

ST. CATHERINE'S ACADEMY GAZETTE

Issue 19

NOVEMBER 2011



This month has been dedicated by Holy Mother Church to
~ The Suffering Souls in Purgatory ~

THE BEST THING FOR THE POOR SOULS

Everybody knows that we can help the poor souls in purgatory and hasten their entrance into heaven. And everybody knows how - by hearing Mass for them, by offering Holy Communion for them, by prayers and pious practices, like sprinkling the graves with holy water and countless other ways, by giving alms, by acts of mortification. But nothing avails so much to help them as having Masses said for them. About this I'll tell you a little story.

It's about Blessed Henry Suso, O.P. He once made an agreement with a fellow Dominican that the one who would outlive the other should say a certain number of Masses for the repose of the one who died first. A few years later this friend of Henry Suso's died. When the sad news reached him, Blessed Suso could not at once say the promised Masses, as other intentions had been given him. But he prayed earnestly for his friend; he fasted; he scourged himself in his behalf. But what do you think happened? I'll tell you.

One day his departed friend suddenly appeared to him, looking unspeakably sad, and said to him - Oh, so reproachfully, "False friend, why have you not kept the sacred promise you made me?"

You can imagine how startled and alarmed Blessed Suso was. "Oh, my friend, be not angry with me," he pleaded. "I really could not say the Masses as yet; but I have offered many prayers for you; I have fasted, I have chastised my body for you."

But the apparition answered, "Your prayers are not powerful enough to deliver me out of the torments I endure. The Blood of Jesus Christ, consecrated and offered up in Holy Mass, alone avails to set me free. If you had said the promised Masses I would be released from my prison by this time. It is all your fault that I am still a prey to the devouring flames." And many other things of a like kind did he say. Then he disappeared.

Father Suso was overwhelmed with grief and sorrow. As soon as he could, he hastened to his Superior, told him all that had occurred, and begged his permission to set aside for a time the other Masses and be allowed to say those he had promised to his friend. Of course the permission was gladly given.

Inside this issue:

Quiz on Doctrine	2
She Sold Her Jewels For Food	3
Maze	6
Coloring picture	9
Petition for the Holy Souls in Purgatory	14
Advent Customs	17
Christmas Novena	19





When the Masses had been said the soul of the dear departed again appeared to Blessed Henry Suso. "I am now at rest," he said, in a voice full of the joy of heaven, "and I will pray for you."

~"Just Stories," Imprimatur 1929 ~

"We must take great care never to do anything before having said our Morning Prayers.... The devil once declared....that if he could have the first moment of the day, he was sure of all the rest."
 Cure D'Arts ~ Sermon on the First Commandment

PRAYER FOR RISING

I rise in the Name of the Father,
 Who created me,
 The Son, Who redeemed me,
 And the Holy Ghost, Who sanctifies me,
 May the Blessed Trinity preserve me from
 All dangers of soul and body. Amen.



QUIZ ON DOCTRINE

1. What is theology?
2. What is dogma?
3. Is a Catholic free to believe certain doctrines of the Church while rejecting others?
4. What is meant by (a) the Church Militant, (b) the Church Suffering, and (c) the Church Triumphant?
5. What is a catechism?
6. What are the principal marks of the True Church?
7. Is the assumption of the Blessed Mother in Heaven an article of faith?
8. What is an indulgence?
9. To gain an indulgence, is it necessary to be in a state of grace?
10. What is the Beatific Vision?

~ "A Catholic Quiz Book," Imprimatur 1945 ~

Answers to quiz on the last page of the newsletter.



SHE SOLD HER JEWELS FOR FOOD

Saint Elizabeth of Hungary



HE SMELL of warm, fresh bread filled the castle kitchen. As the baker opened the oven door to peek inside, he felt a tiny tug at the corner of his big, white apron.

“Please, may I have some bread and a pot of jam?” asked a very small voice. It was Elizabeth, the pretty, six-year-old princess of the castle.

“Are you so hungry, little princess, that you cannot wait till dinner to taste my cooking?” teased the jolly baker.

“Oh no! It’s not for me!” Elizabeth shook her curly brown head. “There are some poor, starving beggars at the gate. I would like to give them a bit of food.”

“Those beggars again! If the duchess catches you feeding them, she will give you another scolding,” warned the servant as he wrapped the bread and jam in her satin cloak.

“Thank you, oh, thank you!” The princess beamed at the baker, then darted out the kitchen door.



The gates of Wartburg Castle were very heavy. Elizabeth's rosy cheeks grew even redder when she pulled the great metal doors open a narrow slit and squeezed through. Happily, she gave her gifts of food to the beggars. One special present she slipped into the grimy hands of a very raggedy girl. "It is a comb that the duke gave me. Now you have something pretty to wear in your hair!" Elizabeth kissed the beggar girl on the cheek and slipped back inside the gates.



THE CASTLE belonged to Duke Herman of Thuringia. When Elizabeth was only four years old, the duke had visited her father, King Andrew of Hungary. He asked if the princess could marry his oldest son, Louis. King Andrew thought it was a fine idea. He sent his infant daughter to Germany, to grow up beside the eleven-year-old boy chosen to be her husband.

While the old duke lived, Elizabeth was very happy. Hermann loved her like his own daughter. In his court, the little Hungarian learned to do all the thing expected of a thirteenth-century German princess. She could read and write Latin, play the lute, sew and spin, even ride a horse and hunt with a hawk.

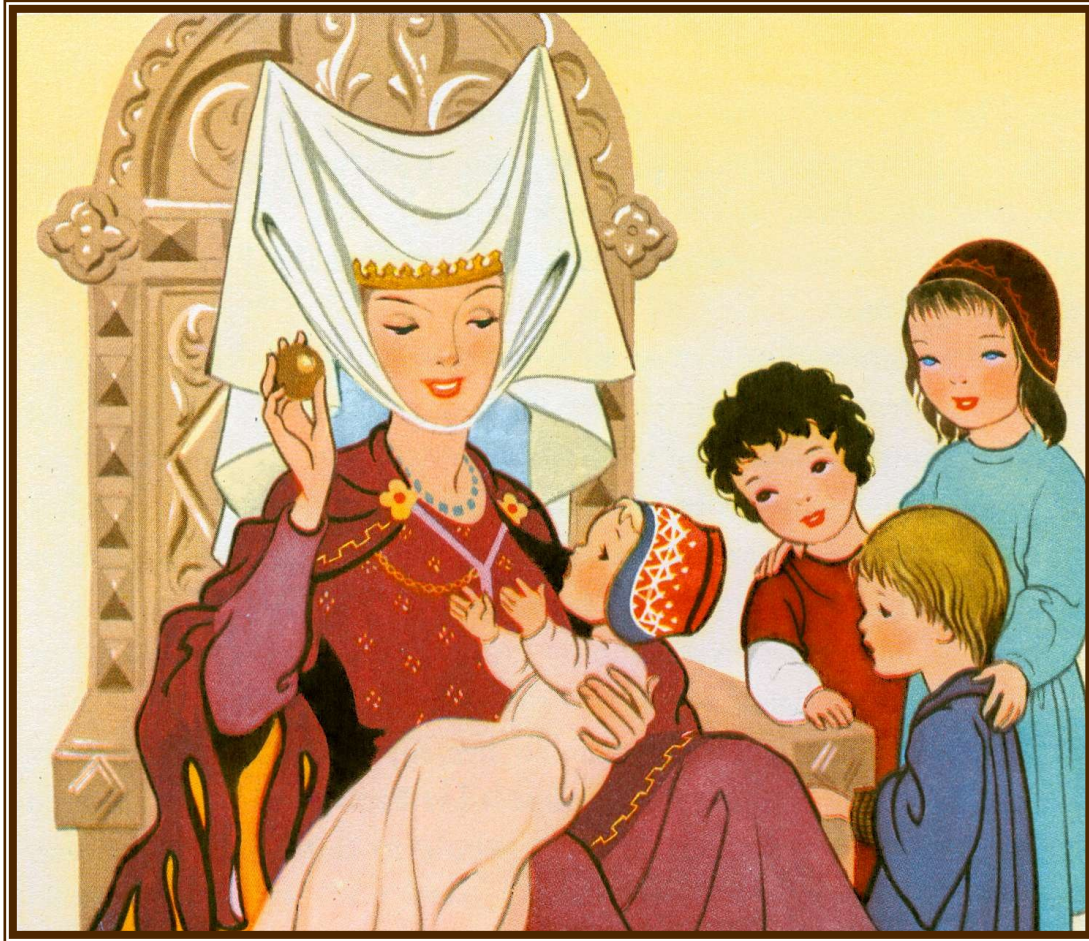
Elizabeth always kept very close to God. While her girl friends played hide-and-seek in the towers and dark dungeons of the castle, she would run off to the chapel to talk to the Infant Jesus. If she were winning a game, she would suddenly say to her playmates: "Enough success. I want to stop now for the love of Christ." Elizabeth made a kind of prayer out of every song she sang and every step she danced.

But the Wartburg was not a holy place. Many of the court members were wicked. They did not like the princess because her goodness made them feel very guilty. Even the duchess and her daughter often said mean things about her. "Elizabeth is a disgrace! She acts like a servant girl, not a princess. Elizabeth would rather wait on beggars than play with the royal children!"

When the old duke died, the duchess wanted Louis to break his engagement to Elizabeth, and send her back to Hungary. The boy – still only sixteen – answered his mother very firmly: "I love Elizabeth with all my heart. Nothing on earth can ever persuade me to part with her."



FINALLY, when Louis was twenty-one and Elizabeth fourteen, they were married. The couple had prepared very carefully for this precious sacrament. They were very happy together, and could hardly bear to be separated from each other. God blessed them with four lovely babies – a boy and three girls.



As mistress of the castle, Elizabeth gave even more to the poor. The court members were shocked by the hundreds of beggars and lepers who clambered up the mountainside to get alms at the castle. They were even more shocked to see their princess dress herself in old clothes, load her arms with food, and walk down the hill to care for the sick in the city below.

Once, when Louis was away in Italy, there was a great famine in the country. Elizabeth emptied the duke's treasuries to build hospitals and buy food. When she ran out of cash, she even sold her clothes and jewels. Everyone expected Louis to be very angry with her because she had spent so much money. Instead, the duke praised his generous wife. "Let her do what she wants," he said. "She gives for the love of God."



N 1227, the Pope asked the Emperor Frederick II to raise a great army to free the Holy Land from the Turks. Duke Louis took the cross of the Crusader eagerly. He was not so eager, however, to leave his little family. "I am going to the Holy War to rescue the tomb of our crucified Savior," he explained to his heart-broken wife.

Tearfully, Elizabeth followed her knight to the edge of the country, kissed him good-bye, and went back home to her children and her charities. Louis never came back. Even before he reached the Holy Land, he died in an epidemic.



As soon as a messenger arrived at the castle with news of Louis's death, his brother Henry took control of Thuringia. Henry wanted all the power for himself. One very cold and snowy night, Elizabeth had to leave home with her young children. Henry sent out word that they were not to be given shelter by any of the villagers. The widow was forced to spend the night in the pig sty of an inn outside the city. No one would help her and her babies were hungry. At last, Elizabeth found refuge in a convent, where her aunt was the superior.

In time, Elizabeth's friends came to her support. Her father, King Andrew, offered to send troops to punish her brother-in-law. Elizabeth refused; she did not want the German people to suffer in another war.



WHEN THE Crusaders brought Louis's body home to be buried, Duke Henry repented. He asked Elizabeth to forgive him his cruelty. Then he returned all the lands and money that were rightfully hers, and promised that he would guard the country for her son, until he was old enough to rule.

Elizabeth had decided what to do with her life. She arranged to have her children taken care of, gave away all her money to the poor, and put on forever the rough brown robes of the Sisters of St. Francis. For the next three years, she waited on the sick, cared for lepers and did penance. Elizabeth died peniless, but she had stored up a great wealth of grace in her soul. God was pleased with her. He granted so many favors to people who prayed in her name, that the Church gave her the title of saint four years after death.

Her feast day is November 19th ~ St. Elizabeth of Hungary, Pray for us!

Please help
The Poor
Souls in
Purgatory
Reach
Heaven!

Pray
For them
Daily!!

Heaven

Poor Souls in
Purgatory



DEATH

“In all thy works remember thy last end, and thou shalt never sin.” (Eccles. 7:40)

We are all interested in the next world. We ought to be. It concerns each one of us. It is moreover very mysterious. A dark cloud hangs over that region beyond the grave. There are many things in this present life that are baffling enough, but when we begin to ponder the life after death, we are thrice bewildered. None of us can escape death. Each one of us will have to enter the mysterious world of the great beyond. Death and what follows must then be of vital and personal concern to each one of us.

Death is the entrance into the next world. But first of all what is death?

Death is the separation of soul and body, the disintegration or coming apart of a human being, in such a way that the visible part of man, the body, lies helpless and dead, while the spiritual part of man, the thinking, knowing, feeling, conscious soul passes on, still alive, into the shadows of life's night.

How often we have paid our respects to the departed! You probably have stood before a casket and gazed thoughtfully on a face of death. A face that once was lit by a human smile, now wears a mask of death. Those features, once so supple and vibrant, are now as cold and rigid as if carved from eternal rock. A face that once responded to our every word and emotion now lies there motionless and cold. If we touch the immobile features, a cold chill runs through our veins. We stand in the presence of death.

No one doubts the reality of death. It is a fact so certain as to convince one skeptical of almost everything else. A scoffer might reject a life after death, might even question the reality of this present life, but in the presence of death he can do little else but admit it. It is Catholic doctrine that in death the human body and soul are separated. As long as both are united, the person lives. As soon as they are separated, the person is dead.

Priests and medical men rightly wonder at what precise moment the soul leaves the body. It is difficult to say. Motion is a pretty sure sign of life. Putrefaction or decay is a sure sign of death. But in between evident motion and putrefaction there may be quite a span of time in which actual and complete death is reasonably doubtful.

A person whose heart has ceased to beat and whose breath can no longer be discerned is apparently dead. There are the recognized signs of death: lack of pulse, no breath, dilation of the pupils, no reflex action when the eyeball is touched. The physician may pronounce him dead. No means at present known to science can revive him. He will before long be actually dead. But in the meantime the soul may still be lingering in the body. That is why a priest called to a Catholic seemingly dead will give conditional absolution and conditional extreme unction. If the person is not yet fully dead and if, before losing consciousness, he has been rightly disposed, the sacraments will aid him. If death has already taken place, the sacraments cannot touch that which is already far off in eternity, beyond the reach of the sacraments, which are for wayfarers on earth.

A priest might administer the sacraments conditionally to one apparently dead a half hour after he seemed to die, or even two hours after, if death was sudden. When one wastes away by sickness, actually death probably comes soon after apparent death. But when a man, say, in vigorous and robust condition is suddenly knocked down in an accident, the soul may linger in his body for quite some time.



Death is an absolute thing. A person is either alive or dead. There is no such thing as being half-dead. However, we can think of a person dying by inches, so to speak. In much the same way as we think of life departing from an amputated arm or leg, so we can conceive of life as receding from the extremities of the body, while lingering still in its more vital parts.

Death is the most important event in the life of a Christian. For as we die, so we will remain forever. As long as body and soul are together one can always change one way or the other. We can fall into sin, or repent. We can get better or worse. Death, however, falls with a terrific finality. It fixes us forever in the condition of soul which we happen to be in at that all-important moment.

No wonder then that the Church has us say in the *Hail Mary*: “Pray for us sinners now and at the hour of our death.” If we obtain Mary’s help to live a good life now, we will have less reason to fear the hour of death; for as we live, so shall we die.

As long as we are alive and in the state of sanctifying grace, we gain merit by every good action that we perform, even by the ordinary daily actions of life that do not seem to be very important. But death stops all that. Merit ends at death. And as we have lived here on earth, so we will be rewarded. The time of work is over. The night has come in which no man can work.

The separated soul leaves its companion, the body. It is immediately judged and assigned to its proper place. But just what can it do?

Without the body, how can it see or hear or feel or move?

As a matter of fact, it can do all these things, because the soul is a spirit, and a spirit has understanding and will.

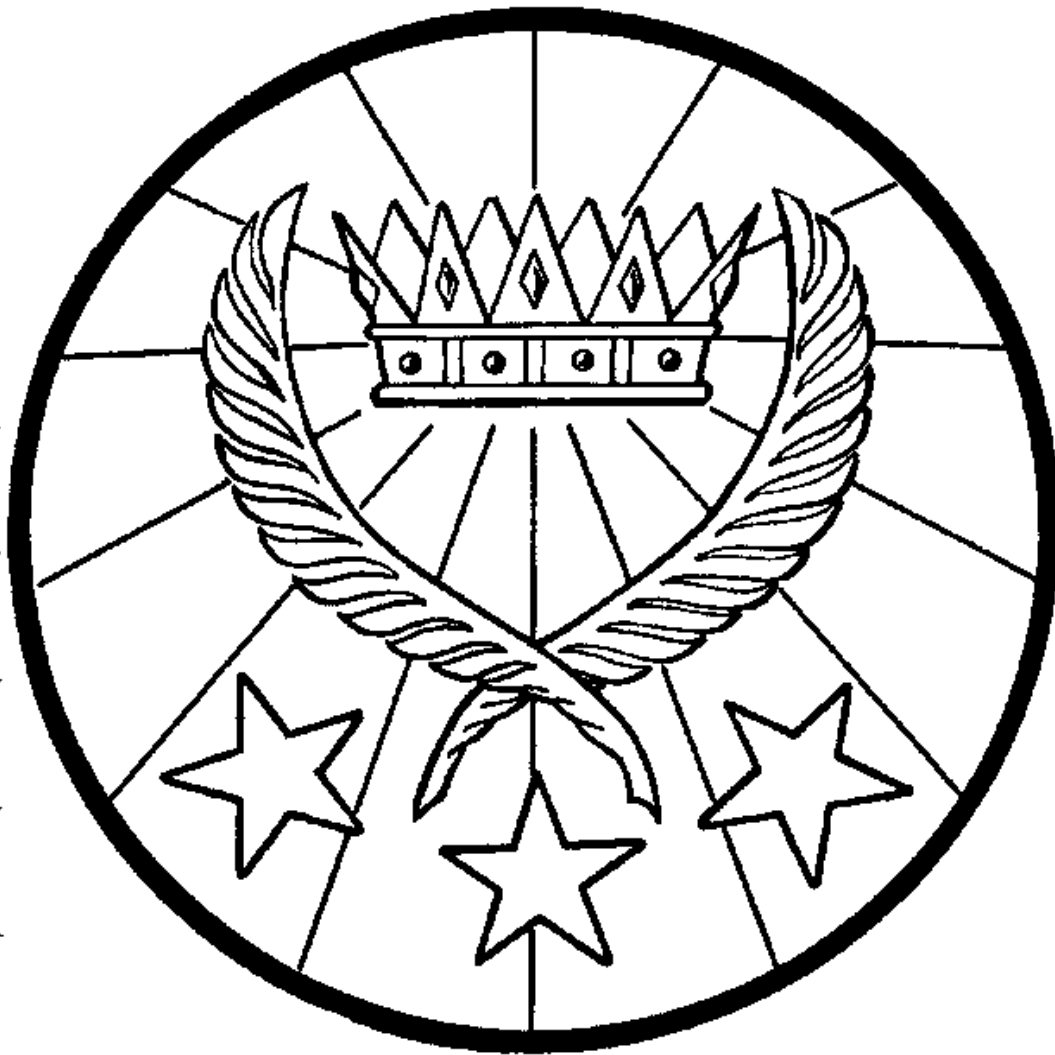
The body is, after all, a kind of burden. A spirit does very well without a body. God the Father has no body. Yet He is perfection itself. The Holy Spirit guides and sanctifies the Church without employing a body. The angels have no bodies. But we human beings do have bodies. Our bodies are meant to be united to our souls. Man, since he is made up of body and soul, is incomplete without the body. But even so, the soul as a spirit can live without the body, as it actually does for the interval - who knows how long it will be? - between death and the final resurrection.

~ “Come the End,” *Imprimatur* 1951 ~





Sainthood



According to the vision of St. John, the saints in glory wear crowns upon their heads (Rev. 2:10, 4:4) and carry palms in their hands (Rev. 7:9). These two emblems are a mark of their happiness obtained by victory through Christ. The stars signify heaven, the abode in which they dwell for all eternity.



JESUS AND THE LITTLE CHILDREN

The soft glow of early evening had settled over the hill of Judea when Jesus and His Apostles were seen on the highway. Their sandals were covered with dust, and their slow, weary steps gave signs that the travelers had come from afar.

They had walked from the shores of Lake Galilee. Jesus loved this beautiful lake. But now He left His favorite place to preach to the people of Judea.

Jesus and His companions sat down to rest near an old stone well just outside the walls of the city. A young woman of the town came to fill her jars with water. When she saw Jesus and His friends, she hastened to tell the people of the town that the Master had come. Everyone was eager to see the Man Who had made the lame walk and the blind see.

The Apostles were very tired, and they knew that Jesus was more tired than they, for He had spent the night in prayer. They spoke to the people, and tried to send them back to their homes. But the people paid no attention to them. They had come to see Jesus and to hear Him, and nothing could turn them away.

Mothers carrying their sick children forced their way through the crowd, so that Jesus might bless their little ones. The blind, holding tightly to their leaders, pushed others aside in their efforts to have the good Master place His hand upon their eyes.

Jesus was never too tired to help the needy. He was never too weary to listen to the prayers of those who suffered. Finally the talking of the crowd died away, and Jesus began to speak. How eagerly the people listened to every word that fell from His holy lips!

Eager little boys and girls stood in the crowd but could see nothing. They were almost buried among the grown folks. They could hear the kind voice of the Master, but they wanted to see His face and hold His hand. Some of the braver ones worked through the crowd to the very feet of Jesus. They shyly placed their arms around Him as He tenderly embraced them.

Others, sitting on the shoulders of their fathers or peeking through the crowd, saw their playmates near Jesus. They also wanted to go to Him. More began to make their way towards Jesus. This angered the Apostles and many of the older people. They roughly pushed the children back, and told them to go home. The Apostles told the mothers to take their children away, because they were bothering the Master.

Our Lord heard the sharp voices of the men, and soon the sobbing of the children reached His ears. He asked what was the matter. When He was told that the men were driving the children away, He called the children to Him. He told the men to stand back and make way for them. The people never forgot His words. "Suffer the little children to come onto Me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of God," He said.

Smiles covered the faces of the little ones as they gathered about the Lord. Children in red, blue, green and gold tunics clamored to kiss the hand of Jesus. Now and then He took a crippled child from the arms of its mother, kissed it, and gave it back to her cured. He twisted His slender fingers in and out among the curls of some of the little girls.



He embraced them lovingly and kissed them one and all. Some sat at His feet and looked into His kind, sweet face. Others placed their arms about Him. A few just stood before Him and gazed in silent awe. They loved the gentle Jesus, and Jesus loved them.

The Apostles and many of the others thought that Jesus was wasting His time on these little children. The older people wanted Jesus to talk to them. Now, Jesus was God, and He knew what they were thinking. So He took a little child from the crowd, and placed him upon a stone nearby. Then He preached a sermon to the people, telling them that unless they became as little children, they could not enter the kingdom of heaven. Our Lord looks upon little children as pure, good and holy. As they grow older He wants them to keep like that.

Our dear Lord loves all children. He is always ready to hear their prayers and to give them His blessing. How would you have liked to have been with the little children whom Jesus kissed and blessed? You can have the same honor if you wish. God rests on the altar of your Church just as truly as He rested near the town of Judea. By making a little visit to Him in the Sacrament of His Love, you can talk to Him as freely as did the children of Judea, and He will give you the same blessing He gave to them.

~ "A Child's Garden of Religion Stories," Imprimatur 1929 ~



Your life lies before you, like a blanket of snow.
Be careful how you tread it, For every step will show!



MATCH THE SAINTS TO THEIR SYMBOLS

- | | |
|---------------------------|---|
| 1. St. Ignatius Loyola | a. Lily. Dove. Benedictine habit. |
| 2. Sts. Cosmos and Damien | b. Lily. |
| 3. St. John the Baptist | c. Franciscan habit. Stigmata. |
| 4. St. Agnes, VM | d. Leg, pointing to a wound in. Sometimes a dog. |
| 5. St. Roch | e. Lamb, olive branch. Palm. |
| 6. St. Joseph | f. Lamb, cross. |
| 7. St. Francis of Assisi | g. Surgical instruments, two men in red robes. Palms. |
| 8. St. Scholastica | h. I.H.S. in the sky. Heart crowned by thorns. |



Prayer for the Souls in Purgatory, to be said when the Church Bell is tolled or after the Evening Angelus.

Thy mercy, Lord, we humbly crave
 For souls whom Thou didst die to save.
 Suffering amidst the cleansing fire,
 To see Thy face they yet aspire.
 Grant them, O Lord, a swift release,
 And bring them where all pain shall cease.

Eternal rest give unto all the faithful
 Departed, O Lord, and let perpetual
 Light shine upon them. May they
 Rest in peace. Amen.

~ *The Catechism Explained* ~Spirago-Clarke
 Imprimatur 1927



St. Elizabeth of Hungary ~ Feast day, November 19th.

J.A.W. "11" ©

If thou have much
Give abundantly:
If thou have little
Take care even so to
Bestow willingly
A little.

Tobias 4; 9.

And be ye kind
One to another:
Merciful,
Forgiving one another,
Even as God hath
Forgiven you
In Christ.

Ephesians 4; 32.



PETITION FOR THE HOLY SOULS IN PURGATORY

O my God, I recommend to Thy clemency the holy in purgatory, and especially those to whom I am most indebted by the bond of charity or of justice; and chiefly I implore Thee in behalf of those who, during their life, have been most devout to the Blessed Sacrament; as also those who have loved the Blessed Virgin. For this I offer Thee, my good Jesus, Thy wounds, Thy agony, Thy death, and all the merits of Thy most bitter passion. I know that it is Thy pleasure I should pray for these holy souls, who are so worthy of Thy love. Hear then, dear Lord, and grant this my prayer in their behalf, which I present to Thee in the words of Thy holy Church: "Eternal rest give unto them, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them."

~ "My Prayer Book," Imprimatur 1908 ~



Saints are God's flowers, fragrant souls
 That His own hand hath planted,
 Not in some far-off heavenly place,
 Or solitude enchanted,
 But here and there and everywhere,
 In lonely field and crowded town,
 God sees a flower when He looks down.

Some wear the lily's stainless white,
 And some the rose of passion,
 And some the violet's heavenly blue,
 But each in its own fashion,
 With silent bloom and soft perfume,
 Is praising Him, Who, from above,
 Beholds each lifted face of love.

~ Henry Van Dyke ~

THE LAST JUDGEMENT

When the Son of man shall come in His majesty, and all the angels with Him, then shall He sit upon the seat of his majesty.

And all the nations shall be gathered before Him, and He shall separate them one from another, as the shepherd separates the sheep from the goats.

And He shall set the sheep on His right hand, and the goats on His left.

Then shall the King say to them that shall be on His right hand: "Come, ye blessed of My Father, possess ye the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.

"For I was hungry and you gave Me to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave Me to drink; I was a stranger, and you took Me in; I was naked, and you covered Me; I was sick, and you visited Me; I was in prison, and you came to Me."

Then shall the just answer Him, saying: "Lord, when did we see Thee hungry, and feed Thee; when did we see Thee thirsty, and gave Thee drink?

"When did we see Thee a stranger, and take Thee in; when did we see Thee naked, and covered Thee?

"When did we see Thee sick or in prison, and came to Thee?"

The King answering shall say to them: "Amen, I say to thee, as long as you did it to one



of these, My least Brethren, you did it to Me.”

Then He shall say to them also that shall be on His left hand: “Depart from Me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire which was prepared for the devil and his angels. “For I was hungry, and you gave Me not to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave Me not to drink. “I was a stranger, and you did not take Me in; I was sick and in prison, and you did not visit Me.” Then they also shall answer Him, saying: “Lord, when did we see Thee hungry, or thirsty, or a stranger, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister to Thee?” Then He shall answer them, saying: “Amen, I say to you, as long as you did it not to one of these least, neither did you do it to Me.

“These shall go into everlasting punishment; but the just, into life everlasting.”

(Matthew 25: 31-46)

THE MONTH OF THE HOLY SOULS

November is the month of the Holy Souls. During November the Church would have us keep in mind those who, departing this life in God’s grace, are not entirely free from venial sins or have not fully paid the satisfaction due to their sins, and, hence, are detained in Purgatory before being admitted to the joys of Heaven.

The Catholic Church has always offered prayers for the dead. The writings of the Fathers of the Church and the inscriptions on early Christian monuments, particularly in the catacombs at Rome, attest to this fact. The Council of Trent tells us that those detained in Purgatory “are helped by the prayers of the faithful and especially by the acceptable Sacrifice of the altar.” Prayer for the dead is prominently found in the Liturgy of the Church. Not only is All Soul’s Day commemorated, but in daily Holy Mass there is a memento of the Faithful departed. Special Masses are found in the Missal. Besides the Mass on the day of death or burial, other requiem Masses are authorized by the Church: on the third day, to inspire us with hope for our dead because of the resurrection of Christ on the third day; on the seventh day, to remind us that, as God rested from the work of creation on the seventh day, so our beloved dead now rest from the toil and labor of life. The Month’s Mind, or Mass on the thirteenth day, is in imitation of the Children of Israel, who mourned the death of Moses and Aaron for thirty days. There is a special Mass for the anniversary of the death of one or more of the Faithful.

While the Church teaches us to pray for the souls of the dead, it also teaches us to respect the bodies of the deceased. It forbids the cremation of the body and bids us remember that it was the dwelling-place of the soul and will arise from the grave to share with the soul eternal joy or punishment. The body is brought to the church of God and there placed before the altar; it is incensed, sprinkled with Holy Water, and a cross and lighted candles are placed near it to teach us that it was the companion of the soul in life, and, through the cross of Christ, will be the companion of the soul for eternity. When for some reason the body cannot be brought to the church, a catafalque is provided, and over it, as representing the body of the deceased, the celebrant reads the various prayers and performs the ceremonies which ordinarily take place over the body of a departed one.

We do not confine to November our prayers for the dead, but we should remember them in a special way during this month. It is a consoling thought for us that when our time of death will have come, we can depart this life knowing that we shall be helped by the prayers of the Faithful to render the satisfaction due for our sins. Let us now, by our prayers, help the Holy Souls, as we hope that one day we shall be helped by the prayers of the Faithful.

~ “Can You Explain Catholic Practices?” *Imprimatur* 1937 ~



Advent begins this year on November 27

WE AWAIT A SAVIOR

Advent is the beginning of the new liturgical year. It is a season of spiritual preparation, marked by eager longing for the coming of the Saviour through grace at Christmas, and for His second and final coming. It is also an ideal time to establish in our homes liturgical customs which will restore our children to Christ.

In our family we use these age-old Advent practices to help our children live closer to Christ and His Church during the pre-Christmas season. Time-tested and proven, the customs teach the doctrines of redemption and develop a generosity with God and a coordination of the family's spiritual efforts as effectively now as they did for our forebears. Their strong and living faith will be the heritage of our children if family religious practices, centered in the Liturgy, "the normal school of sanctity for the laity," become established in our homes.

Secularism has invaded our households. In the pamphlet "Your Home a Church in Miniature," it says of family customs and blessings: "They are a relatively simple, but highly important, means of union between altar and home. They are a media for channeling from one great spiritual reservoir, given into the Church's keeping by Christ, the living and transforming waters of grace from the Saviour's fountain."

Children, who love the beauty and simplicity of family religious practices, make the traditions easy to establish. As a rule it is best to begin with one or two customs and add others in years to come. It is also highly desirable that families develop their own special customs, at least by adapting traditional ones to their personal circumstances. Once established, customs recall to older members of the family long forgotten practices of their own childhood. These have a special appeal because they belonged to our forefathers and link us to the wealth of national customs now fallen into disuse.



ADVENT WREATH

Most popular of the Advent customs handed down to us is the Advent wreath made of evergreens, bound to a circle of wire. German in origin--it was taken, so we are told, from the pagan fire wheel--the wreath represents the cycle of thousands of years from Adam to Christ during which the world awaited the coming of a Redeemer. It also represents the cycle of years since then that we have been awaiting His second and final coming in glory. It bears four candles, equally spaced, three purple ones to be lighted on the "penitential" Sundays, and a rose-colored one for Gaudete, the joyful Sunday in Advent. Candles may be placed inside or outside the wreath. Any kind of Christmas wreath such as those hung in windows may be used. It may be set on a kitchen or dining room table, on an end table in the living room, or in a child's bedroom. However, it is most appealing when suspended by four purple ribbons from a light fixture in the ceiling. When our children were small we bought a large, permanently preserved pine wreath and used it year after year. Now that they are going to school they help to make a new one each Advent.

Inexpensive and easy to assemble is the wreath we make from a bunch or two of laurel leaves bound to



a circle of wire from coat hangers. The evergreens are secured by fine wire to the circle. Candles and ribbons are added as the wreath is put together. Laurel is practical because it does not shed when suspended over the dining room table. Moreover, laurel is a symbol of victory, and thus reminds us that Christ's coming means victory over sin and death. Loveliest of wreaths and fragrant, too, is one of fresh princess pine. When we use that type, we hang it in the living room and add a single silver star to it each evening in Advent when the candles are lighted for prayers. Stars are cut from metallic paper.

The home ceremony for use of the Advent wreath is simple. It consists of Collects, hymns and prayers proper to the Advent season. We have put it together as follows. On the first Sunday of Advent, our family gathers for the blessing of the wreath by the father of the family, who begins:

Father: Our help is in the Name of the Lord.

All answer: Who made heaven and earth.

Father: Let us pray. O God, by whose word all things are sanctified, pour forth Thy blessing upon this wreath, and grant that we who use it may prepare our hearts for the coming of Christ and may receive from Thee abundant graces. Through Christ our Lord.

All: Amen.

He sprinkles the wreath with holy water. Then the youngest child, lights the first candle, and the prayer for the first week is said.

Father: Let us pray. Exert we beseech Thee, O Lord, thy power and come; that by Thy protection we may be freed from the imminent dangers of our sins, and be saved by Thy mercy; Who livest and reignest God, world without end.

All: Amen.

During the first week one candle is left burning during the evening meal, at prayers or at bedtime. Two candles are lighted on the second Sunday and allowed to burn as before. The prayer for the week is:

Father: Let us pray. Stir up, O Lord, our hearts to prepare the ways of Thy only-begotten Son: that by His coming we may be enabled to serve Thee with pure minds; Who livest and reignest God, world without end. Amen.

All: Amen.

Three candles, including the rose candle, are lighted on Gaudete, the third Sunday, and during that week. The following prayer is said:

Father: Let us pray. Bend Thine ear, O Lord, we beseech Thee, to our prayers, and enlighten the darkness of our minds by the grace of Thy visitation; Who livest and reignest God, world without end.



All four candles are lighted on the fourth Sunday and allowed to burn as before. The prayer said the fourth week is:

Father: Let us pray. Exert, we beseech Thee, O Lord, Thy power and come; and succour us by Thy great might; that by the assistance of Thy grace, Thy indulgent mercy may hasten what is delayed by our sins; Who livest and reignest God, world without end.

All: Amen.

~ *The Year and Our Children - Imprimatur 1956* ~



ON THE FEAST OF ST. ANDREW IT IS CUSTOMARY TO START THE FOLLOWING CHRISTMAS NOVENA

Hail and blessed be the hour and the moment in which the Son of God was born of the most pure Virgin Mary, at midnight, in Bethlehem, in piercing cold.

In that hour vouchsafe, O my God! to hear my prayer and grant my desires, through the merits of Our Savior Jesus Christ, and of His most holy Mother. Amen.

(Imprimatur + Michael Augustine, Archbishop of New York, 1897)

It is piously believed that whoever recites the above prayer each day from the feast of St. Andrew (November 30) until Christmas will obtain what is asked.)

Answers to Doctrine Quiz

1. Theology is the science of knowledge which we have or can have of God and divine things.
2. A truth contained in the word of God, written or unwritten, and proposed by the Church for universal belief. Some of the dogmas of the Church are:
the infallibility of the Pope, the Trinity, and the Divinity of Christ.
3. No; as Cardinal Gibbons says, "Should a Catholic be so unfortunate as contumaciously to deny a single article of faith, or withdraw from the communion of his legitimate pastors, he ceases to be a member of the Church..."

4. (a) The faithful on earth, who are struggling for salvation, (b) the faithful in Purgatory, who are being purified of the last stains and consequences of their sins, (c) the faithful in heaven, who have attained salvation.
5. A summary of Christian doctrine, usually in the form of question and answer, for the instruction of Christian people.
6. It is One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic.
7. No; but Pope Benedict XIV (1675 - 1758) stated that it was a probable opinion which it is impious to deny.
8. The remission, in whole or part, of the temporal punishment still due to sin after sacramental absolution.
9. Yes, it is necessary to be in a state of grace, and to have already obtained, by true repentance, forgiveness of those sins for which the temporal punishment is to be remitted by the indulgence.
10. The Beatific Vision is the direct vision or the direct knowledge of God, which the angelic spirits and the souls of the just enjoy in Heaven.

Answers to Saint/Symbol Match Up

1. h, 2. g, 3. f, 4. e, 5. b, 6. b, 7. c, 8. a

NEWSLETTER 19

This is a series of *Catholic Gazettes* for children. We are trying to put a little information in each gazette for all ages. We pray that it will help all to know and love the Faith better. It is put together by the students of St. Catherine's Academy as part of their Language, Religion, Art and Typing Courses. A.M.D.G. We hope you enjoy it. If you have any suggestions, ideas or comments please let us know at : <jwillson61@charter.net>

God Bless all of you!

Tim, the father of this clan, Timmy, Mary, Sarah, Katie, Patrick, Elizabeth and the teacher, Julie. God is good!!

~ ALL ARTICLES ARE MEANT TO BE IN KEEPING WITH THE SOUND TEACHINGS OF THE HOLY ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH, WHICH IS THE SAME CHURCH FOUNDED BY OUR LORD AND SAVIOUR JESUS CHRIST AND WILL LAST UNTIL THE END OF TIME.~