

October 27, 2019

Bulletin #43

Our Lady of Lebanon Maronite Catholic Church

2216 Eoff Street, Wheeling, WV 26003

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Msgr. Bakhos Chidiac, Pastor ■ Mary Lee Porter, Organist

We celebrate Eucharist and evangelize via Catholic doctrine.



7th Sunday after the Holy Cross

- ***Weekend Masses:** Saturday evening at 4:00 p.m. [Rosary & Litany start 20 minutes before Mass]
Sunday morning at 10:30 a.m. [Rosary & Litany start 20 minutes before Mass]
- ***Weekday Masses:** Tuesday and Thursday at 12:05 p.m. [Rosary & Litany before Mass]
Monday, Wednesday, and Friday No Mass
- ***Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament:** First Saturday of the month at 3:30 p.m.
First Sunday of the month after 10:30 a.m. Mass
- ***Confession:** Saturday: 3:00 p.m. to 3:45 p.m. or any other time by appointment
- ***Baptism:** Please call the Pastor as soon as baby is born; at least one Godparent must be Catholic
- ***Weddings:** Please make arrangements at least **six** months in advance before any other plans are made
- ***Sick Calls & Anointing of the Sick:** Please notify the Pastor at 304-233-1688
- ***Parish Council:** Lou Khourey, Mike Linton, Rita Strawn, P.J. Lenz, Mary Stees
- ***Choir Members:** Earl Duffy, Lou Khourey, Robert Harris, Shelly Hancher, Ted Olinski, Joe Simon
- ***Bulletin Coordinator:** Thomasina Geimer
- ***Sacristan:** Mike Linton
- ***Altar Boys:** Dalton Haas, Shaun Hancher, Christopher AlKhouri & Luke Lenz
- ***Cedar Club:** Linda Duffy, President
- ***Women's Society:** Carol Dougherty, President



- ***Bulletin Announcements:** Submit all Bulletin Information to Msgr. Bakhos by Noon on Tuesday every week
- ***New Parishioners:** We welcome you with great joy & invite you to officially register as one of our parishioners
- ***Cedar Hall Rental Fees:** Call the Church Office at 304-233-1688 or 304-639-1372
- ***Parking adjacent to church** is for parishioners and visitors all the time.
- ***Remember the Church in your Last Will & Testament:** Her prayers will accompany you to heaven

7th Sunday after the Holy Cross

Readings: Rom 12: 9-12 and Mt 25:31-46

“Stay awake, therefore! You cannot know the day your Lord is coming.”

While Catholic teaching follows the biblical warning that we will not know the time of Christ’s return, we all know that our personal “end of the world,” our own death, could come at any time.

Advent encourages us to reflect on the return of Christ not so that we will be constantly scanning the heavens, but so that we will be “awake,” alert to the world around us, its beauty as well as its needs. The point is not to wait until Christmas or until the Second Coming, but to be awake right now. The only moment in which we can be awake and aware is, after all, the present.

The purpose of Advent preparation is to understand and accept the three comings of Christ. These “advents” of Jesus pose challenges to our intellects and our wills. The first coming is Jesus’ birth in Bethlehem, fully human in a vulnerable baby and fully divine as he was manifested to the Three Magi. Completely human and completely divine, Jesus willingly took on our life, including the inevitability of death. As we are willing to share in his death, we can have a share in divine life.

The second coming is Jesus’ presence to us in the liturgical mystery of the Christmas celebration. Although the life of Christ has already come to us fully in baptism, our life is a progressive deepening and growing in grace. Advent prepares us to desire and to accept all the grace of our baptism and full unity with Christ. The third coming is Jesus’ eventual return in glory at the end of time. At that moment, Christ will judge all the nations and establish his Kingdom for eternity. During Advent, we come to desire that Kingdom and prepare ourselves to be judged on our love for our fellow humans.

Through the writings of the prophets, the Church helps us prepare to acknowledge Christ as our Savior, accept him in our hearts today, and look forward to his coming at the end of time.

Divine Liturgy Schedule

This Weekend, October 26-27: 7th Sunday after the Holy Cross

Saturday, October 26 at 4:00 p.m.:

- ✠ Betty Joseph (Anniversary) by Larry & Becky Ferrera
- ✠ John Wilson (Anniversary) by his wife Judy Wilson and Family
- ✠ Special Intention

Sunday, October 27 at 10:30 a.m.:

- ✠ Theodore and Bertha Rydzak
- ✠ Tom Ferris by Rebecca Walters

This Weekdays Masses

Monday October 28: No Mass. Pastor’s Day off.

Tuesday October 29 at 12:05 p.m.:

- ✠ Sylvia Long, her husband Arthur, & her son Mark by her last will
- ✠ Bob Sengewalt by his grandchildren: Jeff, Courtney and Patrick Sengewalt

Wednesday October 30: No Mass. Pastor’s Day off.

Thursday October 31 at 12:05 p.m.:

- ✠ Rosella Saseen, parents Nancepe & Helen, grandparents Shikrey & Helen Saseen by her Will
- ✠ Tom Ferris by Msgr Bakhos

Friday, November 1 at 12:05 p.m.: All Saints.

- ✠ Bob Sengewalt by Dave & Debbie Sengewalt
- ✠ Living & Deceased of Tom Brock Jr.

<i>All Souls Masses November 2-8</i>

- † The Habdo & Dougherty Families by Bill & Carol Dougherty
- † Living & Deceased members of the Nicholas & Nimnoom Ghaphery Family & the David Abraham Ghaphery Family
- † Deceased of the Kourey & Howard Families by Lou, Charlotte, Emmalena & Louie Kourey
- † Virginia Kourey Bryan & Deceased of the Nabihah & Habib Kourey Family by the Kourey Family
- † Catherine Arthur by her daughter Carol Burkhart
- † Libby G. Magnone (Birthday) by Mary Zaid Stees & Libby G. Magnone
- † Austin Ghaphery
- † Sylvia Long, her husband Arthur, & her son Mark by her last will
- † Deceased of the Thomas, Splatt & Nutter Families by John & Kathy Thomas (MN)
- † Rosella Saseen, parents Nancepe & Helen, grandparents Shikrey & Helen Saseen by her Will
- † Michael Josephs by his daughter Cyndi & Family
- † Freda & William Josephs by Shawn & Cyndi Josephs-Tobias
- † Mike Joseph by Vickie Joseph
- † Alphonse Joseph by Vickie Joseph
- † Georgette Joseph by Vickie Joseph
- † Mary K. and Tom Ferris by Denise Ferris
- † My parents: Robert Shutler, Sr. & Pearl (Nolte) Shutler by Janet Shutler
- † My grandparents: Harry J. Nolte & Fred & Clara Shutler by Janet Shutler
- † My brother William (Billy) Shutler by Janet Shutler
- † My great-grandparents: Harry F. & Isabelle Nolte by Janet Shutler
- † Sam & Bernadine Elias by Mike & Terri Goleiewski
- † Alphonse & Violet Goleiewski by Mike & Terri Goleiewski
- † Jean, Bill, Doug, Billy, Dick, Ed Sr. & Jr. & Jennifer Bentz by Millet & Susie Fadoul
- † Mathann Rinehart, Sharlet Purpura, Elaine & Jay Cybulski, Annette Tysk, Annette Aprea, Paul Doyle by Millet & Susie Fadoul
- † George & Rose Fadoul, Terri Fadoul, Sonny Hancher & Tom George by Millet & Susie Fadoul
- † Deceased of the Sengewalt, Werner, Cooper & Gwenna Families by Millet & Susie Fadoul
- † Emma & James Dellget by Rita & Rex Strawn
- † Virginia & Harold Strawn by Rita & Rex Strawn
- † Ralph & Mary Joseph Shipley by daughter Thomasina Geimer
- † Robert Hunter Jr. (son-in-law) & Robert Hunter III (grandson) by Thomasina Geimer
- † Suzanne Linton by her husband Mike
- † Frances & Joseph Linton by sons Steve & Mike
- † Adib & Sadie Chidiac (parents), Nadim (brother) & Mona (sister) by Steve & Mike Linton
- † Deceased of our parish by Steve & Mike Linton
- † LaVerne Thomas by Dr. Adel, Diane, Andreah & Justin Frenn
- † Elias & Siham Frenn by Dr. Adel, Diane, Andreah & Justin Frenn
- † Tim, Ginny & Martha Shia by the Family
- † Tom Jochum by the Family
- † Deceased of Gus & Anna Shia Family by the Family
- † Deceased of the Duffy, Comer, Fadoul & Shedeed Families by Earl & Linda Duffy
- † Our parents: Joe & Nell Duffy and Geo & Rose Fadoul by Earl & Linda Duffy
- † Catherine Arthur by her daughter Carol Burkhart
- † George A., Dolores, Bert Fahey by Jackie & Pat Petros
- † Philip P. & Betty Lou Petros by Jackie & Pat Petros
- † Deceased members of the Maroon & Mary Catherine Habeb Families by the Weisner & Joseph Families
- † Edward Monseur by Jean Weisner

- † The Forgotten Souls in Purgatory by Jean Weisner
- † Deceased members of the Nimon & Mariam Joseph Family by their children & grandchildren
- † Lottie Elwartoski by her son Richard Elwartoski
- † Walter Elwartoski by his son Richard Elwartoski
- † Deceased members of Marianna Khoury by Dick & Rosemary Coury
- † Amelia & William Fitzgerald by Dick & Rosemary Coury
- † Anthony, Charlotte & Michael George by the George Family (MN)
- † The Forgotten Souls in Purgatory by the George Family (MN)
- † Sylvia Long, her husband Arthur, & her son Mark by her last will
- † Rosella Saseen, parents Nancepe & Helen, grandparents Shikrey & Helen Saseen by her Will
- † Deceased of the Thomas, Splatt & Nutter Families by John & Kathy Thomas (MN)
- † Deceased of Tom & Judy Brock
- † Matt & Margaret Simonetti by Richard & Mary Ryncarz
- † Thomas & Stella Ryncarz by Richard & Mary Ryncarz
- † Don & Emily Vince by Matt & Vicki Gompers, Don Vince & Ron & Michelle Lucki
- † Patricia Gompers by Matt & Vicki Gompers
- † Bob Sengewalt by Dave & Debbie Sengewalt
- † Robert Rose by Dave & Debbie Sengewalt
- † Cathy (Sharp) Howard by Dave & Debbie Sengewalt
- † Deceased of the Olinski and Ragase Families by Mary Ragase and Kathleen Olinski
- † Lorraine & Alois Marchy by Mary Ragase and Kathleen Olinski
- † Deceased members of the Gaudio and Bine Families by Shirley Bine
- † Shirley Elias Nickerson, Mary, Jean, Rose, Helen, Margaret Elias by their Family
- † Nicholas and Amelia Elias (grandparents) and Shirley Elias Nickerson & Donald A. Nickerson Sr., (parents) by their loving Family
- † Betty & George Joseph, Theresa & Lawrence Ferrera, Selma & Elias Joseph by Larry & Becky Ferrera
- † Mary Jean Ferrera Comas, Joann Ferrera Slack, Janet Rae Ferrera by Larry & Becky Ferrera
- † Deceased of the Wilson and Hodulik Families by Jydy Wilson
- † Deceased of the Bentz and Reynolds Families by Carolee Bentz
- † Our beloved parents John T. & Cecilia John & D. William Burns by Ron & Susan Burns
- † Our beloved grandparents Tom & Sadie John & David & Tamamie Joseph and Donald & Sarah Burns by Ron & Susan Burns
- † Our loving Aunts and uncles Fred & Rita John, Louis & Cecilia Ammar, Sister Mary Thomasina John and Roland & Julia Tappe by Ron & Susan Burns
- † Special Prayer for Dalton on his Birthday by PJ, Nikki, Lindsay & Luke Lenz

Calendar of Parish Events

Christmas Family Breakfast	<i>Sunday, December 8th, following Mass in the Cedar Hall</i>
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Family Christmas Breakfast *(Sunday, December 8th after 10:00 am Mass)*

Come One Come All and join us for our Christmas Family Breakfast. You will enjoy a bountiful breakfast of: Scrambled Eggs; Sausage or Bacon; Hash Brown Potatoes; Toast or Biscuits with Butter, Assorted Jellies or Honey; Mixed Fruit; Orange Juice and Coffee.

Bring the children because we have heard that Santa will make a surprise visit.

Let us start the Christmas Season right with our wonderful Family Christmas Breakfast. A modest donation of \$5.00 a person is welcomed.

Your reservation(s) must to be made by Monday, November 24. This is not an open banquet to the public. Every person is asked to write his/her name or the names of his family members on the sheet of paper and

handle it to Msgr. Bakhos personally or to one of the ladies of the church so that we can order the right amount of food for everyone.

Donations for Christmas Breakfast

The ladies of the Women's Society are asked to bring donations ASAP for the Christmas Gift Basket Raffle. Wine, candy or any other Christmas items would be a great donation. Also the ladies are collecting candy to prepare treat bags for the children attending the December 8th, Family Christmas Breakfast Party which will follow Mass that day.

Christmas Poinsettias in Memory of:

A bouquet of yellow roses will decorate the altar of the Blessed Mother in Memory of Helen Fielding by her husband Donald Fielding, Florida.

These Poinsettias were donated in Memory of:

- ☼ *Tom & Mary K. Ferris by Denise Ferris*
- ☼ *George & Martha Saseen by George & Susan Saseen & Family*
- ☼ *Bob Sengewalt by Dave & Debbie Sengewalt*
- ☼ *Louis N. & Louis H. Khourey, Sr. & Gladys Howard by Lou & Charlotte Khourey & Family*

Birthdays Wishes in the Coming Month:

October 30: Michael Duffy, Andrea Frenn
 November 4: Kenny Joseph, Libby G. Magnone, Dalton Haas
 November 8: Staci Duffy, Mark Wilson, Garrett Bratton
 November 9: Liz Murad, Cindy Thomas
 November 11: Ryan Murad
 November 15: Rena Bratton
 November 24: Rex Strawn
 November 26: Mary Lish

Please Pray for Those on Our Prayer List

(Note: Please call Msgr. Bakhos if you need your name added to our Prayer List. HIPPA regulations)

Jeff Fahey and his daughter Amanda, Elie Frenn, Nick Bedway, Shirley & Jim George, Patty Fahey, Bill Dougherty, Fred Schweizer (brother of our organist Mary Lee Porter), Mike O'Kane (brother-in-law of Nikki Popovich), Phil Geimer, Justin Frenn, John Shibem

<i>Your Church Support Last Week</i>	
\$1,621.00	Sunday Collection
269.00	2 nd collection
100.00	Donations toward the New Metal Roof
22.00	Coffee Hour
30.00	Donation to Poor Families
\$2,042.00	Total Deposits: <i>May God reward you abundantly for supporting your spiritual home!</i> The Finance Committee: Lou Khourey, Mary Stees, Linda Duffy & Mike Linton

Update on the New Roof of the Church

While they were removing the shingles, the roofers discovered that the original roof -that was installed 99 years ago- was still there but covered with two layers of shingles. It was wise decision to remove the old shingles so that any leak in the future can be found easily. The new metal roof will take couple weeks to be completed. In the same token, the old roof of the rectory might be changed while the equipments are still here. This will cost

an additional \$15,000. We still need your help. Many Thanks to all generous parishioners and friends who donated toward the new metal roof that need to be installed before winter. All your donations are tax deductible and your names will be engraved on the Plaque to be mounted inside the church. May God reward you abundantly.

Diamond Level [\$500 and over]

Tom & Judy Brock, Jr., Anonymous, John & Deanna Shiben, Tom, Mary K. & Denise Ferris, Michael & Nicole Breit, Lou & Charlotte Khourey, Rex & Rita Strawn, Women Society, Cedar Club, George J. Thomas (Memorial), George, Susan, Matthew & Luke Saseen, Anonymous, Mark Schroeder and Helen Schroeder, Ron Weisner, Al & Dana Zambito, Ron & Susan Burns,

Gold Level [\$250 to \$499]

Dr. Joseph C. Palmer Family, Evelyn Goodson & Family, Bill & Carol Dougherty, Mike & Terri Golebiewski, Chris & Jeannette Wakim, Kenneth & Nancy Joseph, Don & Lori, Emma & Elijah Nickerson, Matthew & Victoria Gompers, Jack & Rose Palmer, Shirley Bine, George & Jean Weisner,

Silver Level [\$25 to \$249]

Larry & Lillian Siebieda, Denny & Mary Lee Porter, Ron, Kim & Kaitlin Gibbons, Frederick & Janet Jaquay, Peggy Palmer, Joe Roxby, Michael & Kathryn Kelly, Millet & Susie Fadoul, Paul & Natalie Mulvey, Anonymous, Al Depto & Mary C. Davis, Vickie Joseph, Laurence G. Schroeder, Elsie Renzella, Frank & Anna Marie Duymich, Pam & Rick Obyc, Phillip & Thomasina Geimer, Robert J. Coram, Latif Thomas, Richard Elwartoski, Patrick & Jackie Petros, Larry & Becky Ferrera, Carol Burkhart, The Palotay Family, Sue Jochum, Scott & Alicia Peklinsky, Abraham & Company PLLC, Elizabeth Simon, Angele Mansor, James & Lynn Comerci, Fran Saseen, Nini Miller, Mark & Debbie Huffman, Dave & Debbie Sengewalt, Drs. Matthew & Christina Zdilla, Bassam & Jodi Deeb, Mike & Judy Sofka, Rosalie Conti, Sheila Saab, Donzil & Theresa Gain, Michael Duymich, Don & Roberta Henning, Anonymous, Veronica C. Mushet, Randy Weisner, Robert Harris, Carolee K. Bentz, Dolores Oser,

What's New?

--The Women Society and the whole church welcome the three ladies who recently joined the Women Society. Stephanie Josphe, Nisrin Alkouri and Debbie Elias Kull. Good Luck.

--Letters have been mailed requesting payments for Ads on the back page of the bulletin. There are 2 openings for new ads for \$120.00 per year each. Ads can be a memorial for your loved ones or for a business or any other message. Please talk or call Msgr Bakhos or Charlotte before December 2nd. These ads help defray the expenses of printing our bulletins throughout the year. Thanks for your support.



Story

“You’ll never amount to anything,” my high school principal snapped at me. I was in his office for getting into a fight with another student. Sure, I had supplied him with plenty of evidence that this would be the case, but his words stung nonetheless. Rather than fight his prediction, I soon confirmed it by dropping out of school.

An earring, waist—length hair, and years of self— destructive living provided strong evidence that my principal would be right. And had it not been for Our Lady, this might have been the case. But the Blessed Mother, like my own earthly mother, never gave up on me, thanks be to God!

The only external evidence of my journey on the road to perdition that remains is the Grateful Dead tattoo on my left shoulder. My “before and after” appearance is dramatic, but it is nothing compared to the internal changes wrought by God’s grace.

During my early years I experienced many changes in family life. My mother was always a loving and caring woman, but my father drank a lot, eventually causing them to separate when I was about four years old.

When I was ten my mother remarried, and that same year she and my step-dad had me baptized into the Episcopal church. It is my first memory of anything even remotely related to God. Though I was newly baptized, religion did not become a part of my family life. I vaguely recall eating donuts after church, so I must have been to a service or two. I was so illiterate when it came to religion, I had no clue who St. Joseph, the angels and saints, or the Blessed Mother were. Even worse, I honestly thought Jesus was a mythical character who showed up at Christmas along with Santa Claus. I knew nothing, not even a prayer.

My step-dad was in the Navy, so we relocated often. My parents had my little brother within the first year of their marriage and I started giving them trouble soon afterwards. By the time I was thirteen and we were living in Southern California, I was already involved with drugs and girls. It must have been a relief to my parents when my dad became stationed in Japan a chance to get me away from bad influences. Instead, I became such a bad influence on my own that the country of Japan kicked me out ... once they were able to track me down.

It took a month for the military police to find me after I ran away from home. My parents were sick with worry. The naval authorities and Japanese officials were not so sympathetic, but equally as motivated to find me. It did not take much detective work to determine that the white boy regularly spotted at crime scenes was guilty. My dad's tour of duty ended nine months early. I was creating an international scene.

Before I was captured, my mom left with my little brother for my dad's next duty station in Pennsylvania, to prepare a home. But prior to leaving, at the offer of a Filipino friend, both my mom and dad started attending Catholic services. My parents were desperate for help with their out-of-control son, and the Catholic Church offered them great consolation and hope. It was not long before they joined the Church. Although my mom returned to the States heart-broken without me, she now had a source of comfort and strength God.

The military police brought me to jail in handcuffs. Two days later I was released to my stepfather, but military police were in attendance, lest I try to run away again.

Not until I stepped off the plane in the United States were the handcuffs removed. My step-dad treated me with great love and kindness, but I wanted none of it. When I saw my mom again, she cried tears of joy and hugged me, but I brushed her off. I hated my parents for taking me out of my paradise.

Part of the agreement the Navy made with the Japanese authorities not to press charges required me to enter a rehabilitation center. I managed to run away once, but was easily caught and ended up completing the ten-week program. I think everyone knew I did not take the program seriously.

The wall I built between my parents and me was impenetrable and nothing, especially religion, was going to get through. I had no desire to give up my drugs and womanizing.

It was around this time I quit school. I hit rock bottom in life. A girl I really cared for broke up with me, and I soon realized I was not capable of maintaining a relationship. I felt like a total loser. I was desperate. I could not stand being me anymore. I went to rehab for a second time in Philadelphia. Although their intention was to challenge me by telling me the odds were against my ever succeeding, instead I felt: "Why bother, I'm hopeless."

When I turned eighteen, I hummed around the East Coast for a while with a friend. My travels included heavy partying and another night in jail on a misdemeanor before returning home. My life was going nowhere, and I was miserable.

One evening, while planning for a night out with friends, a terrible feeling came over me. Something was coming for me and I could only imagine that it was death.

I canceled my plans. The feeling lingered. I realized it did not matter what I did that evening, I was going to confront something. Whatever it was, I wanted to be home when it happened.

Sitting in my room, I became restless. I wanted to go out but did not dare. Fighting boredom, I walked into the hall and scanned my parent's bookshelf. Shakespeare, poetry...nothing interesting...then one book caught my eye. I pulled it out and scanned it. It was a book on apparitions of the Blessed Mother.

I flipped through and saw pictures of children looking up at a vision of a lady. Stupefied, I read the captions. “My parents are into some kind of a cult!” I thought with horror.

Fascinated, I took it to my room and began reading. At 3 a.m. I closed the book, having read it from cover to cover. I had no idea who the Blessed Mother was, but when I started to read about things like prayer, fasting, Jesus Christ, and His death on the Cross for me, I was overcome with a sense of love and joy. Much of it I did not even understand. When I put the book down I said to myself, “This woman is the woman I have always been looking for. This Virgin Mary is perfect. Her God is my God. I will listen to whatever she tells me.”

My euphoric excitement made sleep impossible. I could not wait until my mom woke up so I could share my enthusiasm with her. My whole life had been flipped upside down. When my mom did finally wake up, I shakily told her I wanted to talk to a Catholic priest. Stunned, she asked me to repeat what her ears could not believe. I showed her the book I had read.

“You read that book?” Mom asked incredulously.

“Mom, I consumed the book,” I exclaimed.

“Whoever Mary is, whoever Jesus is, and that bread...I know it’s all true. I want to talk to a priest!”

There was a Catholic chaplain on base. I literally ran the half-mile to see him at Our Lady of Victory chapel. He did not know what to make of me long hair, earring, funky clothes radically out of place for a military base.

“Who are you and where did you come from?” he wanted to know.

I tried to tell him everything in a few sentences. Not knowing what to make of me and having another appointment, he gave me a crucifix, a picture of the Sacred Heart of Jesus and one of Pope John Paul II, and told me to return the next day. I skipped home with my treasures. Then, I got five big garbage bags and filled them with clothes, music, drug paraphernalia anything I was attached to. My mom stood back silently in amazement and left me alone.

I hung the crucifix and pictures around my room. Then, I did not know what to do while I waited to see the priest the next day so I looked through the book again. A desire welled up in me to talk to God and Our Lady so I knelt in front of the Sacred Heart picture and waited. I thought, “Well, okay, I’m ready.” I had no idea what prayer was all about and expected God to appear to me.

As I looked upon the image of Jesus, however, I became flooded with real contrition and joy. Tears poured down from my eyes for at least an hour, leaving my clothes soaked. I was completely convicted of my sinfulness and of God’s love. I knew there was hope for me. I knew I would never be the same. The old me had died the night before.

The next day the priest was again busy and asked me to go to the back of the church where he would say Mass and then we could talk afterwards. I did so, but when Father came in wearing a white robe (his vestments), and everyone stood at the same time, I was confused. “Is this some sort of choreographed play?” I wondered.

I watched curiously as everyone knelt while Father raised a white circle. At that moment, the depths of my being cried out, “There is my God!” I was infused with the knowledge that it was Jesus Christ. I knew it, I knew it, and I wanted to receive Him so badly.

After Mass I confronted the priest: “When you raised the white circle, that was God, wasn’t it! I know it, that was God! Tell me that was God!”

I wondered why I never knew about all this before. It was what I always wanted. It was the meaning in life that would be everlasting. And the perfect woman I had been searching for, I found in Mary. Everything fell into place.

I overwhelmed quite a few people in the months ahead. My stepdad was one of them. He had been away at sea on an aircraft carrier and happily returned to a completely changed son. Six months later, when I was confirmed, his fatherly words meant the world to me. “Welcome home,” he said. I had gone from hating my parents to realizing they were my best friends. And my little brother whom I had mostly ignored, became third in my life after God and Mary.

In 1993, after only ten months as a Catholic, I said good-bye to the happiest mom in the world, on my

way to be a priest with the Congregation of Marians of the Immaculate Conception. This radical life of poverty, chastity and obedience the very things I once ran from—I now embrace.

My calling to the priesthood is like a marriage covenant with God. The honeymoon the high of my conversion—lasted four years. It was as if God gave me a lollipop experience so I could taste the sweetness of His love. Then He took the lollipop away so I had to struggle and still choose Him. That is where the real love is; to remain faithful when it is not always easy. Our Lady is the one who brought me to Jesus and I continue to go to Him through her. I've been saved by Jesus with the cooperation of His Blessed Mother. Fr D. Calloway



A Time to Laugh (433)

Just for Laughs

--“Police Seek Vandals for Graffiti Work”

--“Volunteers Needed for Suicide Program”

--“Analyst’s Couch Maker Finds a Niche in Shrinking Market”

--Just after hurricane Katrina hit, I watched an interview with a New Orleans businessman who kept his bar open by candlelight when the electricity failed. Okay, so he had had light. But, wondered the reporter, “You have no running water. How can you stay open?”

“Sir,” said the bar owner in a lazy drawl, “folks don’t come to New Orleans to drink the water.”

--Part of my job at the District Attorney’s office is to send letters to people accused of crimes, informing them when a court date is scheduled. One such notice was returned, clearly by a criminal mastermind, with this jotted on the envelope: “I DO NOT LIVE HERE.”

Funny quotes about marriage

--The key to a long and healthy marriage is that, honestly, there’s nothing worth fighting about.

--Why does a woman work ten years to change a man’s habits and then complain that he’s not the man she married?

--I love being married. I was single for a long time, and I just got so sick of finishing my own sentences.

--Until you become a parent, you can’t begin to discover your capacity for strength, love and fatigue.

--The perfect man? A poet on a motorcycle.

--Kids. They’re not easy. But there has to be some penalty for sex.

--You should never marry anybody until you’ve seen each other miserable sick with the flu.

--My wife tells me that if I ever decide to leave, she’s coming with me.

--It ain’t what people call you. It’s what you answer to.

--Marriage is like a 5,000-piece jigsaw puzzle—all sky.

Questions & Answers

--Q.: What do you do if you’re attacked by a troupe of circus performers?

A: Go for the juggler.

--BOB: Al, when did you get a trombone?

Al: I borrowed it from my neighbor’s kid.

Bob: I didn’t know you could play the trombone.

Al: I can’t. And now, neither can he.

--The last thing my friend remembered was ordering a drink at the bar. After that, it was all a blur, except for the nagging feeling that people were staring at him. The next day, he couldn't find his hat. Figuring he'd left it at the bar, he took a walk over.

"Looking for your hat?" asked the bartender. "Yes," said my friend.

As the bartender handed it over, he added, "And would you like your pants too?"

--A man and his wife are sitting in the living room. He says to her, "Just so you know, I never want to live in a vegetative state, dependent on some machine. If that ever happens, just pull the plug." So, she gets up and unplugs the TV.

--Bob Dylan announced he will have a weekly music show on XM Satellite Radio. It will be an hour show followed by another hour show that translates what Bob Dylan said in the first hour.