

## CHURCH STUFF

(A newsletter for Catholic cadets)

Week of 4 May, 2003

To my Catholic brothers and sisters in the Corps:

As I write this, the temperature is around 70-degrees, the sun is out, there's a warm breeze...and it seems that Spring has finally arrived.

It makes sense to pray about the miracle:

It is SPRING, Lord,  
and something stirs in me,  
reaching, stretching,  
groping for words,  
peeking through my defenses,  
beckoning in my laughter,  
riding on past my fears,  
pulsing in my music.

There is a promise in the season,  
and I know no name for it except  
LIFE.

Be with me in my reaching,  
so I will touch or be touched  
by a grace, a warmth,  
a light...  
to unfold my life to a new beginning,  
a fresh budding,  
a SPRING within as well as around me.

O Lord, You have sketched the lines of SPRING.  
Be with me in my unfolding,  
my longing,  
my reaching.

Hope you can lift your heads out of the enduring stress to find some beauty...and to be transformed by it!

### A THOUGHT FOR THE EASTER SEASON:

The world's been compared to a submarine  
that lies damaged on the ocean floor.  
Since the vessel's absolutely watertight,  
the crew members are alive

and can hope to be saved.  
Soon they form two groups:  
one – to study the means of re-surfacing;  
the other – to plan the details of everyday life.

The first tries to make spare parts  
and devises signals to contact other ships at sea;  
full of expectation, they're on the watch,  
all ears,  
straining toward life on the outside.

The second schedules meals,  
projects,  
work periods  
and entertainment.

But, before long, the second group shouts to the first:  
“You dreamers are wasting your time.  
Come over here and help us.  
We're working and having fun.  
At least, we're accomplishing something.”

Finally, the Captain has to speak to everyone  
and recall a basic fact:  
“We're living inside this ship  
just so we can get out.  
We aren't meant to stay down here,  
submerged in hate and thoughts of revenge,  
in self-seeking and indifference,  
in peace and security.  
We're made for something else,  
for an altogether different life.  
Some have got so used to puttering around down here  
that they don't think of re-surfacing anymore  
and don't even care to.”

St. Peter reminds us that we're “strangers and pilgrims here”.  
Those who believe God still has work for them to do farther on  
keep themselves ready, willing and able.  
The saints are more vibrantly alive than anyone else,  
more adaptable to any situation,  
because they've detached themselves from everything,  
and so, they're free to embrace anything.

This is what RESURRECTION means.

Excerpted from "That Man Is You",  
by Louis Evely

#### THINGS CATHOLICS CAN DO:

##### PARISH PICNIC

The Spring PARISH PICNIC will be held on this Sunday, 4 May, at Camp Buckner. Buses for cadets will leave the Supe's Box starting at 1100 and will begin returning from Buckner at 1330. Mass will be celebrated at 1200. Uniform is Gym-A.

##### No 1100 MASS

Because of the 1200 Mass at Buckner this coming Sunday, there will be NO 1100 Mass at the Chapel. There will be the usual Saturday 1715 Mass and the 0900 Mass on Sunday morning; there will also be the usual 1715 Mass in WH5300 on Sunday.

#### DID YOU KNOW?

##### THE DAYS OF THE WEEK:

We never think about the days of the week very much, but it doesn't hurt to take a quiet look at them in a religious setting because, for the most part, they came from a religious setting and, in many cases, still preserve a religious significance.

Our "week of 7 days" originated among the Semitic peoples of the Middle East, and it was based on a logical quarterly subdivision of the 28-day lunar month. In portraying God as Creator in Genesis 1:1, it is presumed that everyone who read the story would understand the "7-day week".

This "7-day week" entered Greek culture, where the days were named after the sun, the moon, and the 5 planets visible to the naked eye. These heavenly bodies were presumed to have special powers and were honored as deities.

When the Germanic peoples gained primary influence in the Roman Empire (AD 400s), they renamed several of the days after their own gods, so the names we use today are a combination of Greek/Roman and Germanic religion:

- Sunday - day of the sun;
- Monday - day of the moon;
- Tuesday - Tiw's day (Germanic god of war);
- Wednesday - Wodin's day (Germanic high-god);
- Thursday - Thor's day (Germanic high-god);
- Friday - Frigg's day (Germanic goddess of love);
- Saturday - day of Saturn.

For the early Christians, only the first day was particularly significant: it was "The Lord's Day". It was not the Sabbath of the Jewish tradition (which was Saturday), but it

was the day on which Jesus rose from the dead. Each Sunday was considered a “little Easter”.

On Sundays, these believers held an elaborate ritual of Scripture reading, prayer, hymns and the Eucharistic memorial of bread and cup (this was often begun on Saturday evening because the ancients believed that the new day began when the sun set on the previous day; that’s why we Catholics celebrate a Saturday afternoon Mass for Sunday).

Wednesdays and Fridays also came to be considered special: Wednesday was supposedly the day on which Judas betrayed Christ (the Wednesday of Holy Week is still called “Spy Wednesday”), and Friday, of course, was the day of Jesus’ death. By the end of the 1<sup>st</sup> century, both days came to be days of fasting (or “station days” – “station” was a Roman military term for “keeping watch”).

Some scholars feel that the early Christian practice of fasting on Wednesdays and Fridays came into being in opposition to the Jewish custom of fasting on Tuesdays and Thursdays.

This tradition of Catholic fasting on Wednesdays and Fridays continued for several hundred years and eventually became part of the Lenten observance.

Catholic religious traditions associated with weekdays evolved around three activities: prayer (privately or in assembly with other believers in the primitive “house-churches” of ancient times), fasting, and daily Mass with seasonal themes or celebrations of the lives of the saints.

#### PLEASE REMEMBER IN YOUR PRAYERS

...all our graduates, relatives and friends serving in Iraq...and their families.

...all our military personnel throughout the world...and their families.

...the wounded and maimed on both sides...and their families.

...the dead on both sides...and their families.

...the innocent non-combatant victims...and their families.

...the intention of peace throughout the Middle East and the building of a just society in Iraq.

#### GOT A QUESTION?

Q: How come there’s a difference between the “Catholic” and “Protestant” versions of “The Lord’s Prayer”?

A: You’re probably referring mostly to the ending “For Thine is the Kingdom and the Power and the Glory, etc...”

In order to answer the question, you have to remember how we got our Bible to begin with. There’s no “original” copy of the whole Scripture. The Bible in English is a translation of a translation, for the most part. The English version of the Bible is based on Greek, Hebrew and Latin manuscripts...and these manuscripts aren’t the original copies either.

So, in preparing a translation the scholars have to check out all the ancient manuscripts and compare them (because they’re not all the same). Then, on the basis of their findings, they have to attempt to come up with common conclusions about

what the original understanding actually was.

In the case of “The Lord’s Prayer”, you can find two versions of it in the Gospels: Matthew 6:9-13 and Luke 11:2-4. If you compare the two, you’ll see that Matthew’s version has become the one used in Christian tradition; it’s a bit “fuller” than Luke’s.

In some later manuscripts, the sentence “For Thine is the Kingdom, etc.” is added on at the end of the prayer (for example, it’s found in this form in “The Didache”, an early Christian document dating from the 100s).

The more reliable and earlier manuscripts of the Gospels don’t contain the sentence. Older translations of the Bible into English (eg, the King James Bible) used the sentence to end the prayer, however, and it became a part of “The Lord’s Prayer” in the Protestant tradition. It was never used in the Catholic tradition, although in the liturgical reform of the 1960s, it was added to the section of the Mass right before Holy Communion as part of a longer prayer..

Most Bible scholars today would not consider that the sentence was part of the original version, but the custom of offering a “doxology” (expression of praise) to God as a part of a prayer is certainly prominent in the Bible (see I Chronicles 29:11 or II Timothy 4:18).

Personally, I’ve never understood why it’s been made into a big deal between some Catholics and some Protestants over the centuries. With it or without it, “The Lord’s Prayer” is still “The Lord’s Prayer”.

## THEOLOGY EVERY CATHOLIC SHOULD KNOW:

### ANONYMOUS CHRISTIAN:

This is a term popularized by the German Catholic theologian Karl Rahner in the 1960s. It was his attempt to describe those who are “justified by grace” even though they remain outside the formal Christian community.

He was attempting to explain how people who do not know Christ – that is, are not church members, have not been baptized, do not confess Christ and may not even believe explicitly in God – might attain to eternal salvation.

His reasoning centered around the presence of “God’s grace in the world and in the hearts of men and women”. He believed that God’s “will for salvation” is present not only in a Christian’s “explicit faith” but also in their “preconscious openness” to the Mystery of God.

Rahner felt that every human being had to come to grips with the Mystery of God in his or her life and that the spiritual “wrestling” that results from that life-struggle can be called “God’s grace”, even though it needs to come to full and complete expression in the Church.

In his words, an “anonymous Christian” is “a person who lives in a state of Christ’s grace through faith, hope and love yet who has no explicit knowledge of the fact that his or her life is oriented in grace-given salvation to Jesus Christ”.

Rahner’s concern was somehow to positively address the religious lives of the vast majority of humanity – which does not embrace the Gospel in any direct or explicit way. He believed that one cannot set limits to God’s saving power; he also believed that “grace” is found widely in the world.

He believed further that this “grace” can be “justifying” and can save even those who – through no fault of their own – do not possess every aspect of formal Christianity that the Church usually expects.

UNSOLICITED SPIRITUAL THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK:

“Science investigates;  
Religion interprets.  
Science gives people knowledge,  
which is power.  
Religion gives people wisdom,  
which is control.”

Dr. Martin Luther King

And that’s the way it is, a day like all days, filled with those events that alter and illuminate our time...

and YOU ARE THERE!!

“Free your minds, then, of encumbrances;  
control them,  
and put your trust in nothing  
but the grace that will be given you  
when Jesus is revealed.”

I Peter 1:13

My God keep you in all things.

Woodie