

# PASTOR BONUS

TRUE STORIES FROM REAL PRIESTS

By: Cole Bot

When I was given the chance to interview a priest for a story, I knew who I was going to reach out to: Father Zach Peterson. Reading these stories, I was not only able to appreciate Father Zach's humor, but also the miracle of priestly vocations which, when accepted, will truly make a difference in the lives of the faithful.

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## "Irony Embodied"

During my first year of priestly ministry...I offered the Blessing of Throats after each of the weekend masses the weekend after the Church celebrated the Memorial of St. Blaise (Feb 3). This is the blessing where the priest or deacon takes two (unlit) candles, places them around the neck, and prays this prayer: "Through the intercession of St. Blaise, bishop and martyr, may God deliver you from every disease of the throat and from every other illness, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit."

This blessing can be offered once for a large group of people, or can be offered individually. I did the blessing at the end of Mass over everybody, but also offered it individually as people departed the building. I'm pretty sure that most people also came to receive the blessing individually as the line was long and took around 10 minutes to get through everybody.

So after imparting this special blessing on hundreds of people over the course of two days and four weekend masses, the irony of all ironies occurred: I lost my voice.

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## "Emergency at Mass"

After I had finished distributing communion, I returned to the altar to begin purifying the sacred vessels as one of the Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion brought Communion to those sitting in the back of church. When the minister returned to the altar, he informed me that one of the elderly parishioners in the back pew of church was unresponsive (not breathing and no pulse). 9-1-1 had been called and the ambulance was on its way. Luckily, some of the town's EMTs are Catholic and were at Mass. They relayed the message to me to keep people in church so that the ambulance wouldn't have to battle the departing traffic as it tried to get to the Church.

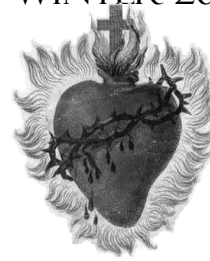
So I finished purifying the sacred vessels, put the ciborium with the consecrated hosts in the tabernacle, and sat down. I began to think of what I should say and do.

The only thing that I could think to do was to go and administer the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick. So I told everyone to remain seated, walked across the sanctuary to the ambry (where the Sacred Oils are kept), and took out the Oil of the Sick. I walked to back of church and administered the short form of the Sacrament to this gentleman. I said the words: "Through this Holy Anointing, may the Lord in his love and mercy help you with the grace of the Holy Spirit" as I anointed his forehead with the oil. Then, I said the second part of the prayer: "May the Lord who frees you from sin save you and raise you up" and as I anointed his wrists, he took a huge breath in and opened his eyes!

After we told him what had happened, he initially declined to go to the hospital, but agreed after the EMTs insisted. After being checked out in the hospital, he returned home. This happened over five years ago and unfortunately, this elderly gentleman has since passed away.

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**PULSE**



A NEWSLETTER FOR THE YOUTH OF THE DIOCESE OF NEW ULM,

BY THE YOUTH OF THE DIOCESE OF NEW ULM

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## SAINTS ARE CRAZY

This past January youth from all over the Diocese attended the Broom Tree Retreat. It is a weekend retreat intended to deepen our prayer life and give us a break from the day-to-day busy-ness of life. The theme this year was based on the famous Gospel story of Sts. Martha and Mary: "But one thing is necessary: Mary hath chosen the best part."

I have to say, I was amazed by the response of those who attended. At the end of the retreat, people your age were making firm resolutions to attend daily Mass, delete distracting apps from their phones, pray the Rosary everyday, and many other laudable practices.

That's crazy! Who does that!?

Saints do. Saints look like ordinary people, but they are actually extraordinary. They live *in* the world, but not *of* the world. Now, that's no easy task. You're nothing short of a hero if you try to resist the many distractions and temptations of our modern world, but that is why one of the Church's requirements for sainthood is "heroic virtue."

When we think of heroes, we think of adventure, risk, bravery, and sometimes a really bad Mariah Carey song from 1993 (well, I do anyway). And if saints are heroes, that means that sainthood is exciting and at times a little crazy in the eyes of the world.

In this issue we'll see some examples of sainthood that should inspire us as well: Archbishop Fulton Sheen was not afraid to prophesy about taboo topics, Saint Francis gave up everything he had to follow Christ, and Blessed Marco helped to save Europe (and anyone who's ever had to pull an all-nighter to finish a paper) from destruction.

So, be crazy and BE A SAINT! Hopefully this issue of *The Pulse* helps you to achieve that goal. May God bless you.

In Christ through Mary,  
Kevin Losleben



# Our Lady of Fatima and Islam

By: Joseph Goedtke

Father James Gilhooly carried the groceries he had selected off the shelves of the local Shop Rite and dumped them onto the conveyor of the express lane. Looking up he caught a glimpse of the cashier's nametag. Her name was Fatima. Naturally, he thought immediately of Our Lady's apparitions in Fatima, Portugal, where Our Lady appeared to three shepherd children in 1917 and delivered a message of penance and prayer for the conversion of sinners. After inquiring briefly as to the source of the name, Fatima informed him that she was Muslim and that Fatima is a very traditional woman's name in Muslim culture. As it turns out, Fatima is the name of the daughter of Muhammad, the founder of Islam. So is it a coincidence that the insignificant Portuguese town where the Blessed Mother chose to appear back in 1917 bears the name of Muhammad's own daughter?

I don't think so, and neither did Archbishop Fulton Sheen. In his 1952 book *The World's First Love*, the prophetic archbishop explained that in the Middle Ages, while the Muslims were occupying Portugal, there lived a Muslim princess named Fatima. She fell in love with a Catholic boy who named the local town after her. Hence the village that Our Lady appeared in centuries later bore the name of Muhammad's daughter. Sheen went on to note that the Muslims hold Fatima and the Blessed Virgin Mary in very high praise. Muhammad himself even wrote that Fatima was "...the most blessed among women in paradise after Mary". Mary is mentioned in the Koran no less than thirty times. These verses describe her as "Virgin ever virgin" and Muslim tradition traces her lineage back to Abraham, Noah and Adam. The Muslims' devotion to Mary combined with an Islamic name is very attractive for them. Thus it should not surprise us that countless Muslims frequent the shrine of our Lady of Fatima.

Archbishop Sheen firmly believed that this was all part of Mary's plan when she appeared in Fatima:

*"Since nothing ever happens out of Heaven except with a finesse of all details, I believe that the Blessed Virgin chose to be known as 'Our Lady of Fatima' as a pledge and sign of hope for the Muslim people, and as an assurance that they, who show her so much respect, will one day accept her divine Son too."*

Our Lady of Fatima, pray for us!



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# The (Catholic) History of Cappuccino

By: Beret Henningsgaard

Whether it's donuts and coffee after church or Bible studies with friends, coffee usually threads its way into Catholic gatherings. Although our present culture is partially to blame for this, Catholics' love for coffee goes all the way back to the seventeenth century!

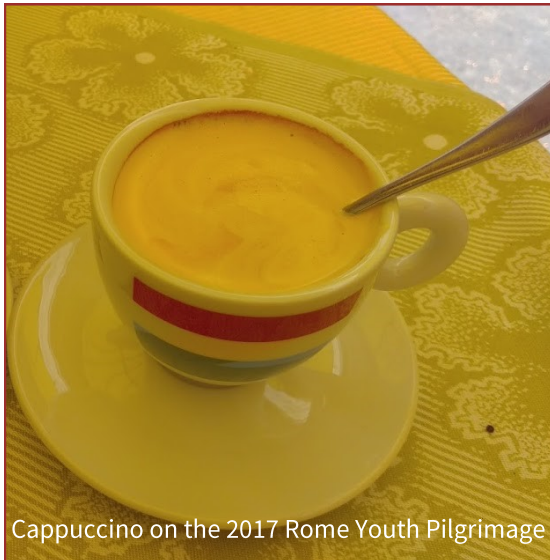


Sensing God calling him, Carlo Domenico Cristofori joined the Capuchin Order in 1648 taking the name Marco. He was regarded as a holy man and became a trusted adviser of Pope Innocent XI on affairs of spiritual, political and economic matters.

In 1683, Friar Marco found himself rallying the Catholic troops as they prepared to fight the Ottoman Turks at the Battle of Vienna. The Catholics triumphed, saving Europe in what has become one of the most important military battles in history.

Collecting their booty, the Catholic soldiers (who were from all over Europe) found sacks of coffee left by the Turks. The Italians complained that the coffee was too strong and so decided to mix it with whipped cream and spices. The reddish-brown color - known in Italian as "capuchin" because of the color of the Capuchin habits - of the newly found beverage reminded them of their favorite friar who rallied them before the battle: Marco. The soldiers thus named the delicious coffee drink in his honor: "cappuccino," which translates "small capuchin" in Italian.

**The next time you enjoy a cappuccino, remember to thank Blessed Marco!**



Cappuccino on the 2017 Rome Youth Pilgrimage

# The Serenity Prayer

By: Kendra Wentzel

God, grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change,  
Courage to change the things I can,  
And wisdom to know the difference.  
Living one day at a time,  
Enjoying one moment at a time,  
Accepting hardship as a pathway to peace,  
Taking, as Jesus did,  
This sinful world as it is,  
Not as I would have it,  
Trusting that You will make all things right,  
If I surrender to Your will,  
So that I may be reasonably happy in this life,  
And supremely happy with You forever in the next. Amen.

The Serenity Prayer is perhaps one of the most well known Christian prayers today, used amongst many denominations across the world. An American Protestant theologian, Reinhold Niebuhr, wrote the prayer in the early 1930s for a sermon. At the brink of World War II, he composed this prayer to remind people to ask God for His help in that time of tremendous pain. Although not written by a Catholic, this prayer is Catholic in thought and emphasizes trust in God.

I have always struggled with accepting change and being out of control. I like things to stay the same, and to always know what's going to happen. A few years ago my mom told me about the Serenity Prayer, and how she thought I might find it helpful. Now I recite it often; when things aren't going my way, when I'm having a bad day, and when I need the courage to stand up for God and myself. There are so many times throughout my life where this prayer has helped me ask for God's aid and to trust Him.

Sometimes I think we forget that we are just God's instruments. We go through our daily lives trying to make the right choices, sometimes not once asking Him what He wants us to do. It's easy to neglect to ask for His help when times are hard, and it's even easier not to accept His help. The Serenity Prayer can help remind us to ask for God's assistance and trust that He will love and protect us throughout all of life's trials.



# The Rich Man who Had Nothing



By: Megan Tollefson



Assisi, Italy (2018)

Assisi and was taken prisoner and held for ransom for a year, but that still did not satisfy him. When the Fourth Crusades called for warriors, Francis knew he must go. However, once he was a day's ride outside of Assisi God came to Francis in a dream telling him to return to Assisi. Francis obeyed.

Upon his return Francis was laughed at by everyone who loved him. Distraught, he began praying to God hoping he would receive an answer. Then one day while Francis was praying in the church of San Damiano, he heard Christ on the crucifix tell him to repair His Church. Thinking he was supposed to literally repair that one church, Francis stole wealth from his father and did so. This enraged his father, for he did not want a son of God. His father brought Francis to the bishop and demanded that he renounce being his father's heir. Francis did so with a smile, even stripping his clothes while proclaiming, "From now on I can say with complete freedom, 'Our Father who art in heaven.'"

Francis began to live his life for God. He traveled and preached about returning to the Church and obedience to God. People saw how he lived with nothing but love and began to follow him. Francis began what he called an "expression of God's brotherhood" which is now known as the Franciscan Order. He and his companions focused on true equality with the poor, the sick, the rich, and even nature. Francis felt extremely connected to nature, he communicated with birds and wolves and valued them as a brother as well. Francis and his friars lived a holy life of extreme poverty, but they did so with unending joy. Francis reasoned, "Possessing something is the

Born to wealthy parents in 1182, Saint Francis of Assisi was instantly adored by everyone. As a youth, he lived a very easy life full of dreaming, partying, and sin. However, Francis was not satisfied with just his wealth; he wanted to become a noble knight. He fought for

death of love, what could you do to a man who owns nothing? You can't starve a fasting man, you can't steal from someone who has no money, you can't ruin someone who hates prestige."

Francis spent the rest of his life preaching and praying, but he eventually gave up the authority he held within his Franciscan Order and became a brother within it. The end of Francis' life was filled with humiliation and suffering. He meditated on Christ's passion and received the stigmata and then fell ill from his many years of traveling. Francis handled his pain and suffering in the most beautiful way: he wrote his Canticle of the Sun, which expressed his feeling of unity with creation in praising God.

Saint Francis of Assisi died on October 4, 1226 at the age of 45 and was canonized two years after his death. He is the patron saint of ecologists and merchants. Known as the man who had nothing - but yet - had everything, he was the man who God told to rebuild His Church, who spoke to animals and kissed lepers. Despite a young life full of lust and drinking, God spoke to him, and he began a conversion through which he never stopped smiling.



View from the hermitage on the mountain (2018)



Basilica of Saint Francis of Assisi(2018)

## Author's note:

This past December I was able to travel to Rome for 10 days with my church. We also spent two days in Assisi. This beautiful, walled in, fairytale city holds such a profound feeling of peace within it. We traveled to Saint Francis' hermitage on top of the mountain, we said Mass at his tomb, and we saw the crucifix that spoke to him. Saint Francis is still very much present in Assisi, his unbounded joy and love have made a lasting impact on my life. God bless!

*All images in this article are courtesy of the author.*