



DIRECTION *for* OUR TIMES

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE LAY APOSTLES OF JESUS CHRIST THE RETURNING KING

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ISSUE 13

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Unity

By Anne, a lay apostle

I recently prayed for unity. Upon consideration, I could see that in order for unity to occur, all Catholic organizations should flow upwards through our Bishops, and on to and through the Holy Father, the Chair of Peter.

I became aware that God sends great graces down through the Holy Father, through the Bishops, and into the faithful serving in our Church. And this gave me the greatest joy and the greatest confidence in what we could do if we were serving faithfully in our Church.

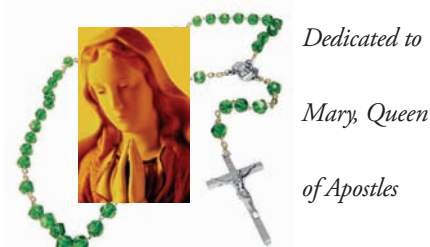
I think we could say that unity requires a disposition of the heart that refuses to condemn. In other words, a person seeking unity will say, "I am one of God's children, I am doing the best I can. Others are also God's children. Others are probably doing the best they can."

Certainly none of us likes to think of ourselves as judgmental. And if it were pointed out to us that we were behaving in a judgmental way, I think that most of us would really try to change that. But judging others can be habit-forming and we can get so used to judging others that we do not know we are doing it. We should consider the last sin we committed, something that bothered us enough that we took it to Confession. In the light of God's grace, we probably experienced Christ as compassionate and forgiving. And He is compassionate and forgiving. So when we think of everyone else we have to accept and understand that God views them as compassionately as he views each one of us. There is no difference. We experience God's mercy and all of His other children experience God's mercy.

Jesus does not lead with condemnation. Jesus leads with mercy. If we are to accept our lay apostle call authentically, we must also lead with God's mercy and never condemnation. The holiest people I know always excuse the sins of others. The holiest people I know will seek to mitigate for the failures of others. In other words, they'll say, "Well, yes, this person is getting it wrong in *this* way, but there may be very good reasons and we have to understand the whole picture." This is what holy people do. They behave like the Lord and they view others in the light of God's mercy. It's very beautiful.

Now what does our Catechism say about judging? We always want to go to the pure teaching in our Church. It says that, "Although we can judge that an act is in itself a grave offense, we must entrust judgment of persons to the justice and mercy of God." (CCC 1861)

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*Dedicated to
Mary, Queen
of Apostles*

News of the Mission

By Steve Logan, DFOT Vice President and Treasurer



New Website Video Testimony about the Hosting of a Eucharistic Day of Renewal

We recently added a new video to our website titled: "How to Host a Eucharistic Day of Renewal." This video is a ten-minute testimony of our fellow lay apostle **Denise Reilly** sharing her experiences of hosting a Eucharistic Day of Renewal. Denise hosted a very successful Eucharistic Day of Renewal in her parish in Uniontown, PA on May 3, 2008. By viewing this video, you may feel prompted by the Holy Spirit to host a Eucharistic Day of Renewal in your parish as well.

To view this video, along with the many other videos we have available, please visit our website at: <http://www.directionforourtimes.com/videos.html>

New DVD Available:

"Eucharistic Day of Renewal at Holy Trinity Abbey"

We are pleased to announce that a video recording was made of the Eucharistic Day of Renewal which was held at Holy Trinity Abbey in Kilnacrott, Ireland on August 16th, 2008. This DVD gives lay apostles, whether or not they were able to attend the event, an opportunity to "sit in the audience" and see and hear Anne present two talks. Also included on this DVD is the powerful testimony of Dr. Mark Miravalle, Professor of Theology and Spirituality at Franciscan University of Steubenville.

The above mentioned DVD is available by calling our office or by visiting our website at:
<http://directionforourtimes.com/store/page1.html>



Holy Trinity Abbey

As Anne mentions in her letter (see page 3), Direction for Our Times received an extension, until June 30, 2009, to continue to seek donations for the purchase of Holy Trinity Abbey. Our staff continues to work diligently so that our Lord's desire for the Abbey to be a place of pilgrimage and prayer for this mission can become a reality. In January, we launched the Four by Forty Plan whereby lay apostles can make a donation of \$40 dollars for four months, either through our website electronically or by mail. Larry Pauly, in the article on page 12, expresses the great gratitude all of us who work for the mission feel about the responses we have received. To learn more about Holy Trinity Abbey in three specially prepared videos, please visit our website at:

<http://www.directionforourtimes.com/HTAvideos.html>

2009 Upcoming Events

Sunday, April 25th

Eucharistic Day of Renewal
St. Joseph the Worker Church
Pierre Part, Louisiana

Thursday, May 7th

St. Anne's Parish Lay Apostle Prayer
Group, Bailieborough, Ireland

Friday, May 8th

A Day at Holy Trinity Abbey

Saturday, May 9th

Eucharistic Day of Renewal
Holy Trinity Abbey
Kilnacrott, Ireland

Thursday, June 4th

St. Anne's Parish Lay Apostle Prayer Group
Bailieborough, Ireland

Wednesday, June 24th

Leeds, England (Clergy only)
Intercession for Priests Retreat
Venue: Hingsley Hall, Leeds, England
Email: retreats@intercessionforpriests.org
Website: www.intercessionforpriests.org

Friday evening, June 26th

Re-Charge Youth Event
Rosary Hill
Justice, Illinois (Chicago area)

Saturday, June 27th

Eucharistic Day of Renewal
Rosary Hill
Justice, Illinois (Chicago area)

August 3rd – August 28th

Dublin, Ireland (Clergy only)
Intercession for Priests Retreat
All Hallows College
Website: www.intercessionforpriests.org

Monday, August 10th

Knock Shrine, Co. Mayo, Ireland
National Day of Prayer for Priests
Knock Shrine, Co. Mayo, Ireland

10:00am Talk for Priests only
11:30am Eucharistic Hour of prayer
and praise (All are welcome)
3:00pm Mass and Eucharistic Healing
Service (All are welcome)

A Letter from Anne, a lay apostle

Dear lay apostles,

I am writing about our project of completing the purchase of Holy Trinity Abbey. As of December 8, 2009 we did not have the complete purchase price and the Board of Directors of Direction for Our Times Ireland has decided that we will not seek to finance the remaining funds. We feel it is better to raise the funds before we complete the transfer of the property.

We do this to protect the primary operations goal, which is to translate and disseminate the written works.

We continue to work closely with the Norbertine priests at the Abbey and they have graciously given us an extension of time until June 30, 2009, during which we hope to finish raising the necessary funds.

For most of us, a large financial donation is not possible. Our new project manager, Larry Pauly, has developed an idea for a campaign by which those of us with little money can donate a little bit for four months. He calls this campaign the Four by Forty. I think it is excellent because it will enable each of our small contributions to be joined together in a meaningful way. Some can give more, of course, and some will not be able to give even the smaller amount, but in the middle we will have the power of all the lay apostles contributing to the completion of God's plan.

I am at peace that the Abbey project is proceeding as it should in that we have done all we have been asked. We have unity on our Direction for Our Times Ireland Board and with the Norbertine priests. The Lord will see to the rest in His time.

Your sister in Christ,
Anne, a lay apostle

The International Scope of the Mission



As Anne recently noted in one of her monthly talks, our little mission isn't so little anymore. We recently analyzed the international presence of the mission and were pleased to discover the following:

Prayer Groups: In the United States, there are now 285 registered groups in 47 states. In addition, there are 105 registered prayer groups in 12 other countries of the world. This makes a total of 390 registered prayer groups internationally.

Website Visits: During the past year, we had website visitors from 143 different countries/territories.

In a thirty day period beginning January 24 to February 23, the DFOT website had 17, 097 visits from 82 countries.

Monthly Message: On a monthly basis, the number of persons requesting email or postal delivery of the Monthly Message now totals approximately 15,000. We now have the Monthly Message available in the following languages on our website: English, Chinese, Dutch, French, German, Portuguese, Russian, Spanish and Ukrainian.

When Does Life Begin?

By Deal W. Hudson



I have believed life begins at conception long before I became Catholic at age 34 and even before I started practicing the Christian faith at the age of 19. The common sense of the matter has always held up to scrutiny, as far as I am concerned. Sperm and egg come together, and the life of a human person begins.

All of what Aristotle called the “first nature” of a person is contained at the moment after conception – the “second nature” is what is actualized out of first nature by the influence of nurture and experience. Human beings have a common first nature, but each individual has a completely unique second nature.

Other notions of when personhood, or “life,” begins don’t hold up under scrutiny. The idea that an unborn child is “dependent” on the mother and, therefore, not a human life ignores the fact that even grown-ups are dependent on others for their lives and well-being. A newborn will be just as dependent on his mother, or someone, after being born as she or he was in the womb. Without care, the



newborn will die. This does not make the newborn less human, rather it is indicative of what being human means, or requires; that solidarity is necessary for survival (Remember

“It Takes a Village”?).

Some argue that the unborn are not yet human because they lack rational intelligence, the distinctive difference of the human species. Rationality is certainly not missing in the arsenal of an unborn child’s potentialities. If the child lives, he or she will certainly exercise that potentiality in a recognizable way.

The “first nature” of any living being contains a bundle of potencies which are actualized according to the growth cycle of the individual being. Just because the actualization of the capacity for human reasoning cannot be detected in a child’s prenatal existence is no reason to assume the child lacks that capacity.

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Monthly Message

As given to Anne, a lay apostle

November 1, 2008

Jesus

Dear apostles, are you aware of My presence? Do you understand how I remain with you in each moment? Sometimes you suffer and in your suffering you feel abandoned. This is merely a feeling that I allow for you so that you can share even that part of My Passion with Me. I could never abandon you and I do not abandon

you. I remain with you, consoling you and guiding you. If you are suffering, My friend, you can be sure that I am aware of your suffering and that I am providing you with special graces to cope with your cross. In the same way that I remain with each beloved apostle, I remain with the whole world. I, Jesus, love every person ever created by the Father. I seek goodness and peace for every man and woman on earth. I am looking out for the heavenly interests of all of God’s children. You, My dear ones, possess an earthly view that is limited. I understand that your view is limited because I understand everything

about you. At this time I would like you, My beloved apostles, to also accept that your view is limited. In seeking the good of all of God’s children, I must allow changes to come which will impact all of God’s children. I do this to bring about the goodness and peace I refer to but the change will be gradual in terms of the benefits to come. Trust Me in everything. I do not abandon even one of God’s children and My beloved apostles who give Me constant friendship and loyalty will be united with Me in everything. Be at peace, dear children. I am with you.

“The Family That Prays Together, Stays Together”

100th Anniversary of the Birth of Fr. Patrick Peyton, CSC



Father Peyton was born on January 9, 1909, in Caracastle, County Mayo, Ireland to a family that prayed the family Rosary in their home nightly.

In his 51 years of ministry devoted to the Blessed Mother, her Rosary and to families, Father Peyton conducted 40 Rosary rallies worldwide that drew 28 million people, including 2 million in 1964 in Brazil and 1 million in 1985 in the Philippines. He also produced more than 600 radio and television programs that featured hundreds of Hollywood stars. His famous slogans encapsulate his mission, “The family that prays together stays together” and “A world at prayer is a world at peace.”

“Father Peyton’s most sacred insight, the goal toward which his whole fascinating life was directed, was to encourage families to come together daily to pray the Rosary. He saw so many benefits to this simple practice,” said Holy Cross Father John Phalen, CSC, president of Holy Cross Family Ministries. “Let 2009 be a year of strengthening the family through the family Rosary!” he added.

Father Peyton died on June 3, 1992, and

his cause for sainthood was opened on June 1, 2001, bestowing on him the title “Servant of God.” His cause is being continued by the Archdiocese of Baltimore.

The 100th anniversary of the birth of the “Rosary priest” will be observed with many public activities and events around the world. Holy Cross Family Ministries, Easton, Mass., furthers Father Peyton’s work and vision under the sponsorship of the Congregation of Holy Cross. Holy Cross Family Ministries has offices in 17 countries and all of them will be conducting many public activities during 2009 including Holy Hours, Rosary rallies, Masses and gala celebrations with music, food and dance.

In Ireland:

April 26, 2009

Eucharistic Liturgy with Cardinal Sean Brady
St Joseph Church
Attymass, Ballina, Co. Mayo

Gala event will include: Unveiling of Father Peyton statue, testimonies by dignitaries, food, music, and dancing.

June 6, 2009

All Ireland Rosary Rally
Knock Shrine of the Most Holy Rosary
Contact Details: The Father Patrick Peyton Memorial Centre
+353 (0)96 45374 – ppmc@eircom.net or
Fr Tom Mulligan +353 (0)96 45095 – thomasam@indigo.ie

In the United States:

June 6, 2009

A Family Rosary Fest
1:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.
Prayer – Praise – Worship
WB Mason Stadium, Stonehill College,
Easton, MA

Gates open at 12:00 p.m.

Speakers will include: Most Rev. George Coleman, Bishop of Fall River; Willy & Gerrie Stadelmann, survivors of the Mumbai attack.

Benefits of Praying the Family Rosary

- To establish the presence of God in the home; “For where two or three are gathered together for my sake, there I am in the midst of them” (Matthew XVIII, 20).
- To provide an example for the younger members of the family to carry on throughout life.
- To strengthen the parents’ feelings of responsibility toward the children’s spiritual life.
- To establish and maintain a peaceful spirit within the family.
- To obtain the special grace that is gained through oral collective prayer, which has a special value of its own.
- To create a means to understanding, unity, respect and obedience within the family group.
- To assure the discipline of the will implied in the faithful attention to family prayer.
- To enlist this aid to faith as a means of keeping alive a solid living practical faith in the family.
- To pray for spiritual and material needs of the family, such as sustenance, health, forgiveness, strength of perseverance and strength against temptation.
- To serve as a reminder to offer indulgences for deceased members of the family.
- To petition for success for each member of the family in his or her vocation in life.
- To gain plenary indulgences that are attached to the daily recitation of the family Rosary.

(Source: Advantages to Praying the Family Rosary, by Father Peyton, CSC.)

Go to Holy Cross Family Ministries’ website – www.hcfm.org – for details on the many public activities during 2009.

Re-Charge Update

By Nora McCarthy, Youth Coordinator



Ryan Cody leads a talk about love during the Re-Charge Vocations Retreat.



www.recharge.cc

November was a busy month for Re-Charge, the Youth Ministry of Direction for Our Times. I have two really exciting updates to give you.

First, at the invitation of Bishop Leo O'Reilly, the Re-Charge Vocations Retreat team worked to promote vocations to the priesthood and

religious life in the diocese of Kilmore, Ireland. Our Re-Charge Vocations Retreat team includes me and five of the young men and women who are discerning whether the Lord is calling them to the priesthood or religious life.

Our program is designed to help young people understand that we are *all* called to serve the Church in some way. Our team visited twelve high schools, giving young people the chance to consider a new perspective on vocations. The response to these retreats was extremely positive. As a result, the Re-Charge Vocations Retreat team was invited to lead another set of retreats in other dioceses in Ireland this March.

Our Re-Charge Vocations Retreat program covers a variety of topics. We start by

introducing the "Fave Five." We focus on five practices of the Catholic faith. These include:

Prayer

Mass

Confession

Adoration

Knowing That You Are Not Alone

These concepts and topics are all taught through dramatic skits, personal testimonies, small group activities and music videos. They have all been specifically developed to communicate the beauty of the Catholic faith in ways that young people can relate to.

The program also touches on topics such as sexuality, addictions, depression and suicide. If you are interested in learning more about how to bring a Re-Charge Vocations Retreat to your parish, high school or college in the United States or Europe please e-mail us at recharge.cc@gmail.com for more information.

Our second major accomplishment is producing an exciting video on vocations called "Re-Charge Your Life." This video highlights the reality that every young person has a vocation within the Church. It helps our young people to consider that God has prepared them for a unique role in our Church, whether they choose to stay single, get married, or become a religious or a priest.

Also, through interviews with a priest, a religious sister, and several young lay people who currently work in the Catholic Church, this video tells how they can discover what their role might be.

We consider this an excellent resource to broaden the vocation discussion with young people.

The "Re-Charge Your Life" video is now available for purchase on our website www.directionforourtimes.org. Short clips of this video are also available on YouTube.

Growing into Vocations



Monthly Message

As given to Anne, a lay apostle

January 1, 2009

Jesus

Dear apostles, today I wish to bring you heavenly encouragement. You often feel the opposite of encouragement, that is, discouragement. While this experience of discouragement is an unavoidable part of your time on earth, I want you to be aware of My presence in this cross. Talk to Me about your feelings of discouragement and you will move through these periods safely and more comfortably. If you talk to Me, you will be better able to understand that your discouragement comes from your humanity and not from heaven. In other words, feelings of discouragement are not accurate reflections of heaven's feelings about you, your service or your effectiveness. It could be that all is going perfectly with you from heaven's perspective, and yet you are unaware of this for many reasons. Perhaps we are allowing a cross of suffering for you to bring benefits to you and to the world. You feel this as discouragement and yet heaven is not discouraged. Indeed, it is often the case that heaven is pleased with your faithfulness in the face of your cross. Human discouragement must be viewed with Me, Jesus, so that its cause and benefit can be understood. As an example, someone suffering in his body with sickness or limitation can justly understand his struggle with discouragement. An apostle struggling in this way can accept that he is both receiving graces himself and obtaining graces for others. Beloved apostles, allow Me into your struggle. It will become lighter. I will keep you encouraged if you remain united to Me.

An Update on the young people discerning the call to serve this mission

In our last newsletter we introduced you to the 7 young men and women who are discerning a radical call to serve this mission in religious life. In October two houses were opened in Bailieborough, Ireland to provide residence for these servants. There is a Discernment House for Men and a Discernment House for Women. Both of these houses rely completely on providence and we are always in need of assistance. The young men and women who are living in residence at these houses are giving of their talents to assist the mission as they spend this year in discernment.

The parishioners of St. Anne's Catholic Parish in Bailieborough have played an important role of providing for the needs of these young men and women. On the first Thursday of each month, St. Anne's hosts a Monthly Prayer Group at which Anne speaks. Parishioners join our Discerners to welcome many lay apostles from all over Ireland and other parts of the world. Parishioners also help by contributing basic supplies needed in the daily lives of the Discerners.

Our discerning young men and women have been very busy working on a variety of events. They are involved with parish outreach, Re-Charge activities, school retreats, packing and shipping of book orders, compassionate listening for telephone callers and pilgrims, outreach to other organizations and representation of the apostolate at events throughout Ireland.

In February the young men and women led a number of events with young adults. They hosted a Youth Night filled with fun faith activities at the Bailieborough Community Center. Fifty-two young people joined in the night. The evening included music, dancing, skits and just plain hanging out with friends. We hope this will be the first of many Bailieborough Youth Nights to come.

Direction for Our Times is hosting a number of Eucharistic Days of Renewal this spring and summer. Our young men and women will be participating in these events.

A Gift to Share

By Crystal Sullivan

Several years ago, Bonnie Shoemaker was leading a full and rewarding life as a wife, mother, and oncology/pain management research nurse in Fort Myers, Florida. But her career was put on hold when she learned that her father was dying of cancer. Taking a leave of absence, she gained first-hand experience of what it meant to be a primary caregiver, providing end-of-life care in the home.

A few weeks after his death, she was invited to attend a Eucharistic Day of Renewal in Clearwater, Florida. While traveling to the conference, Bonnie read Volume One to learn more about Anne, a lay apostle. While reading it, she felt the messages resonating within her soul as if Jesus Himself was speaking directly to her. At the Eucharistic Day, she could sense the Holy Spirit taking hold of her heart and opening her eyes. She finally understood what it meant to have an intimate relationship with Jesus. Bonnie was ready to commit to live the rest of her life as a lay apostle of Jesus Christ the Returning King.



Bonnie Shoemaker

A few months after Bonnie's father died, her mother's health began to decline. Her mother had suffered from bipolar disorder

most of her life, which only added to the trauma and drama of end-of-life care. However, with renewed spiritual strength from having read all of the Volumes, *Climbing the Mountain* and *Mist of Mercy*, Bonnie felt more prepared than ever to face the challenges. Thirteen months later, her mother passed away, and Bonnie believed her life experience might prove helpful to others who were struggling with a family member diagnosed with a mental illness. Bonnie now felt it was time for a change ... it was time to start writing!

After having some articles accepted for publication in Christian magazines, Bonnie realized she had a gift that could be used to help the mission. Bonnie decided that she would contact Direction for Our Times to see if she could interview Anne in order to write an article about this quickly growing apostolate. This idea set in motion a series of events which led to an exciting plan. Bonnie, with the help of the Direction for Our Times

Monthly Message

As given to Anne, a lay apostle

February 1, 2009

Jesus

Dearest apostles, how lovingly heaven ministers to you in your hard work. If you are moving calmly, from one task to the next, conscious of heaven's presence in your day, then you do not feel overwhelmed. If, on the other hand, you forget that heaven is with you and that you are only one part of a big plan, you may be feeling overwhelmed or feeling that you may not have what you need to fulfil your

part of My plan. I have designed your life in such a way that you can live it in each moment with Me. I have all that you need for every moment of time. Your service is important to heaven. It is so important to heaven that heaven would not risk leaving you without the necessary graces for each task we have assigned to you. Are you working hard? Are you carrying a heavy cross? Are you worried about your loved ones? Are you lonely? I have the graces for you. I have what you need both to be holy yourself and to allow others to draw from your holiness. I am here, with you, working through you and alongside you, and I am sturdy. I will not falter, dear apostle. I will not

change my mind about you. I love you today and I have loved you for a long time. I know you. I know what you need. You are making progress. Your willingness to sit quietly and read My words, conscious of My love for you, gives Me happiness. Allow My graces to give you happiness. Allow My graces to give you a light heart. Yes, there is work to be done, but not work without joy. Yes, there are crosses to be carried, but not carried without trust. You are concerned for your loved ones but I share your concern and I bless your prayers and efforts on their behalf. You may be lonely, dear apostle, but you are not alone. Rejoice. I am with you.

staff, would solicit testimonials of Christians all around the world who have been touched by the words of Jesus, the Blessed Mother and the saints. She is currently in the process of compiling these testimonies for a book she will write about the fruits of this mission. This will include stories of those who have been deeply moved by the messages from heaven in various ways, whether it was through reading the Volumes, the "Heaven Speaks" Booklets, Anne's writings, by attending a Eucharistic Day of Renewal, viewing a DVD, or by encountering the mission in some other way.

It will include stories of people who have returned to the sacraments after many years away from the Church, as well as stories of conversions, emotional healings, and healings within relationships. Bonnie hopes the book will introduce others to the Apostolate of Jesus Christ the Returning King, as well as provide evidence for those skeptical of the truth contained in the messages. As Bonnie remarked, "Through the messages in the Volumes and the graces Jesus promises to those who say "yes" to Him, He turned a defensive, stubborn, control-freak into a calm forgiver. Although, if you ask my close friends and fellow lay apostles, they may disagree with the word *calm*. We could all agree on calling it on fire with the Holy Spirit!"

Bonnie's life has certainly included times of suffering and struggle. But what started as a story of loss and death has culminated in a work filled with hope and life.

Direction for Our Times is still accepting testimonies for this book, so if you have a testimonial you would like to share, please contact us immediately, as the book is presently being prepared for publication, either by calling the office at 708-496-9300 or emailing us at dfot.testimony@gmail.com.

Anxiety

By Nora McCarthy, Youth Coordinator



This is like the scary monster in the closet for adults. Most of the time we are rational enough to understand why things are happening in our lives, especially during the day. But when it gets dark and night comes we begin to freak out. We begin to worry. Anxiety creeps in.

If you have ever gone through a breakup that did not make sense, lost a job you loved, did not get into the university of your dreams, in other words, experienced disappointment, then you know what I mean. The worst part of anxiety is the crippling

fear that things might not change and that the anxiety might stay forever. Yes, the pain life brings can be debilitating at times. What do we hold on to during these times? What is the secret to enduring these events and learning something from them? Trust in God.

I thought I had a pretty good trust in God, until one point in my life when it was tested. My trust crumpled. I crumpled. Night overcame me. Yes, it's easy to trust when our lives are going as planned, but it's painful to trust when things don't.

The funny part about these hard times in our lives, is that whenever we look back at them, we understand what good came from them. Maybe we learned compassion. Maybe we learned not to be too materialistic. Maybe we learned how much we really loved someone.

This is fine after the fact but we also need to survive the pain and anxiety of the moment. During the times, we might be angry at God and blame Him for everything. Days go by and we get more anxious.

It is ironic that during these times the thing we need to do the most is the thing we want to do the least, that is, pray. Prayer is like the currency which buys us trust. We can't trust until we are able to go to God and ask for His help. It's kind of like pulling over for directions when we get lost. It feels like such a pain, even a waste of time. We dread it. We might even procrastinate and just keep driving even though we know we are headed in the wrong direction – but eventually we stop, pull over, and ask for directions. That is how I see prayer. Pulling our lives over to the side of the road and asking God to direct our path.

We think we know it all until we get lost.

Prayerful Giving

By Larry Pauly, Director of Special Projects

I started in my role as Director of Special Projects in August, 2008. I worked in development for more than fifteen years before coming to this mission. Still, I am regularly humbled by lay apostles from all over the world as they make gifts in support of Direction for Our Times.

During the Four by Forty Plan for the Abbey, many lay apostles have shared with me their stories about their decision to support the mission. One couple wrote that they, "... could only give \$10.00 a month since times are tough. We will pray continually that the Abbey is bought." Another lay apostle couple wrote that even though their \$100.00-per-month-pledge for twelve months would end in January, 2009, they were praying and considering how they could support the Abbey project even more.

Each gift and pledge is important. Lay apostles are giving from their treasure in a time when making a gift, of any size, is a difficult decision. My hope is that each donor knows that through this effort, we can all join together in making the Lord's plan for the Abbey come to fruition.



Please check our website regularly. You will find that we continue to look for new ways to allow all lay apostles to participate in supporting this mission. You can make a single, one-time gift in support of the mission, or you can choose to make a pledge of small, monthly gifts over several months or a year. We hope that through these added choices

lay apostles will find the best way to participate in supporting the mission if they have the means.

You can always reach me to discuss a gift at (513) 321-2945 or by email at lcpdfot@gmail.com.

When Does Life Begin?, continued from page 4

There are many things a child won't do right away, such as forming words, sentences, and grasping concepts. But as any mother will tell you, children learn these things far sooner than you would expect.

Both of the arguments above suffer from another defect – they focus on certain aspects or qualities of a human life and not the life itself. When you talk to parents about the birth of a child they will often tell you about the sudden recognition that a new life has

been thrust into their hands. A human being *who did not exist now exists* and has come forth from you. The contrast between existence and non-existence that is experienced at childbirth points back to the existence that came into being at the moment of conception. Sperm and egg joined together, and a new being, a third being, was created out of the union. That third being, the child, *has never been before*, except, perhaps, in the mind of God.

There is nothing that we experience or

participate in as human beings that can come even close to the creation of a new, unique human life. All the rest is a shaping of that life, a grooming of his or her second nature. But the shaping of a being that exists cannot compete in metaphysical grandeur with creation. It's hard to think of an unborn child as a "clump of cells" when you focus on the coming-to-be of a human being and all that will inevitably come forth from that life, if it is not taken away.

Now let's think about that for a moment. When we think of ourselves and our failures we would always like to think about God's mercy. But when we think about others and their failures, sometimes we are tempted to say, "Well, he'll get his" and that would be not very merciful. So we want to catch ourselves when we are doing this. Our hearts must be softened.

We can say that lying is wrong but we cannot make a judgment against everyone who tells a lie. We can say that stealing is wrong but we cannot make a judgment against everyone who steals. Indeed, we can say that judging is wrong, but we cannot make a judgment against everyone who judges.

From what I can see, this judgment thing is like a door that swings both ways. It tends to hit people in the face on both sides. And by that I mean that people are hurt by the cruel judgments of others and then they themselves are led into judging the ones who hurt them. It's like the chicken pox. It spreads.

We consider our Church and all in it and there are different groups with different charisms. Each of us hears the call of Christ differently and then seeks to answer this call in our unique way. Some people can rejoice freely

in the unique call for others. Others are intolerant of anyone who is different from themselves. We have to target this as an area for work because, if we are comparing and judging we are getting distracted from the point, which is to seek out our brothers and sisters struggling in darkness. Our goal is not to force them into the Church or drag the back to the Sacraments. Our goal is to be with them in their pain as a compassionate presence, a compassionate, listening presence. That is what Jesus would do.

Yes, I have been studying this judgment idea because it is so troublesome. It would be good for us as lay apostles to take it on in ourselves, in an active way. Let's really target this as an area for work.

I will share with you a resolution that I made some time back. I resolved to try to view everyone as boys and girls, as opposed to men and women. This makes it easy for me, then, to be loving and merciful to them. God sees each of us as children, after all. So if we also view everyone as God's child, we will be less likely to judge someone or lash out at him or her. Instead we will make a case for them. In our hearts we will be persuaded that they are entitled to mercy.

This will work. What we will do is replace a judging habit with a merciful habit. It will become a habit and we will have altered something in ourselves. We will become holier.

So first, we will view everyone as one of God's children, a boy or a girl. Second, when they are sinful or they sin against us, we will try to make a case of mercy for them, if only in our hearts. Instead of asking Jesus to judge them, we will ask Jesus to forgive them.

Now, Jesus needs our service and He needs us to be holy. In the December Monthly Message Jesus says, ***"If you do not advance, you will move away from Me."*** And He says, ***"You will begin to resent Me for the crosses I send to you. You will begin to persuade yourself that perhaps there is an easier way for you, a way that calls for less sacrifice and less commitment."*** He says, ***"This will not be My plan but your plan. This will be your version of holiness, not Mine."***

I think the world has enough of humanity's version of holiness. Let us, as apostles, take on God's version of holiness.

As a final note, never forget gentleness. The strongest men and women I know are the most gentle.

Monthly Message

As given to Anne, a lay apostle

December 1, 2008

Jesus

My dear little apostles, there is so much to be done. You see the need to bring Me to others. You see your brothers and sisters struggling in darkness without Me. If the light is to be brought to them, it will be brought by you. When I say there is much to be done, I am telling you that the world needs your service, it is true. But I am also telling you that there are many things to be done in your soul. You must be committed to changing. Are you prepared to allow Me to make you

holy? If you are not prepared to let go of those things that prevent you from progressing in holiness, then you will not advance. If you do not advance, you will move away from me. You will begin to resent Me for the crosses I send to you. You will begin to persuade yourself that perhaps there is an easier way for you, a way that calls for less sacrifice and less commitment. This will not be My plan but your plan. This will be your version of holiness, not Mine. I know that some of the services I ask from you are repugnant to you. I know this and yet I call you into these things anyway. If you reject parts of the work, you will be executing an incomplete plan. I have a big plan. I build on it each day. You are part of that. I need you to listen carefully for

My directions and then serve exactly as I am asking. My dear friends, if I cannot instruct and direct you, then who will listen to Me? Who will trust Me to protect humanity? Where is the joy that comes from God's children when they trust their Father in heaven? I tell you that where joy is absent, trust is absent. When a person is humble, he will see that he needs greater trust and he will try to become smaller so that I can become bigger in his life and in his work. I am asking you to do that. Be humble. Allow Me, Jesus, to be your King. My Kingdom was not of this world. Your Kingdom is not of this world. You will be rewarded in heaven, My beloved. For now, serve Me, your King, in the way I am asking. This will be the best plan for you and for the world.

The Painting of Jesus Christ the Returning King

By Steve Logan, DFOT Vice President and Treasurer

An Interview with the Artist, Janusz Antosz

In September of 2005, Anne received a series of locutions from Saint Faustina, who revealed to her that the apostolate of Jesus Christ the Returning King would be an extension of the Divine Mercy mission. The next month, Anne was invited by Sister Brieghe McKenna and Fr. Kevin Scallon to attend a pilgrimage to the International Divine Mercy Shrine in Poland. On this pilgrimage Anne received the image of Jesus Christ the Returning King as a gift from the Mother Superior of St. Faustina's order. The Mother Superior told Anne she was confident that the image was definitely meant for this mission. St. Faustina confirmed the importance of this image in an October 28, 2005 locution, stating:

"The image of Jesus Christ the Returning King should be spread throughout the world. There are many graces attached to this image. Like the Divine Mercy image, this image will be widely recognized as a source of goodness and healing. All who venerate this image will be blessed."

Obviously, the image was created with heavenly inspiration and direction. To better appreciate the richness of all the details contained in the painting, a phone interview was held on May 21, 2008 between Steve Logan and Janusz Antosz, the Polish artist who painted the Jesus Christ the Returning King image. Sr. Natalie Pekala, O.P. provided the translation during the conversation. Janusz quoted Scripture many times during the conversation, and the Scripture references are included in the descriptions below.

General thoughts about the painting:

Before Janusz began the painting, he experienced a long period of pain and suffering. From beginning to end, it took him over a year to complete the painting.

Janusz stated clearly that this painting is the pearl of his entire body of work. He explained that it is a painting from a technical standpoint, but has many aspects of an icon. The painting blends the Western European painting style with the style of icons from the East. He wanted the painting to have the look of both, so as to include all of the Catholic



Church (Eastern and Latin) as well as other Christians (Orthodox). It is a merging of styles that represents a hope for Christian unity. According to Janusz, it shows Our Lord's longing "that they may be one, as We are one" (John 17:22). As a whole, the painting is meant to reflect the glory of heaven.

For Janusz, this painting is a gift back to the Lord for all of the gifts He has given him. Captured below are Janusz's responses during the phone interview:

Who are the two individuals at the bottom of painting?

There is not any one particular saint associated to these saints. The individuals represent Eastern and Western saints. The Eastern saint is the hooded individual and the other, a Western saint. In the painting, they both adore the Lord which represents that all believers, from East to West, will adore the Lord.

Please describe the flowers along the arch at the top of the painting.

The flowers, which are shaped as bells, symbolize the good news of a beginning, or in other words, an announcement of a coming. For example, at the beginning of Mass, the bells are rung and the priest enters the sanctuary. In this case, it is the High Priest entering.

What about the gold area below the arch?

The gold area represents the glory and reality of heaven.

Is there any significance to Our Lord's vestments and the color of the vestments?

Our Lord is dressed as a bishop/priest and the colors are those traditionally used to portray sacrifice as well as glory and praise. The pattern on the vestments is consistent with patterns found in icons. The color of the alb is blue.

How did you decide to portray Our Lord's face?

I modeled Our Lord's face after the Shroud of Turin.

Our Lord's hand is raised in blessing. Did you know the hand gesture of Our Lord in the painting, in sign language, says "I REALLY LOVE YOU"?

Jesus' hand is the same in all icons and I was trying to replicate the hand gesture of a blessing. I am very surprised to learn that there is an additional meaning in sign language.

What does the scepter with the cross at the top represent?

The scepter represents that through the power of the cross, all power rests with the Lord. "All authority in heaven and on earth has been give to Me" (Matt 28:18).

And the crown on His head?

His crown reflects His kingship - "The King of kings and the Lord of lords." (1 Tim 6:15).

What about His halo and the letters around His halo?

The letters around his halo are actually symbols: the letter O is Omega, and the letter N is Greek for "I am". These words are taken from the book of Exodus 3:14, when Moses asks God for His name. According to an expert on icons, O and N are symbols of the presence of God and the mystery of the Incarnation – the divine presence becomes visible. Also, in this icon, it reflects the mystery of the coming of Our Lord. The invisible God of the Old Covenant becomes visible in the New Covenant when, after having received a body by being born of the Virgin Mary, He appears to us so that we may adore Him as God, who is love.

What was your inspiration for His throne?

The throne is in a style from the 17th century Baroque period. The light, bright colors represent Christ the King's purity, beauty and holiness. I am trying to convey that the environment around Jesus is very bright and beautiful.

What about the white lilies on the top of His throne?

The white lilies are the flowers closest to Our Lord and represent His purity.

What type of angels are in the painting?

These angels are Seraphim angels - the angels present at God's throne who constantly praise Him (Isaiah 6:1-7).

Is there anything special about the medal around His neck?

The medal with the cross image is on Our Lord's Sacred Heart. It is meant to show that by dying on the cross, He shows the love He has for each one of us. In most of the icons I have seen, the medallion does not have any type of image in it. I felt it appropriate to add the cross for this symbolism.

Please tell me about the flowers directly to the left and the right of his throne.

These flowers are wide open and facing the Lord, meaning they are praising and giving great glory to the Lord.

And the grapes and wheat?

The grapes and wheat represent the Holy Eucharist.

What about the two groups of flowers in the bottom corners?

These flowers are natural flowers wide open facing toward Jesus giving Him glory.

Is there anything special about the open area between the two groups of flowers?

By painting this open area, I wanted to convey that through prayer and meditation, we will not have any obstruction on the journey to Christ. We will all have a direct path or an open road to the Lord and we will gain a more intimate relationship and closer union with Him.

Is there anything significant about the gold leaves in the top corners?

These leaves are leaves of a vine, indicating that Jesus is the vine (John 15:1). The leaves are open and giving glory to Our Lord. They are also positioned to showcase Our Lord.



Heaven Speaks to THOSE WHO STRUGGLE TO FORGIVE

December 13, 2006

Jesus

How blessed I am that you take a moment to read these words. I am God. I am complete, and yet your simple act of reading My words gives Me glory. You are important to Me and you are important to My family, which includes all men of good will. Because I love you and because I need your help, I wish to give you the opportunity to find greater peace in your heart. It is clear to Me that many suffer from hidden wounds. The only way for these wounds to heal is for the carrier of the wound to forgive the one who inflicted the injury. My dear child, this can be difficult. When a wound finds a home in the heart, it becomes comfortable there. It must be loosened and shifted. Both a willingness to forgive and a spirit of forgiveness are necessary because it is these things that make the wound uncomfortable. The wound then begins to dislodge. This re-awakens the pain, but only temporarily until the wound is removed altogether.

I want to begin this process in you. If you proceed in the process of forgiveness with Me, you will find that forgiveness floods your heart. Your wounds will be gone. I have the power to heal every one of your wounds. When you try to do this alone, you do not experience success and you find that bitterness persists. Bitterness characterizes My enemy. Forgiveness characterizes Me. You, a beloved little child of God, seek to find peace in your heart. You will only find peace if you step into the stream of goodness. This stream is like a river of grace with which I desire to bathe you, removing all pain and injury. What will remain in your soul is joy. This joy, this heavenly peace, will be obtained by accepting your flaws and accepting the flaws of others. You see, My friend, if you accept the flaws and sins of others, you will soften in attitude toward yourself. I love you. I accept you. I need you to accept yourself so that you will be at peace in My Kingdom and it is through forgiving others that you will find acceptance of your own humanity.

St. Faustina

Oh my, how we suffer on earth. We are so very woundable, are we not? Our humanity makes us vulnerable and we are subject to pain. My friends, Jesus wishes to heal you from the injuries levied against you. It is possible that you are suffering from pains that were inflicted in the past. At this time, Jesus is allotting a torrent of graces because He wants His little ones to be at peace. If a person is at peace, that person can serve God with very little self-will. There are different periods in the history of this world. At different times, Jesus sends different graces, always considering the appropriateness of the grace for the time. In

other words, Jesus knows what His people require and gives accordingly. At this time, the Lord sees that souls are in distress. The great darkness has obscured the usual process of acceptance for others and many carry heavy burdens that they should have cast off already. There is a preoccupation with self that precludes God's children from considering the struggles of others. This preoccupation has inhibited spiritual healing for many. Jesus wills at this time to send heavenly help that will shake God's children out of this fog. You have been hurt by others. Heaven knows this. Now it is time to forgive those who have hurt you. Jesus is all mercy, it is true, but God is also all justice. Those who have hurt you will be held accountable. Do you want this? Do you desire it? My friend, nobody escapes divine justice. Where does that fact place you in terms of the sins you have committed? Are you free from sin? Have you hurt anyone in your past? Be honest and I will ask God to illuminate your soul for you because you are in the same boat as those who have hurt you in terms of being held accountable for sins committed. Perhaps you have been injured grievously. Perhaps the evil committed against you far exceeds anything you have ever done wrong. Be at peace. God will make all wrongs right and the ones who hurt you will have to deal with their own process. We are concerned with your growth today and your growth will be stunted if you do not accept forgiveness into your heart. You need bring nothing to this process but willingness. Tell Jesus that you are willing and He will begin His work. If you are not willing, I understand that, also. In that case you must ask Jesus to give you willingness. Jesus loves this prayer. Do not think it makes you unworthy of the process. You say, "Jesus, I am too angry, too hurt. You will have to heal me enough so that I can even allow such a process to begin." The heart of Jesus rejoices in this and He tells the Father that, truly, this is a soul in

which He can work. In other words, I am telling you that there is no reason to persist in bitterness. It is time to let it go. We will support you and sustain you.

St. Faustina

My friend, there is great opportunity here. Jesus is promising you that He will assume responsibility for your healing. This is the healing that comes from heaven, the authentic liberation from spiritual and emotional distress. This is not something that is obtainable from a worldly source because only the divine can make these promises and then deliver these graces. I cried many tears on earth. Do not fear tears. Tears provide the soul with moisture which allows for great growth in virtue and holiness. Tears are a sign that healing is taking place. Sometimes tears flow out of the person and with the tears goes the hurt. Good-bye to hurt. Welcome to forgiveness.

What does forgiveness bring? I will tell you. Forgiveness brings peace. Forgiveness brings self-acceptance because you are able to say, "Yes, this bad thing happened to me. Yes, it was hurtful and I suffered pain because of it." Then you stop and say, "No. I will not allow this injury to suffocate the goodness in me. No. I will not allow it to divert me from God's will in my life. I will not behave badly because someone else has behaved badly. If I do so, I am being tricked."

You see, my friend, the path of bitterness leads in the opposite direction of where you must go. Come our way, to heaven, and you will have joy. The enemy seeks to divert you by encouraging you to persist in bitter self-righteousness and indignation. You know that it is not Jesus who advises you to hold on to anger. It is His enemy, who is also your enemy.

St. Faustina

Ask yourself this question. "Am I angry at Jesus?" If you answer, "Yes," you must tell Him and talk about it with Him in the silence of your heart. There is only one combatant here, my friend, because Jesus is most assuredly not angry at you. As such, you are fighting all by yourself. Day after day, you make a case against God, reviewing all of

the hurts that God has failed to prevent. You find yourself softening at times, and then you hastily list the wrongs God has committed against you, backing up your case and affirming your decision to ignore God or even work against Him. If you could see me you would see that I am shaking my head sadly. This will never succeed for you. This state of affairs will really have to cease. I would like to say, "Stop this at once," but who am I to give you orders? You would say, "Who is this Faustina who speaks with such authority? Faustina does not understand my pain or she would join me in my anger against God."

You are wrong, of course. I would not join you in your anger against God because I know God. I am united to Jesus in heaven and I am continually suffused with His love for me. At the very same time that I am suffused with His love for me, I am suffused with His love for you because it is all the same love, from the same Source, and it includes us all. Do you understand? Will you try to stay with me while I attempt to explain this to you?

I exist permanently in the heart of God. You exist permanently in the heart of God in that He created you and He cannot fail to love you. He is enamored with every part of you, every characteristic, and every possibility in your future. Your anger, your pain, your sinfulness, in no way diminishes God's love for you. This is not even possible. God will never reject one of His children. It is His children who reject Him. My beloved friend, you are like a small child sitting in a corner at a birthday party with his arms crossed. Will you do this in heaven? Will you come to heaven and refuse to join in our joy? No. You will not. You will have to work through this pain in purgatory. Now, perhaps you are getting angry at me. You say, "More injustice! Faustina is threatening me." I am not threatening you. You are my little brother or sister and God has given me the task of helping you to cast off your bitterness, allowing Him to replace it with His forgiveness. In order to do so I am using the powerful weapon that is the truth. You have a great many friends in heaven and they want you to begin this process now so that you are ready to come straight to heaven when you die in your body. I want this too. Jesus wants this also. We have many people

here who are heavily committed to your cause. Won't you come back to completeness now? I love you very much. I know all about heavy burdens that tempt one to bitterness. Sit in silence and we will begin this important work in your soul.

Blessed Mother

I am with you, my child. I am in all of your pain and I understand why you are having difficulty. Heaven sees everything. This fact should only console you because heaven completely accepts humanity. Dear child of my heart, heaven was created for you. Let me repeat that for my little wounded one. God made heaven for you. This is your home. You will come here if you accept Jesus when you die. Accept Him now and you will live out the remainder of your time united to all of us, who seek to save others. I want to explain something to you so that you know that we understand your predicament. Your difficulty in forgiving is understandable. I had to forgive those who crucified my Son. My love for Jesus is combined with my respect for Him and it was this way for me on earth. He always served God's children. He always put the good of humanity first, sacrificing everything for every human being ever created. His love was perfect and perfectly selfless. Yes, I loved Him fully. In His presence I could only melt with the love He exhibited. When He was crucified, and even before that, unjustly castigated and slandered, my heart nearly broke. At His death, My heart stopped as well, in terms of its ability to recover and love. It was only through the grace of the Almighty God, who breathed forgiveness into me, that I was able to continue on in the world without my Son. I am telling you that you should not be ashamed to need God's help in this process. I, also, needed God's help. God placed forgiveness in my heart and He will do the same for you. A final word of love for you is this. Remember that you have hurt our Jesus and Jesus willingly forgives you. Jesus loves you so tenderly. Forgive others as Jesus has forgiven you and you will know heaven's peace. We will help you. I am with you and I will never leave you.

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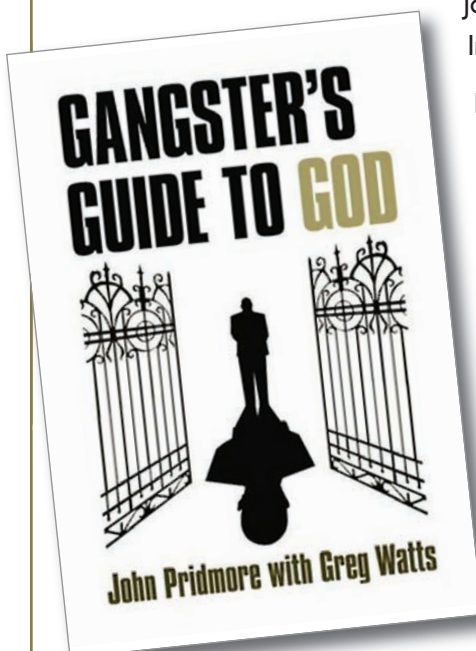
Mission Information Packet Available

DFOT makes available free information for the clergy who are interested in knowing more about the Lay Apostolate of Jesus Christ the Returning King. Our Mission Packet is available to any priest or bishop, and includes background, a letter from Anne's bishop, plus Volume One and Volume Four books.

Send us the name of the priest or bishop who is interested in reviewing these materials, and we will send him the entire package at no charge. Contact the DFOT office for more information.

Book Review

Gangster's Guide to God



John Pridmore searched for happiness in money, power, drugs and sex and found none. In this book he demolishes these worldly illusions and presents his truth.

Pridmore was a vicious and dangerous gangster of London's East End. He left his former life on a quest for truth and found it in God. In *Gangster's Guide to God*, Pridmore speaks bluntly about the deception of the world he was in and openly of his journey and the foundations of his new life.

John Pridmore is the author of the best-selling life story *From Gangland to Promised Land* and over the last ten years has given inspiring life-changing talks in Europe and America to over a million people.

A review by Anne, a lay apostle:

"This is a truly delightful book. It is an easy read and by this I mean that John Pridmore conveys truth in simple packages. Truths are simple so this is the best way to convey them. I enjoyed this book, filled with funny stories and wonderful observations about our faith and our world. Lay apostles will enjoy this book and I must say it is a good book for those family members who may not be sure what they believe."