins with the *Apostles' Creed*, which summarizes the great mysteries of the Catholic faith. The *Our Father*, which introduces each mystery, is from the Gospels. The first part of the *Hail Mary* is the angel's words announcing Christ's birth and Elizabeth's greeting to Mary. St. Pius V officially added the second part of the *Hail Mary*. The Mysteries of the Rosary center on the events of Christ's life. There are four sets of Mysteries: Joyful, Sorrowful, Glorious and--added by Pope John Paul II in 2002--the Luminous."

Here is a listing of the five sets of mysteries: The Joyful Mysteries are *the Annunciation (Luke 1:28)*, *the Visitation (Luke 1:41-2)*, *the Nativity (Luke 2:7)*, *the Presentation of Jesus in the Temple (Luke 2:22)*, and *the finding Jesus in the Temple (Luke 2:46)*. The Luminous Mysteries (The Mysteries of Light) are *the Baptism of Christ in the Jordan (Matthew 3:16-17)*, *the wedding feast at Cana (John 2:4-6)*, *Jesus' proclamation of the coming of the Kingdom of God (Matthew 1:14-15)*, *the Transfiguration (Luke 9:29)*, and *the institution of the Eucharist (Luke 22:19-20)*. The Sorrowful Mysteries are *the agony in the garden*

and Mary gave birth in a crude stable. She wrapped the baby in cloths and placed him in a manger.

**The Shepherd's
Worship the
Savior:**

Out in the fields, an angel of the Lord appeared to the shepherds who were tending their flocks of sheep by night.

The angel announced that the Savior had been born in the town of David. Suddenly a great host of heavenly beings appeared with the angels and began singing praises to God. As the angelic beings departed, the shepherds decided to travel to Bethlehem and see the Christ-child.

There they found Mary, Joseph and the baby, in the stable. After their visit, they began to spread the word about this amazing child and everything the

thorns (Matthew 27:28-29), the carrying of the cross (John 19:17, and the crucifixion and death (Luke 23:46). The Glorious Mysteries are the resurrection (Mark 16:6), the Ascension (Mark 16:19), the descent of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:2), the Assumption (Judith 15:10-11), and the Coronation of Mary (Cf. Revelation 12:1).

The Roman Catholic rosary beads or the Psalter of Mary can benefit anyone at any phase of his or her spiritual life from novices to advance. The ultimate goal is a boundless love for God and union with God.

The Anglican Prayer Beads

By Brother Francis+, O.S.S.T.

This brief article is to introduce to the reader a new tool to assist with contemplative prayer that is used in the Anglican Communion - the Anglican prayer beads. It is also known as the Anglican rosary, Christian prayer beads, or Anglican/Episcopalian prayer beads.

Since the earliest of times *prayer beads are present in almost every culture.* People have used pebbles or a string of knots or beads on a cord to keep track of prayers presented to God. *Using prayer beads as a tool of meditation is as old as human history.*

Church prayer has been a pivotal part of Christian living. Saint Luke wrote that the newly baptized committed themselves to the apostles' teaching and fraternity, to the breaking of bread and prayers (Acts 2:42). Saint Paul urges us to pray without ceasing to give thanks in all instances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you (1 Thessalonians 5:17-18).

Every major religious tradition used prayer beads throughout history. The earliest recorded examples are the Malabeads of the Hindu and Buddhist faiths. The Eastern Orthodox has a prayer cord with cross-knots, and the Roman Catholics have the rosary. The Roman Catholic rosary originated sometime between the 12th and 15th century. There are also the Islamic prayer beads called the Misbaha or the Tasbeeh.

The Rev. Lynn Baumann from the Episcopal Church in the United States created the Anglican prayer beads in the mid-1980s as an aid to contemplative prayer. Prayer beads have grown in approval among those seeking to enrich their prayer life. The prayer beads have been adopted by Lutherans, Methodists, and other Protestant groups, thus giving rise to the term Christian prayer beads. There's also a nondenominational variation known as the Earth Rosary. Consisting of four sets of 13 beads, which indicate the 13 weeks in each of the four seasons, the Earth Rosary has a total of 52 beads, representing each week of the year.

The Anglican prayer beads are made up of 33 beads, which represent the years of Jesus' earthy life, while the Catholic rosary has 59. It is divided into four weeks of seven beads each, and the Catholic rosary has five decades of 10 beads a piece. A single bead separates the weeks and decades on both rosaries.

angel had said about him. They went on their way still praising and glorifying God. But Mary kept quiet, treasuring their words and pondering them in her heart. It must have been beyond her ability to grasp, that sleeping in her arms—the tender child she had just borne—was the Savior of the world.

The Magi Bring Gifts:

After Jesus' birth, Herod was king of Judea. At this time wise men (Magi) from the east saw a star, they came in search, knowing the star signified the birth of the king of the Jews. The wise men came to the Jewish rulers in Jerusalem and asked where the Christ was to be born. The rulers explained, "In Bethlehem in Judea," referring to Micah 5:2. Herod secretly met with the Magi and asked them

Beads: Gateway to Prayer, an article written by Maryknoll Brother John Beeching enlightens us about prayer beads, "When we start to pray with beads, our prayer forms on our lips, but gradually it internalizes, welling from within our heart. As we progress, the prayer may become simply awareness or getting lost in the Divine."

Anglican prayer beads is a simple tool to assist in one's prayer life. Anglican prayer beads are used as a tactile aid to prayer. It helps to bring us into contemplative of meditative prayer by use of mind, body, and spirit. The touching of the fingers on each bead helps in keeping our mind from drifting, and the cadence of the prayers steers us more easily into quietness.

Trappist monk and priest Dom M. Basil Pennington reminds us in *Praying by Hand: Rediscovering the Rosary as a Way of Prayer*, prayer beads simply are a method or instrument "to help us pray, to enter into communion and union with God. Therefore, we should feel free to use it or pray it in any way that helps us to enter into that union."

The Jesus Prayer

Brother Francis+, O.S.S.T.

The purpose of this brief article is merely to introduce the reader to the practice of the Jesus Prayer or the prayer of the heart.

Prayer is the center of our Christian being, the root of our experience of Jesus as the Risen Lord and Savior. Saint Paul insists the Christians of first century Thessalonica to "pray without ceasing" (1 Thessalonians 5:17). And in his letter to Rome, the Apostle teaches the Christian community there to "be constant in prayer" (Romans 12:12). He not only advises unceasing prayer of the Christians in his care, but does it himself. "We constantly thank God for you" (1 Thessalonians. 2:13) he pens in his letter to the Thessalonian community; and he comforts Timothy, his "true child in the faith" (1 Timothy 1:2) with the words: "Always I remember you in my prayers" (2 Timothy 1:3).

Prayer is all of life. Prayer is as essential to our life as breathing. To a certain extent, pray means to think and live our entire life in the Presence of God. A Russian and French theologian, writer, and professor of theology Paul Evdokimov has observed: "Our whole life, every act and gesture, even a smile must become a hymn or adoration, an offering, a prayer. We must become prayer-prayer incarnate." This is what Saint Paul means when he writes to the Corinthians that "whatever you do, do it for the glory of God" (1 Corinthians 10:31).

In order to enter more deeply into the life of prayer, to live our entire life in the Presence of God, and to come to grips with Saint Paul's challenge to pray unceasingly, the Eastern Orthodox, Oriental Orthodox, and Eastern Catholic churches offers the Jesus Prayer, which is sometimes called the prayer of the heart.

The anonymous author of *The Way of the Pilgrim* reports that the Jesus Prayer writes: "When I prayed in my heart, everything around me seemed

***to report back
after they had
found the child.
Herod told the
Magi that he too
wanted to go and
worship the babe.
But secretly
Herod was
plotting to kill the
child.***

***So the wise men
continued to
follow the star in
search of the new
born king and
found Jesus with
his mother in
Bethlehem. They
bowed and
worshipped him,
offering treasures
of gold, incense,
and myrrh. When
they left, they did
not return to
Herod. They had
been warned in a
dream of his plot
to destroy the
child.***



delightful and marvelous. The trees, the grass, the birds, the air, the light seemed to be telling me that they existed for man's sake, that they witnessed to the love of God for man, that all things prayed to God and sang his praise."

The Jesus Prayer is offered as a means of concentration, as a focal point for our inner life. The most frequently used form of the Jesus Prayer is: "Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me, a sinner." It can be used for worship, petition, intercession, invocation, adoration, and thanksgiving.

Greek Orthodox Christians, in particular, use a "prayer rope", a knotted cord of 33, 50, or 100 knots. Many Roman Catholics use a traditional Rosary praying the Jesus Prayer in place of the Rosary prayers. Anglicans and others who are not Orthodox or Roman Catholic use a form known as "Anglican Prayer Beads" or the Anglican Rosary.

Anthony DeMello, S.J. in his book *Contact With God* says, "I don't know why it is, but the fingering of beads brings to many people peace and prayerfulness; it is probably because it brings rhythm into the prayer."

Growth in prayer has no end," Russian Orthodox Saint Theophan the Recluse informs us. "If this growth ceases, it means that life ceases." The way of the heart is infinite because the God whom we seek is infinite in the depths of his glory. The Jesus Prayer is a road sign along the spiritual journey, a journey that all of us must take.

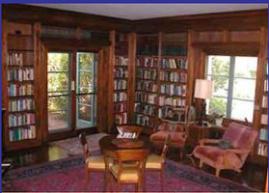
Third Annual O.S.S.T. Synod / Retreat held October 11-13 2013 in Santa Barbara, CA



Immaculate Heart Center for Spiritual Renewal

Gifted to Grow was the overarching theme as the Order of the Most Holy Mary Theotokos – "The Old Catholic Marianists" assembled in Chapter 11-13 October 2013. We gathered for our 2013 O.S.S.T. Synod / Retreat at the Immaculate Heart Center for Spiritual Renewal located in the foothills of Montecito, (Santa Barbara) CA, as a time for spiritual renewal, connected community, prayerful worship, and engaging dialogue. We consider what it means to be a spiritually-vibrant religious community within the context of a changing and challenging ecclesiology.

The purpose of the annual Synod / Retreat was to provide our membership the



opportunity to gather from across the vast distances of the jurisdiction for worship, theological reflection, fellowship, networking, and spiritual renewal.



What are your strengths?

We have uniquely been blessed with gifts, some we may wish we didn't have, others we covet as did the people of Corinth as recorded in 1 Corinthians 12-13, others believe their gift is the coolest. Paul writes: "Fools, every godly gift is necessary, and nobody has all the gifts! Everybody gets some gift from God; nobody gets them all." We all have been blessed with gifts to share. Through the use of story, we will listen, share, and identify your most dependable strengths (gifts). Living from our strengths we are most fulfilled and together we complete the Body of Christ.

To view pictures of 2013 O.S.S.T. Synod / Retreat visit our web site at:

http://www.osst-abbey.org/2013_osst_synod__retreat

Grace at Christmas Dinner

Don't forget to say grace before your Christmas dinner. Here's one you might use:

God of Christmas and of every day, giver of all good gifts, we thank you for the many ways you have blessed us. We are grateful for each person gathered around this table. Bless us, our food and our company today. Bless those we love who are not with us.

With gratitude and love, we remember your humble birth into our lives and so pray for those without food or family or friendship at this time. We remember the stable in which you were born and so pray for those with no place to live.

We join your angels in giving glory to God in the highest and in praying for peace and goodwill on earth. Help us to see what really matters and to respond with faith, hope and love.



**Order of the Most
Holy Mary
Theotokos**

**The Mother
House,
Our Lady of
Peace
Archabbey,
Atlanta, GA**

**Virgin Mother of
God Hermitage,
Fayetteville, NC**

**Our Lady of
Divine Providence
Abbey,
Roanoke, VA**

**Our Lady of
Solitude Abbey,
Mayer, AZ**

**Abbey of Our
Lady of Grace,
New Port Richey,
FL**

**Abbey of Saint
Mary Theotokos,
Corona, CA**

**Rectory
Westland, MI**

**Twenty-nine
Palms, CA**

Make of our hearts a crib in which to place the Christ child. Keep us safe and close to you in the year ahead. For you are our Christmas Lord, now and forever.

Amen.

Advent / Christmas Message from the Presiding Archbishop / Abbot



Mary, the Theotokos, pray for us and lead us to do the Father's will for our lives.

My Dear Marianist Priests, Brothers, Sisters, and Friends of O.S.S.T.,

We have just begun a new year in our faith life and are living the journey of Advent in preparation for the feast of Christmas. This is a significant time to be lived with great seriousness, as it helps us once again to renew ourselves and prepare 'room' in our lives for welcoming the Savior of the world: Emmanuel = GOD-WITH-US. Often, in this time of Advent, we will be calling out: "O come, O come, Emmanuel!" – as we wait in joyful hope.

How easy it is in our world today to lose focus, with the commercialization of this sacred time! As Christians – those who love Jesus and choose to follow his way – we are not immune to, but can so easily be seduced by, this commercialization. Yes, Christmas is an occasion and a significant event to celebrate; but what is it that we are celebrating and rejoicing in?

Advent allows us the time, supported by the Scriptures and the liturgy, to reflect on this question and to re-focus. Like Mary who "*treasured these things and pondered them in her heart*" (Lk.2:19), we are called to adopt a contemplative stance – wondering and seeing deeper into the things that are happening in our world and in our lives, and pondering it's meaning in light of the Christ: our Savior, God-with-us, the Light of the world. Of course, this contemplative stance will no doubt also challenge us to a personal and communal conversion, which is

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**"The Old Catholic
Marianists"**



**Merry
Christmas!**
*and a
Blessed New Year*

a continual call to a genuine living of the values of God's kingdom.

For us, Marianists, the Christmas event is reflected upon from a specific standpoint. Like Mary and Joseph, we gaze upon the Christ-Child, wondering and with perhaps the same question in our minds as that of the parents of John the Baptist: "What will this Child turn out to be?" (Lk.1:66).

I am brought to recall the image which St Paul of the Cross treasured – the Infant Christ lying not on a manger of straw (as is often depicted), but on a cross. We know that this Child will grow up, and be supported by his parents, to assume his mission in this world as our Savior, but only through the way of the Cross, i.e. his Passion, Death and Resurrection – the Paschal Mystery. For us, Marianists, as is intrinsic in the seed of nature, this mystery is a journey of hope and life...and Emmanuel, our God-with-us has traversed it.

We will all be engaged busily in these weeks before Christmas preparing to make our celebration meaningful and successful in our parishes, communities and families, as we must. However, let us be encouraged to adopt a contemplative stance, the stance of the true disciple. From this platform, we are certain to be enriched both in our personal, spiritual, and pastoral lives.

As we journey together in this time of Advent, let us do so with the attitude of "waiting in joyful hope for the coming of our Savior Jesus Christ", who is the human face of God: Emmanuel = GOD-WITH-US. This is the greatest gift that we will receive and give at Christmas.

I thank you all for the witness you give as Marianists in your life and ministry as you prepare to welcome Christ and give him 'room' in your lives. May Christ reign in your hearts and may you know his Peace.

I send you my sincere greetings and wish each one of you a blessed and peace-filled Christmas. I beg your prayer for me and our entire O.S.S.T. community as we move into yet another New Year.

Your Servant in Christ through Mary,

Dom ++Robert - Presiding Archbishop / Abbot, O.S.S.T.

~ Totus Tuus ~ "Totally Yours"



On behalf of the O.S.S.T. family we wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

