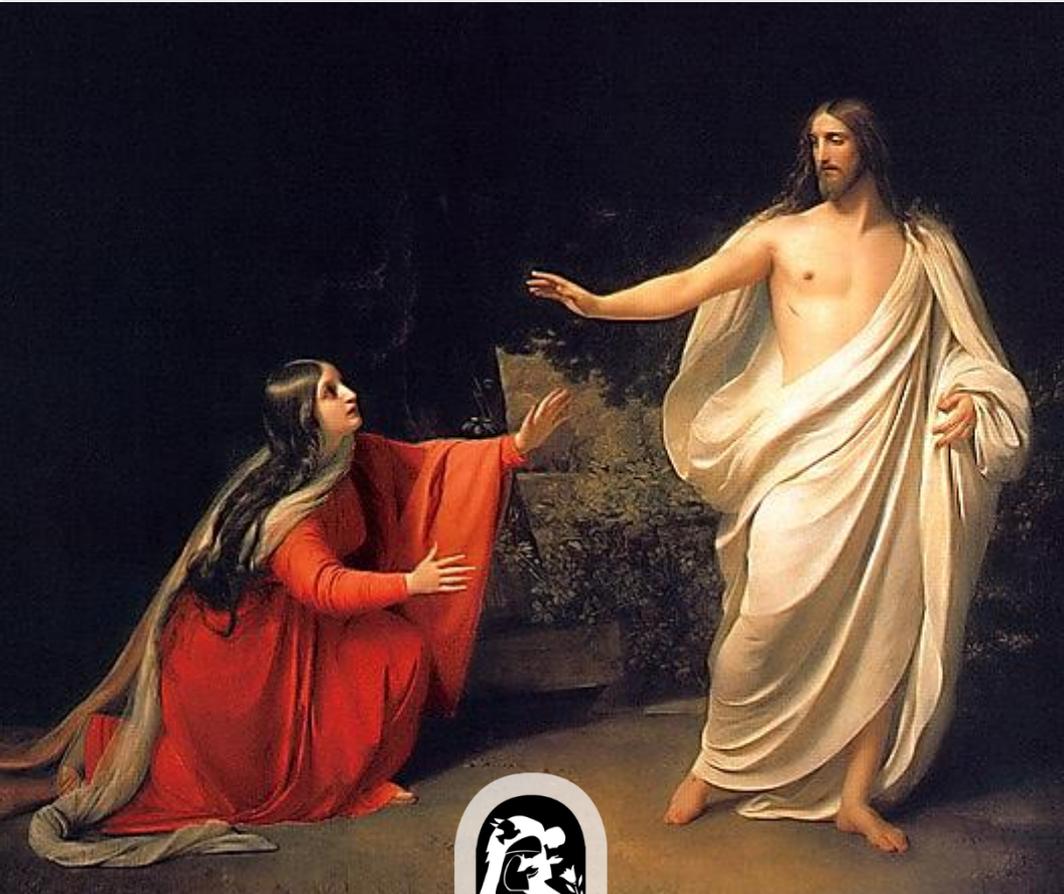


STRICTLY NOT FOR SALE

July 2022
ISSUE

Unki

SUNDAY GOSPEL REFLECTIONS
& CATECHESSES



DOMINICAN NOVITIATE OF THE ANNUNCIATION
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ISSUE

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BINHI is the official monthly publication of the novices of the Dominican Novitiate of the Annunciation at the Minor Basilica of Our Lady of the Rosary of Manaoag. Featured in it are the reflections of the novices on the Sunday Gospels of the current month, short catechesis regarding our faith, and the lives of selected saints, especially that of the Dominican Order. **BINHI** aims to aid the faithful nurturing the seed of the Word of God by providing practical and relevant points to reflect on.

Catechism of the Month

“Saint Mary Magdalene”

CATECHISM OF THE MONTH by Br. Mark Jammie Gotengco

The story of St. Mary Magdalene is one of the most moving and encouraging in the Holy Scriptures. The famous penitent woman mentioned by St. Luke was, by her perfect conversion, an inspiring example and model of repentance to all succeeding centuries. She is called the sinner. This seems to imply that she led a lewd and disorderly life.

Mary Magdalene probably received her name from Magdala, a place on the western shore of the sea of Galilee, near Tiberias. Our Lord first met her on His Galilean ministry. It was gratitude and religious zeal that devoted her to our Divine Redeemer after so great an assistance. She followed him almost everywhere he went that she might have an opportunity of attending to all his sacred directions, and of exercising her love in caring for him.

In the gloomiest hour of our Lord's life, she stood at some distance, watching Him on the cross; and with “the other Mary” she saw the great stone rolled before the door of the tomb wherein lay the body of the Lord. But the crowning mercy of the life of Mary Magdalene was yet to come, for it was she who, bearing sweet spices and weeping by the sepulchre early on the first day of the week, was the first to see, to be greeted by, and to recognize, the Risen Christ. The penitent sinner, Mary Magdalene, was the first witness to that resurrection without which our faith and our preaching are alike vain; it was to the abused flesh of the penitent that the radiant and glorified body of the Son of God was first made manifest. It is by this virtue that the Order of Preachers named her among its patrons. They have regarded her as the “Apostle to the Apostles.” The Order has compared the mission of Magdalene in announcing the resurrection to their own mission.



The name of Mary Magdalene deserves special honour, particularly at a time when women are struggling to be heard in the church and society. On the last chapter of her life, according to ancient tradition, she accompanied John to Ephesus, where she died; a later unfounded pious legend in the West had her going to Provence, France, with Martha and Lazarus and dying there on July 22 on whose feast is celebrated by the church.

JULY

3

God Alone Suffices

REFLECTION on the 14TH Sunday in Ordinary Time (Lk 10:1-2, 17-20)

by Br. Vincentius Teguh Samudra

Before sending 72 other disciples, Jesus said to them, “Set off without purse or bag or sandals; and do not stop at the homes of those you know.” Can you imagine ourselves sent by Jesus like so? In today’s context, that message would probably sound like this: “Set off without all your gadgets. Leave your phones, laptops, tablets, and other electronic devices. Wear not your Nike, Gucci, Adidas, and other branded things.” If Jesus said so, would you still like to go?

Brothers and sisters, what do you seek within your journey on earth? Is it wealth, fame, power, pleasure, or honour? When you gain all these things, will you be truly happy or just merely happy? Jesus sent his disciples without any provision in order to detach them from worldly goods. He wanted them to preach the kingdom of God without any distraction. Now, let us check ourselves. There might be an occasion where you want to serve the Lord at the Church either as an altar server, choir, usher, or other ministries. Yet, you brought with you your expensive phone or wear your branded things. What is your true intention? Is it to show off those things and become popular or to serve him?

Nevertheless, look at those 72 disciples. They had nothing with them except Jesus’ encouragement. He became the centre of their ministry. Did you see what happened when they returned from their mission? They came back full of joy. They did not bring anything when they left and yet they returned rejoicing. Why? Because they are filled with grace. How can you be filled with God’s grace if your hands are closed while holding those precious gadgets? Our hands should be open in order to receive abundant blessings from God.

Therefore, detach yourselves from worldly goods. Set off without purse or bag or sandals. Do not let yourselves rely on expensive gadgets or branded clothing. If they lead you closer to God and enable you to glorify Him better in your life, then use them prudently, otherwise let them go. Courage! You will rejoice not because of having a brand-new phone or wearing pricy shirts. But you will rejoice because your names are written in heaven.

JULY

9

St. John of Cologne and Companions

CATECHISM by Br. Henry Saw Min Khaung Htet

John Heer was born in Cologne, Germany at the beginning of the sixteenth century and entered the Order of Preachers in his native city. He was then sent to Holland where he served as a parish priest at Hoornaer. In 1572, the Calvinist forces took

the city of Gorcum and imprisoned its Catholic clergy. Saint John learned of their difficult situation and went to minister to them but he was captured.

For several days, their captors treated the prisoners with incredible cruelty. They were then taken to Briel, Holland, where they were offered their freedom if they would deny the primacy of the pope and abandon the Catholic doctrine of the Eucharist. St. John refused this offer and as a result, he and his companions were hanged on the night of July 8-9, 1572.

JULY
10

Is There a Pre-Requisite to be a Good Samaritan?

REFLECTION on the 15TH Sunday in Ordinary Time (Lk 10:25-37)
by Br. Joefel T. Daraug

During the 1990's, there was a song popularized by Yano that somehow became controversial because of its lyrics. The song has a line that goes like this: "*Banal na aso, santong kabayo, natatawa ako....*" This was based on the personal experience of the singer who, at that time, found inspiration when he was riding on a jeepney and many of us used to sing this song. But have we really understood the message of this song? Or have we sung it because the melody is pleasing to us?

Today's gospel is somehow corelated to this song especially to those who are in the Church, regardless of what kind of services we render in our own churches. The account of Luke proves that having a bulk pocket, tremendous power, being an active church goer and even a priest is **not a pre-requisite** in order for us to help others and be a good Samaritan. It is also not necessary to wait for someone begging for help for us to extend our hands. A good Samaritan is someone who is willing to help in their own little way without asking something in return. A good Samaritan should not be labelled. It must be pure, sincere, and genuine gestures of demonstrating love and compassion to someone. Therefore, we need not to be intelligent in order to help; we need not to be a doctor in order to heal the wounds and sickness of others; we need not to be a teacher in order to teach morals and lessons in life; we need not to be in politics in order to serve other people; and, we need not to be a priest or religious in order to preach and spread the good news of our Lord. We should always remember that a good Samaritan has **no requirement** at



all. For as long as we have a good heart and can show love, mercy, and compassion to others, then we can be so.

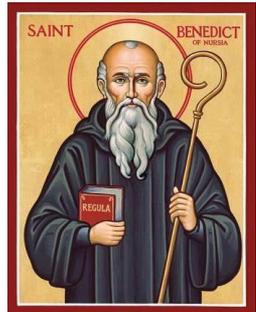
My dear brothers and sisters, we need to extend our hands, use our minds, and open our hearts not only to someone who longs for it, but to everyone who needs it. Pope Francis called us to be good stewards of creation, good shepherds of our flocks, and be good Samaritans to all and not to a chosen few.

JULY
11

St. Benedict

CATECHISM by Br. Michael Dominic B. Vasco

Saint Benedict was born in Nursia in Umbria, Italy around 480. Disgusted by the moral squalor of his fellow students, he abandoned his studies, gave up his inheritance, and devoted himself to the quest for God. He founded the Order of Benedictines based on liturgical prayer and manual labor and well known for its Latin motto: *Ora et Labora* (“pray and work”). He is considered as the Father of Western monasticism. He died in the abbey of Monte Cassino which he had founded in 547.



Saint Benedict is depicted in black robes with a book, an abbot’s crozier, a raven with bread on his beak, a broken cup, a rod or a bundle of rods. He had been the patron saint of Europe since 1964 and is the protector of farmers, Italian architects, chemists, peasants, engineers, and speleologists. His feast day falls on the 11th of July.

JULY
15

St. Bonaventure

CATECHISM by Br. Marco Alberto D. Untu

Saint Bonaventure was born about the year 1218 in Bagnorea near Orvieto, Italy. He was the son of Giovanni di Fidanza and Maria la Ritella. In his childhood, he suffered an illness, and at that time, Saint Francis of Assisi cured him from that illness. According to the legend, he got the name Bonaventure from that experience. Bonaventure itself means “good fortune.” He entered the Franciscan Order in 1243. He studied philosophy and theology at Paris under Alexander of Hales who later became his follower. After finishing his study, he taught Theology and Scripture at Paris around 1248.

Saint Bonaventure was a great philosopher and theologian in medieval times. He was known as “the *Seraphic Doctor*” after writing numerous treatises. Because of his decisive role in the order, he was also called “*the second founder*”

of the order.” He wrote the official Franciscan biography of Saint Francis. His writings always illuminated the study of philosophy and theology. Bonaventure died during the Council of Lyons in 1274. He was canonized in 1482 and declared a Doctor of the Church in 1588.



Choose the Best Part in Listening to God's Words

REFLECTION on the 16TH Sunday in Ordinary Time (Lk 10:25-37)
by Br. Warnakulasuriya Kavin Senesh Fernando

Hospitality is an important human value and Christian virtue because it expresses one's love, concern, and personal care extended to the guest. The first reading for today highlights Abraham as a very hospitable person. His genuine zeal and personal concern for the visitors is well brought up by the phrase: he ran from the entrance of the tent to greet them. This is very much parallel to the Gospel which signifies the attitude of Martha's hospitality towards Jesus. Martha and Mary were given the best role to serve him. In the story of Jesus with Martha and Mary, Jesus appreciates the actions of both sisters as these reflect their intimacy with him. Mary's act of listening to the Lord shows her openness to him and his teachings, which is a deeper level of intimacy and a basic attitude of discipleship. While Martha's act is good and important, she needs to accept the priority of listening to Jesus' message. But her worrying about the things that she needs to do, hinders her from doing so, even calling her sister embarrassingly, "My sister has left me to do all the work" (Luke 10:40). Most of us are engaged in different activities. Sometimes, it is hard to keep the words of God instilled in our minds because of our business. The Gospel invites us to listen and meditate on his words deeply and reflect on how we can find the correct pattern of life; thereby, deepening our intimate relationship with Him which enables us to do our mission in the modern world.



Sursum Corda

REFLECTION on the 17TH Sunday in Ordinary Time (Lk 11:1-13)
by Br. Alexander Darren E. Ang

"Lord, teach us how to pray."

This sentence often times comes not only from the disciples but also from us. We always ask about how do we make a prayer or what makes a prayer beautiful. We might think that it is a long prayer with the beautiful words. However, Jesus teaches us that a good prayer is not about the number of words you put in or the theological and difficult words you use. A good prayer is about our heart looking forward



to God. “*Sursum Corda*”, “Lift up your heart.” The act and the intention of a person who prays is more important than the number of words he says.

Moreover, Jesus opened his prayer with the word, “Father.” He invited us to pray to God like a son asking something to his father. Father will not refuse what his child asks. He will provide it as long as his child needs it. However, he will refuse if it is not necessary for his child. For example, a child asks his father to buy him a land. It is impossible for his father to provide it. The same thing happens in our prayer. We ask our Father to provide for us our need. He will grant our prayer as long as we need it, though He already knows what we really need. So, let us lift up our hearts to our Father. We pray in our need to Him. Let us knock on his door and believe that it will be opened for us.

JULY

25

St. James the Greater

CATECHISM by Br. Augusto
Bustamante Cuaño III



St. James, brother of St. John the Evangelist, son of Zebedee, was called the “Greater” to make a distinction from the other apostle of the similar name, surnamed the Less because he was the younger. Abandoning his fishing net in order to become a “fisher of men.” St. James was one of the earliest disciples to follow our Lord Jesus Christ, and the first apostle to be martyred. St. James and his brother St. John were called “sons of thunder” because both of them were known to be quick-tempered. For example, when a town of the Samaritans refused to entertain Christ, they suggested that He should call down fire from Heaven to consume them but our Lord rebuked them to understand that meekness and patience were the arms by which they were overcome.

The details of the life of St. James the Greater after the Crucifixion are uncertain. He may have gone to Judea and Samaria to spread the gospel after the Lord’s ascension. But according to tradition of Spain, St. James made an evangelizing visit to that country. St. James the Greater was beheaded by Herod Agrippa I in Jerusalem. It is said that his body was carried to the shore where a boat suddenly appeared. His disciples placed the body in this miraculous vessel and it floated to the coast of Spain. The Christians there found the relics and buried them in a forest where the city of Santiago de Compostela now stands. The shrine containing his relics in Compostela was of great importance during the crusaders, because the soldiers believed St. James could grant military skill. Santiago de Compostela remains a major site of modern pilgrimage.

JULY

26

Sts. Joachim and Anne

CATECHISM by Br. Francis Louie M. Cruz

After twenty years of marriage, Anne was still unable to give an heir to her husband. As was the custom, the Jewish community looked upon sterile women with scorn and marginalized them. They considered sterility a sign of the absence of God's blessing. Therefore, having reached an advanced age and finding himself still without heir, Joachim went to the temple carrying offerings for the Lord. He was refused because he, at that time, has not fathered a child. In despair, without telling Anne, Joachim left for the desert where his flock was grazing. He was determined to fast for 40 days and 40 nights and ask the Lord to give him a son.



Lord heard their prayer. Although they were old and childless, God gave them a child from whom would be born the Messiah. An ancient tradition, going back to the first half of the 2nd century identifies Joachim and Anne as the parents of the Blessed Virgin Mary. The feast day for Anne and Joachim was added to the liturgical calendar in 1584.

JULY

29

Sts. Martha, Mary, and Lazarus

CATECHISM by Br. Jhim E. Sambrano

On the 26th of January 2021, the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments released a document for the celebration of three saints in the General Roman Calendar: "In the household of Bethany, the Lord Jesus experienced the family spirit and friendship of Martha, Mary and Lazarus. For this reason, the Gospel of John states that He loved them. Martha generously offered Him hospitality, Mary listened attentively to His words, and Lazarus promptly emerged from the tomb at the command of the One who humiliated death."

There was a traditional uncertainty of the Latin Church regarding the identity of Mary. The first one was the Magdalene to whom Christ appeared after His resurrection, second was the sister of Martha, while the other was the sinner whose sins were forgiven by our Lord Jesus Christ. This was the reason for the inclusion of Saint Martha alone on 29th of July in the General Roman Calendar. This issue has been resolved in recent studies and times, verified by the current Roman Martyrology, which commemorates Mary and Lazarus in the same date as Martha.



JULY

31

Happiness is Meant to be Shared

REFLECTION on the 18TH Sunday in Ordinary Time (Lk 12:13-21)
by Br. Piter Robertus B. Simamora

Attachment to the things around us is hard to avoid. We are surrounded by worldly things such as money, food, popularity and many other things. Those things attract us because, somehow, it gives us pleasure. Our human desire for pleasure pushes us to want it more. If we aren't keen enough to grasp the trap of those possession, we will become greedier. We think we have everything but we actually don't. Being greedy will not bring happiness.

Jesus, in today's Gospel, tells us the parable of the foolish rich man who puts his trust in his treasure. He thought his treasure will bring him happiness, so he builds his big store room and kept his treasure there, hoping he can enjoy it by himself. However, God who sees his act took his life, and the treasure becomes nothing. He can't use it and there's no one who will inherit it. In the eyes of the world, he is rich but not in God.

Dear friends, greed will give more things to us, but we will find no meaning in that. We can get true happiness by sharing what we have to others. There are more benefits that we get from charity. One of which is the chance to see the smiles of differently-abled children in the nursing home I have visited. At that time, our minor seminary in Indonesia had an exposure to that facility twice a month. We had to read the bible and sing songs for them, but sometimes it was hard to get their attention. Therefore, some of us were advised to buy packs of candies. Actually, we had a long discussion about that idea because our allowance is limited. Then, we decide to sacrifice our allowance, but indeed sacrifice brings more happiness for we got their attention and had a chance to play some games with them as well. They even prayed for us!

Brothers and sisters, it's actually okay if you enjoy our own work, but sometimes we are overly focused on our enjoyment. Therefore, we forget to notice the needs of others. What's the point of being happy if you can't share the meaning of such happiness? We can learn from the bees who share their honey to others. I also hope we too can share our own honey, so everyone can taste it and that the sweetness may reach the tongue of God.



13th Century

Dominican Blessing

May God the Father bless us,
may God the Son heal us,
may God the Holy Spirit enlighten us
and give us eyes to see with,
ears to hear with,
hands to do God's work with,
feet to walk with,
and mouth to preach the word of salvation with,
and the angel of peace,
to watch over us and lead us
at last, by the Lord's gift, to the kingdom.
Amen.

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