

PASTOR BONUS

TRUE STORIES FROM REAL PRIESTS



The following is from an interview of Fr. Jeremy Kucera by Kendra Wentzel.

When I was a newly ordained priest, serving Holy Redeemer parish in Marshall, I had one of those blunders that a newly ordained priest can suffer. I can't remember the context of the homily I was preaching, but I do remember specifically the line I was trying to say: that God dwells in our hearts. However, that's not what came out of my mouth.

Maybe I was too young and excited at the time and didn't speak slow enough in order to enunciate clearly. ...To my surprise, what ended up coming out of my mouth was not that God dwells in our hearts, but that God dwells in our...farts!

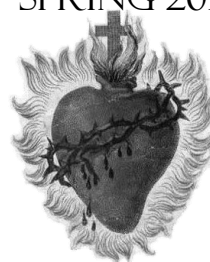
After I said it I just stopped in my tracks and simply asked the congregation, "Did I just say what I think I said?" They responded "yes." In the moment I didn't know how to react other than that I just started chuckling in surprise. Before you knew it we were all laughing.

All I know is that 13 years later from time to time I might run into someone from Marshall and they'll remind me of that moment. No one remembers that homily's message, but a few still remember that line. Maybe being able to laugh at a mistake together that evening taught all of us something far more valuable than anything else I was trying to say. We're not perfect and we shouldn't take ourselves too seriously. God loves us no matter what, even when we make mistakes.

Editor's Note: Fr. Jeremy Kucera is pastor of the churches in Appleton, Benson, Clontarf, Danvers, De Graff, and Murdock.

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

BY THE YOUTH OF THE DIOCESE OF NEW ULM

WINTER IS OVER...FOR REAL THIS TIME

Remember that last April snowstorm that dashed all your hopes for a timely arrival for spring? I do. I knew it was time for winter to be over when my four year old son looked outside at the snow that morning and said, "It's snowing?" [insert forlorn sigh] "Oh..."

But, thanks be to God, spring has definitely arrived! And with the arrival of spring, we start to think summer. I want to invite you to two opportunities this summer and next summer that you should consider.

Camp Beloved and Camp Greatness

If you've had a friend who has attended one of the diocesan camps, you've probably heard nothing but good things. The fact of the matter is that these summer camps are awesome. **Camp Beloved** is for the girls and runs from July 21-25 is for girls in grades 7-12. It features a ton of games, lots of time for prayer, and pretty amazing counsellors. This year will feature a hiking trip and beach party at Flandrau State Park in New Ulm. **Camp Greatness** is actually two camps—a middle school camp which runs from July 26-29 and a high school camp which runs from July 30-August 3. Both camps feature sports everyday, daily Mass and adoration, and great food. The campers are divided into four teams which compete throughout the week. The middle schoolers compete for the sought-after Golden Bowling Pin and the high schoolers compete for their name on the Golden Champions Board. It's kind of a big deal. Visit dnu.org/camp-beloved and dnu.org/camp-greatness

2019 Rome Youth Pilgrimage

In June of 2019, the Diocese will be taking a pilgrimage to Rome. This is open to all incoming and outgoing seniors for the 2018-19 school year. We visit sites such as St. Peter's Basilica, the Sistine Chapel, and the Pantheon. We also take trips to Assisi (the home of St. Francis), Siena (the home of St. Catherine of Siena), and Nettuno (the home of St. Maria Goretti). It is an incredible opportunity and I hope you will join us. Go to dnu.org/rome-youth-pilgrimage for more information.

THE CHAPLET OF DIVINE MERCY

By: Joseph Goedtke



Only nine years before World War II broke out and the world entered a period of global terror, St. Faustina Kowalska, a Polish Sister in the Congregation of the Sisters of Our Lady of Mercy, received a series of visions that lasted from 1931 to her death in 1938. Known as the “Apostle of Mercy,” St. Faustina recorded her visions in her 730 page diary. According to that diary, Christ appeared to her dressed in a white robe, with one hand raised in blessing while the other hand touched a mark in His chest. From that mark, two rays shone forth, one red, the other white. The rays represented the blood and water that flowed from Jesus’ side when the Roman soldier pierced him with a spear.

Christ proceeded to instruct St. Faustina to “paint an image according to what you see here, inscribed with the message: ‘Jesus I trust in you.’”

In addition to the image, Jesus asked that the Second Sunday of Easter be known as the Feast of Divine Mercy and He taught a prayer to St. Faustina known as the Chaplet of Divine Mercy. The Chaplet became a widely known Catholic devotion and is said using the beads of a standard Rosary, but takes less than one third of the time to pray. It can also be used in a novena spanning from Good Friday to Divine Mercy Sunday. The prayer repeats over and over a cry from mankind for Christ’s mercy to be poured out: *For the sake of His sorrowful Passion, have mercy on us and on the whole world.* Christ expressed repeatedly to St. Faustina that He desired such an outpouring and that He wished the world to be reminded of who God was: a merciful father who will stop at nothing to forgive even the most hardened of sinners. Jesus said that “Mankind will not have peace until it turns to the fount of my mercy”.

If you would like to learn how to pray the Chaplet of Divine Mercy or if you would like to learn about the Divine Mercy message, scan the QR code to the right or visit www.thedivinemercy.org.



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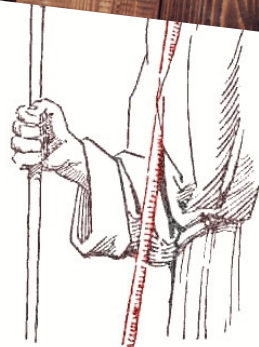
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You're Catholic, but did you know...

By: Megan Tollefson

In the Roman Catholic Church, anyone can perform a baptism! When someone is facing a life or death situation and wants to be baptized and there just is not enough time to find a priest to do so, anyone can perform the ceremony. In addition to the life or death situation (an important aspect to this fact), there are three things that must happen in order for the baptism to be valid:

1. The baptizer has the intention to do what the Church requires.
2. The baptizer uses the correct form (the formula of words): *[Name of person being baptized], I baptize you in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.*
3. The baptizer uses the correct matter: pouring water over the person.

Vatican City is only about one square mile in size, with a population of about 500 people, but over 20 million people visit it every year! It also has diplomatic relations with just about every country in the world, and to maintain those relations the Pope travels and visits other countries. Pope St. John Paul II visited 129 countries and logged a total of 750,000 frequent flyer miles!

The Catholic Church is the only church founded by Jesus Christ! Every other church was founded by someone other than Jesus and was, in some way, a split from the Catholic Church. The Catholic Church is also the church that put together the Bible (at the Council of Rome in 382 AD) as we know it today.

The Catholic Church is likely the largest charitable organization in the world. When you consider how many people are served throughout the world through our hospitals, schools, charities, and churches, it truly is astounding!

The Catholic church is full of amazingly odd and interesting facts that only further prove that our faith is unique and beautiful and there for us always and forever.



St. Teresa of Calcutta with a baby!
Image credit: toptenz.net.

Easter Season and the Glorious Mysteries

By: Cole Bot

In the past few years, I've been increasingly taught (and reminded!) that the Rosary, which especially honors our Blessed Mother, is a devotion much in need of our attention. St. Dominic and Our Lady of Fatima present especially powerful cases for and testaments to the power of the Holy Rosary as seen in the life of St. Dominic and in Our Lady of Fatima's message to "Pray the Rosary every day in honor of Our Lady of the Rosary in order to obtain peace in the world." Many saints point to the Rosary as a special form of prayer as a devotional, in requesting intercessions, and for meditation. In praying the Rosary, we place all of our being in the hands of Our Mother: we have as our material focus an object which we use to keep track of the prayers (the beads), our mental focus the Rosary's prayers, and our spiritual focus the very lives of Mary and her son, Jesus, with all of the needs and prayers we have to offer them.

For me, this Easter Season has been a particularly joyful one. It is a blessing to recount not only the presence of Jesus in this season, but the presence of Mary in her Rosary which has played an integral part in that joy. I was surprised to find, after falling away from much practice of the Rosary at all for most of the school year, that Mary was happy to open her arms to me with this gift of joy in prayer. This joy brought me closer to the Rosary with a desire, especially during the Easter Season, to pray the Glorious Mysteries, which are the Resurrection, the Ascension, the Descent of the Holy Spirit, the Assumption, and the Coronation of Mary as Queen of Heaven and Earth. More recently, I've found that the Rosary can be prayed in a manner recognizing the current Liturgical Season that the Church is in: for Easter, special attention is fittingly given to the Glorious Mysteries!

Different forms of the mysteries themselves (such as the Luminous Mysteries instituted by Pope St. John Paul II) and "calendars" or times to pray them have been recommended by the Church, but most important are the intentions with which we pray them and the time spent meditating on the lives of Jesus and Mary. Please always remember that Our Lady is with you as your Mother, and that she will always be ready to answer your prayers in the gift of the Rosary.

For my recommended article on the Glorious Mysteries, with their importance to the Church and in the Rosary, visit <https://goo.gl/NHVi1a>.

SET THE WORLD ON FIRE!

By: Beret Henningsgaard

Born in Siena in 1347 on the Feast of the Annunciation, St. Catherine was the 23rd child in her family. Although her parents were deeply religious, the intensity of St. Catherine's devotion surprised them. To the displeasure of her mother, at the age of 15 she cut off most of her hair in an attempt to discourage suitors. One day her father walked in to her room to find the Holy Spirit descending upon her in the form of a dove. From then on, he realized that St. Catherine was, indeed, a saint and he gave her a special prayer room under the stairs. There she spent the next couple of years praying and fasting until she joined the Third Order Dominicans (a lay order of the Dominicans) at the age of 18. St. Catherine was known in Siena for her service to the poor, her life of prayer, and her asceticism (practice of penance and mortification).

Many problems plagued the Church during St. Catherine's lifetime, and on fire with the Holy Spirit, she wrote vigorously to Church leaders encouraging them towards peace and love rather than division. One of the most famous interventions St. Catherine is known for is with Pope Gregory XI. Strangely, for a period of 67 years (a span of seven papacies), the pope lived in Avignon, France due to political division. St. Catherine boldly yet humbly implored Pope Gregory XI to move back to Rome for the good of the Church. In September of 1376, he did.

During her time and travels, she was sought out by many learned theologians who were astonished and humbled by the answers she gave. Throughout her life, she frequently received mystical visions, during which she was mystically married to Christ and was taught by

Him to read and write. In another encounter with Jesus, she received the stigmata which, out of humility, she asked would be invisible. Her conversations with God the Father, recorded by her followers while she was in a state of ecstasy, were collected into what's known as *The Dialogue of St. Catherine of Siena*. St. Catherine died in 1380 at the age of 33 (the same age that Christ died). For many years before her death, her only source of nutrition was the Eucharist, which she received daily. She was named a Doctor of the Church in 1970 and her writings are still read to this day.

St. Catherine of Siena reveals that from the simplest to the bravest among us, everyone is called to be a saint. What she said nearly 600 years ago still rings true today, "Be who God meant you to be and you will set the world on fire." Her life exhibits just this, the powerful influence of what it's like to give yourself completely to God's will.

"You must believe in truth that whatever God gives or permits is for your salvation." - St. Catherine of Siena

"Do you know, daughter, who you are and who I am? If you know these two things you will have beatitude within your grasp. You are she who is not, and I AM HE WHO IS." - Heavenly Father to St. Catherine of Siena

St. Catherine of Siena, pray for us!



Although she wore a Dominican habit, St. Catherine was not a professed religious sister.



Mystic Marriage of Saint Catherine of Siena by Clement de Torres