



Grace Church of West Feliciana Parish

"A loving congregation seeking unity with God and each other in Christ"

Newsletter

May 19 and 26, 2019

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A Not So Small Problem

I had never been in such a pickle before. I was nineteen years old, a freshman in Catholic Seminary, a puritan of the highest order, and I was in love. Now, for most of you who may be unfamiliar with Roman Catholicism, priests are not allowed to marry. Better yet, they are required to be celibate, not just during seminary, but for life. For many this is a beautiful vocation of total self-dedication to God and the Church. In fact, in my culture, we still held to the Scholastic belief of Thomas Aquinas that virginity was one of the greatest virtues (ST, Part Two, Qn 152). As such, many seminarians were not only just celibate, but virgins. For those who were not virgins when they entered seminary, in the physical sense of the word, Aquinas recommended Spiritual Virginity, which in many ways was more praiseworthy than virginity itself, "Now the end which renders virginity praiseworthy is that one may have leisure for Divine things, as stated above. Wherefore the theological virtues as well as the virtue of religion, the acts of which consist in being occupied about Divine things, are preferable to virginity," (in a physical sense). In fact, for Thomas, martyrdom and the monastic life were superior to virginity.

So, there I was. On the one hand, trying excruciatingly hard to be obedient to the vow of celibacy I had made in my heart, a vow I had resolved to live by for the rest of my life. This was not just an external imposition, but rather, a beautiful vocation to love God above all things and all people. A vow that drew me closer to God, and made me more open to the Divine mysteries which filled the lives of saints like St. John of the Cross, St. Theresa of Avila, and St. Francis of Assisi. I wanted to love God with singular devotion, to have no other companion for my earthly journey, and to dedicate every waking moment to serving his divine will for my life. These lofty and beautiful ideals could only be lived out, so I thought at the time, within the boundaries provided by celibacy. So, there I was – all in!

On the other hand, Piedad, whose name translates as "piety," was eighteen, and absolutely gorgeous. She was smart, opinionated, vivacious, argumentative, irreverent, and driven by deep internal convictions, which were diametrically opposed to mine. Her light brown eyes, long flowing hair, and graceful walk made her the most beautiful woman I had ever met. And she had an incredible quality I had never seen before: she really, really, liked me. This was astounding to me! I was a mousy, short, bespectacled, and insecure man at the time, yet, she thought I was witty, smart, and kind. She also had the ability to pierce into my heart, and get to the bottom of a truth I was struggling very hard to deny: I felt like an impostor in seminary. I felt like I didn't belong. Everyone else seemed to be holier, kinder, somehow more joyful than I was. I felt like an actor playing a religious game I wasn't fully prepared to play. This was not a lack of voca-

tion, or even a sense that God wasn't calling me into ministry. It was, rather, pure, undeniable, unrelenting, personal insecurity.

I had met the girl at a wake, which I have come to understand as a common occurrence. In fact, I married a beautiful couple not long ago who also met at a funeral. I guess there is something about death that reminds us to "gather rosebuds while we may." The girl walked late to the service and sat on the only available seat, which was right next to me. I noticed her glancing in my direction several times, and I avoided her the best I could, holding hard to the Tau cross I always carried. This was a small Franciscan cross I had received as a gift, and which I treated almost like a talisman. When faced with uncomfortable situations or temptations, I would hold the cross in my right hand, and the simple gesture reminded me of vows I had made and intended to keep.

"How does it feel to be so strong?" She asked after the service.

Confused about her question and enraptured by her eyes, I managed to ask, "What do you mean?"

"Well, you must be very strong because it looks like you're carrying the weight of the world on your shoulders. Where do you train?" She asked sarcastically, but not in a mean way. In fact, I believed she was flirting with me.

Surprised by the girl's candor, I opened myself completely to her over a cup of black coffee at a small restaurant a few blocks away from the church. My act of extreme vulnerability began a friendship that lasted many years. I can speak openly now about the herculean effort it took to remain celibate, while falling desperately in love with Piedad over the course of a year. Surprisingly and ironically, it was the girl's understanding and support that made it possible for me to remain faithful. "I can do many things, but I can't compete with God!" She would often say. I now know she wasn't competing with God, but, rather, she was competing with my own understanding of God's plan for my life.

Have you ever been torn between two equally appealing options? Have you ever felt as though your understanding of God is interfering with your desire for happiness? Have you ever felt as an impostor in your spiritual journey? What do you do when these feelings rise-up to the surface of your mind? If this has ever happened to you, please know you are not alone. Take a risk to become vulnerable. Speak to God candidly and seek the wise counsel of family and friends. You will soon find that as hard as discernment can be at times, God's yoke is always easy, and his burdens are always light. Trust in him, and he will guide you through.

May he continue to bless you, Fr. Roldan+

West Feliciana Food Pantry Needs

Please consider helping our local food pantry with the following needs: egg cartons, plastic bags, and help with bagging rice. The pantry enjoys having "rice packing crews" come help, so round up a few friends to help serve our community!

Grace Church will collect cans of tuna for the month of May and June. If you would like to learn more about Grace's Food Pantry ministry, please reach out to Karen Snyder or Kelly Ward.

Intercessory prayers are asked for Grace Church members who are ill

Kathy Anderson, Jack Anderson, Valerie Barnes, Diane Christopher, Neal Kelly, Jason Kennedy, Charlotte Maxwell, Tom Morris, Eric Nelson, Sara Nelson, Kay Tengler, Mary Thompson, Wendell Wade, Pam Willson, Jake Wray, Madeline Wright.

Birthdays

Betty Sessions, Heather Howle-May 19; Cecile Means, Sara Nelson, Dwight Singer-May 20; Cindy Seeman-May 21; Karen Dwyer-May 22; Jonathan Weller, Suzanne Daniel-May 23; Susan Roland-May 24; Joe Gerry, Suzanne Beckley, Rusty Kleinpeter, Collin Loyacono-May 27; Houston McVea, Cindy Robinson-May 28; Jeff Pruitt, Will Benton, Fiona Tully-May 29; Lorna Klein-May 31; Kathryn Ward, Corey Foster-June 1.

Wedding

Anniversaries

James and Briana Boucher-May 19; Jordan and Liz Truitt-May 21; Hamp and Debbie Willis-May 22; Mark and Eve Clevenger, Miles and Missy Higgins-May 23; Steve and Lynn Gaudet-May 24; Keith and Maddie Watts - May 26; Ricky and Chaille Lambert-May 28; Bobby and Sharon Wilson-June 1.

Grace News & Upcoming Events

Other persons

prayers are asked for:

Claiborne Arbutnot, Charles Barham, Walker Bell, Micaela Kell Bennett, Wayne Bergeron, Isabella Bertucci, Leslie Bickham, Luanne, Phillip Bowen, Ben Brown, Steve Brown, Mason Brudewick, Willie Bryant, Randy Bryant, Jenny Clark, Kitty Claus, Daryn Conrad, Rob Cox, Frances Woods Curry, Sandy Davenport, Kathleen Davis, Debbie Desmar, Helen Deselles, Cathy Doslovic, Molly Douglas, Amy Dwyer, Mark Ellison, Jennifer Erickson, Ellen Ewald, Sara Fahey, Mark Felner, Dennis Flynn, Matthew Gill, Jerry Green, Jim and Claire Hackney, Jane Hamilton, Roy Hardin, Parke Henderson, Wayne Hudnall, Joel James, Michelle Jeansonne, Jill Joffrion, Henry Jones, Mary Jo Kaly, Cathy K., Jody Lemoine, Jessica Liddle, Max, Charlotte Mayeaux, Ralph McKenzie, Lainece Martrain, Mary Anne McCrory, Ruby McKee, Cheryl Meaux, Robin Michel, Bill Miller, Jimmy Mitchell, Randall Nachman, Walter Oliveaux, Barton Platte, Elizabeth Poole, Susanna Prescott, Tammy Riggs, James and Sylvia Roach, Cole Rourke, Gwin Shanks, Kaizlyn Shockley, Rusty Snyder, Cade Stapleton, Angel Thompson, Roland Toups, Millie and Howard Varner, Deborah Vines, Emily Walz, Trey Watson, Dennisia Williams, Lynn Zinn.

Those serving in the armed forces:

Parker Blanche, Amanda Browning, Jay Christopher, Ryan Coacher, John Davis, Joseph Dooley, Polly Finley, Bryan Geltz, Edward Jenkins, Laura Latson, Shawn Lemons, Terry Palmer, James Powers, Jeff Ragusa, Christopher Willis, Aaron Zuccaro, 745th & 746th Exped Squads, 379th & 926th Exped. Support Squads, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault).

Thank you to all who helped plan Mrs. Carol Woodward's 90th Birthday celebration and those who were able to attend. We celebrated her to the fullest!

The Senior Movie at the West Feliciana Parish Library on Friday, May 17th is Peeples. The movie will start at 10 a.m. Please reach out to Maria Gerry if you would like to attend.

St. Francisville United Methodist Church invites you to the Women's Quarterly Ecumenical Prayer Breakfast on Saturday, May 18th from 8:30–10:30 a.m. in Fellowship Hall.

Fr. Roldan will preach and celebrate at St. John's on Sunday, May 19th. Bishop Jenkins will preach and celebrate the 7:30 a.m. Holy Eucharist at Grace.

Church Mice will be held on Sunday, May 19th from 4 p.m.–6 p.m. in Grace Preschool. This program is open to all children Pre-K through 5th grade. Children will be taught a fun bible lesson, complete a craft, and join together for a meal and fellowship. Invite your friends! Parent Fellowship will also be held on Sunday, May 19th from 4 p.m. to 6 p.m. at the Golsan House. Join other parents of children 18 years and younger for an evening of fellowship and refreshments. Bring your own drinks and an appetizer or dessert to share. We hope you can join us!

Grace Church Offices will be closed on Monday, May 27th in observance of Memorial Day. We pray you have a safe and blessed holiday weekend.

The next meeting of the Grace Church Book Club, Seekers and Sages will be Tuesday, May 28th. We will discuss the book; *We Are Called to Rise* by Laura McBride. Copies are available for purchase at The Conundrum. Sign up by emailing Coco Treppendahl, cocotrepp@bellsouth.net. Location and time will be announced later.

Our annual Pentecost Picnic will take place here at Jackson Hall on Sunday, June 9th. Grace will provide the drinks, fried chicken, and rolls. There is a sign-up sheet in the narthex for the dishes we will need and/or to be on the cleanup crew. Please prepare a side dish for 10 people. We will have inflatables and fun games for family fun. Congregants are encouraged to wear red and dress casually for our annual picnic. We pray you can join us for a day of good food and better fellowship. If you have any questions, please contact Dixie Blue, dixiewblue@gmail.com.

Grace Preschool is still accepting registrations for the 2019-2020 school year. Our preschool is open to all students who will be three years old by September 30th, 2019. Registration packets are available in the church offices or online, <https://www.gracechurchwfp.org/preschool.html>.

Vacation Bible School Registration is open for both participants and volunteers! Come join us July 8th to the 12th as we journey with Paul to share the Gospel in Athens! Please register at <https://vbspro.events/p/events/gracechurchwfpvbs2019>. If you have questions or are interested in helping, please reach out to Alyssa at youth@gracechurchwfp.org or 225-245-1385.

Choir Rehearsals are now held following the 10:00 a.m. service on Sundays. If you enjoy singing, come join the Grace Choir this summer. New members are needed. Questions? —phone Mel Hale at (225)931-3382 or talk to him or any choir member after church.

We need more babysitters for the 10 a.m. Holy Eucharist. If you are interested and are 14 years or older, please see Meg Kendrick for an application. This is a paid position.

Grace Church
of West Feliciana Parish
P.O. Box 28
St. Francisville LA 70775

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St. Francisville LA 70775

Sunday Ministry Assistants & Calendar

Sunday May 19, 2019

Acolytes: Karina Mulkey, Fettle Means, Baus Fin, Lena Fin

Chalice bearers: 7:30 a.m.: Lucie Butler

10 a.m.: Sara Klein, Sheryl Wynters

Ushers: Joe Savell, Dwight Singer

Lectors: Karen Synder

Vestry Rep: Kathy Kane

Altar Guild: Team 3

Children's Church: Alyssa Louis

Altar Flowers: Sheryl Wynters

Sanctuary Candle: Jeanne and Tom Morris

Coffee Hour: Linda and Tom Flynn

Babysitters: Sarah Roldan, Grant Rome

Sunday May 26, 2019

Acolytes: Hayden Howle, Ella Howle, Cecile Means, Fettle Means

Chalice bearers: 7:30 a.m.: S. Gautheir/C. Stevens

10 a.m.: Landon Anderson, Richard Kendrick

Ushers: Kelly Ward, Carl Fontenot

Lectors: Heather Howle, Meg Kendrick

Vestry Rep: Tommy Loyacono

Children's Church: Alyssa Louis

Altar Guild: Team 4

Altar Flowers: Dottie and Steve Dunn

Sanctuary Candle: Mary Morse

Coffee Hour: Linda and Tom Flynn

Babysitters: Shiloh Felton, Shelby Griffin

May 19, 2018

7:30am - Holy Eucharist

at St. John's & Grace

8:45 a.m. Bible Study

10:00am - Holy Eucharist

Coffee Hour

May 26, 2019

7:30am - Holy Eucharist

8:45 a.m. Bible Study

10:00am - Holy Eucharist

Coffee Hour

Wednesday, May 22

5 - 7pm - Youth Group Open House

5:15pm - Eucharist

Thursday, May 23

9:15am - Morning Prayer

10:00am - Worship: SF Country Manor

Friday, May 24

7:00am - Eucharist

8:30am - Lectionary Bible Study

Sunday, May 26

7:30am - Eucharist

8:45am - Bible Study

10:00am - Eucharist

Monday, May 27

Church Offices Closed for Memorial Day

Wednesday, May 29

5 - 7pm - Youth Group

5:15pm - Holy Eucharist

Thursday, May 30

9:15am - Morning Prayer

10:00am - Worship: SF Country Manor

Friday, May 31

7:00am - Eucharist

8:30am - Lectionary Bible Study