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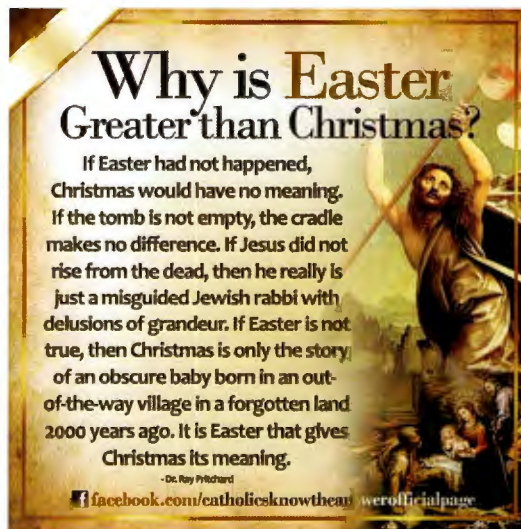
FR. CK'S CORNER: WHAT IS MOST IMPORTANT: CHRISTMAS OR EASTER?

By Fr. Christopher Klusman



Welcome to the second half of the newsletter. I hoped you did not peek nor opened to this second half until Easter?!

I'm continuing with my previous newsletter article from Winter 2020, on how people celebrate Christmas as if there isn't an Advent season. Thinking about Lent; isn't it funny how people are very good about celebrating Lent and going into Holy Week? Once Holy Week is over, then the celebration of Easter. Do you ever see anyone celebrating Easter during Lent? Having Easter parties during Lent? Rarely... if any at all... It is sad that we often can really experience Lent, but oftentimes not really experience Advent.



Easter Morn

*When Jesus, Sun of Justice,
Arose on Easter morn,
When He the cross and passion
For our sins had borne.*

*He first appeared to Mary,
What joy when she her Son
Saw glorious and immortal,
Aglow with victory won!
ALLELUIA!*

While I had mentioned that Christmas began on the evening of December 24th, many people begin Christmas in November. It is like beginning to celebrate Easter in February. While the Christmas season begins on December 24th, many people are finished with Christmas already on December 26th, through seeing stripped Christmas trees already out on the front lawn ready for pick-up. Can you imagine if we did that for Easter? After Easter day of Sunday, April 4th, then no more Easter stuff. Put away the Easter baskets, take down the decorations, and no more "Alleluias." Food for thought...

Here is a question: **Which is more important: Christmas or Easter?** Oftentimes, people have the impression (if you really search deep down) that Christmas is most important. I remember as a kid when I would ride on Christmas Day to my other

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MISSION STATEMENT - DEAF APOSTOLATE

The Deaf Apostolate in the Archdiocese of Milwaukee exists to enable all Catholic Deaf and Hard of Hearing people to participate fully in the liturgical, educational, pastoral, spiritual, and human concerns ministries in the Church.

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families' houses for Christmas parties experiencing novelty and awe at seeing a McDonald's that is closed during the day?! Target is closed. Many stores, restaurants, and places closed!



It was the strangest thing for my young eyes to see as my parents drove past these buildings. I had never seen anything like that on any other day except Christmas day/evening of December 25. It is a memory that still is deeply locked in my memories.

But what about Easter day? Even as a child and teenager, when my parents, again, drove me to other relatives' houses for Easter parties, I would see McDonald's open and busy. Stores were open and busy! Many buildings bustling with customers and visitors. My impression and understanding were that Christmas is more important than Easter. Because everything shut down on Christmas day, but not for Easter. So, Christmas had to be the most important.

But, when I got older and learning at the Seminary, can you imagine my surprise at learning the answer to the question: What is most important: Christmas or Easter? While my gut reaction was going to say, "Christmas!" But, I was told at the Seminary that it is Easter. Easter? *Easter? Huh?*

The more I studied, the more it made sense. Easter is the most important, greatest, and holiest day of the year. While Christmas is very important, it is Jesus' Death and Resurrection that changed everything! Christmas was important because it allowed the Second Person of the Trinity to become a human being, which leads Jesus to eventually offer Himself as a Sacrifice, while Jesus is also the High Priest, for our salvation. I will never forget one of my favorite lessons taught by Patty Kostechka to her Deaf students for religious education: Jesus opened the locked gates of heaven when He rose from the dead! What a momentous occasion! When Jesus was born, the gates of heaven were still locked as caused by Adam and Eve's sin and expulsion from the Garden. But, praise be to God that Jesus, the new Adam, alongside with Our Lady standing by Him at the Cross as the New Eve, was able to undo the mistake of Adam and Eve and unlock the gates of heaven, so that we, faithful followers, can enjoy



eternal life in Heaven with God and the Communion of Saints! What better gift can there be? In a way, the greatest gift of Jesus at Christmas led to the greatest gift of all time made possible at Easter: salvation with Jesus in heaven!

If only, *if only*, when driving on Easter day to a family party in celebration of Easter, if only would I see McDonald's closed. If only would I see Wal-Mart closed. If only Amazon stopped shipments on that day! If only... then what would that teach us about the importance of Easter?

Now, if I ask you the question: What is most important: Christmas or Easter? What would you say and why?



A woman went to a dentist for the fifth time to ask him to grind down her false teeth because "they don't fit." "Well," said the dentist, "I'll do it again this time, but no more. By every test, these should fit your mouth easily." "Who said anything about my mouth," the woman replied testily. "They don't fit in the glass!"





St. Andrew Parish DEAF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION MINISTRY SHARING THE GOOD NEWS

FROM THE DELAVAN CORNER: EASTER AND BEYOND



**By Jennifer Paul, Coordinator
Deaf Religious Education
& Deaf Ministry
St. Andrew Parish, Delavan**

We hope that, by the time you read this, you have made the most out of the Lent season.

We hope that everyone – myself included – had managed to break free of the distractions and look outward and onto God. Did we look closely at where we get our sense of peace from? Is it our relationship with God rather than worldly goods? We are not saying to forsake all worldly goods. Rather we are saying not to **DEPEND** on them for our joy.

The more critical question is we had also made the time to look around us, to discern what is good for us spiritually, and finally to discard that which is not so good for us? Doing just that goes beyond Easter and helps our lifelong journey as Catholics.

Easter has significant chronological and spiritual terms – which come together to mean liturgical - is a gift for us to start anew on this journey. We made mistakes but God is mercy, and we keep trying. At this point, self-discipline is important. If you find your willpower lacking, pray and ask for help. Ask your friends for support. This is why we need to discern what is good for us – if you find yourself succumbing to temptations around certain people, maybe you need to reconsider how much time you spend with them. True friends are those who want you to be a better version of yourself and true friends also want you to have true peace and help you find it.

You would think it is too exhausting to keep trying but with prayer and practice, it would not be as difficult. On the contrary,

you would find yourself feeling peaceful and joyous and **WANT** to keep doing what is good and holy. Eternal life does not begin when we die but in the here and now. It begins at the very beginning with the Sacrament of Baptism. As we grow in the faith and receive the next Sacraments throughout life, we have the liturgical calendar to remind us of the holy journey and keep it up or to try again.



This parable in the Gospel of Matthew is also helpful and should motivate us on our lifelong journey as Catholics. I was reminded of this powerful parable in Fr. Christopher Klusman's recent Bible Study via ZOOM:

Hear then the parable of the sower -

The seed sown on the path is the one who hears the word of the kingdom without understanding it, and the evil one comes and steals away what was sown in his heart.

The seed sown on rocky ground is the one who hears the word and receives it at once with joy.

But he has no root and lasts only for a time. When some tribulation or persecution comes because of the word, he immediately falls away.

The seed sown among thorns is the one who hears the word, but then worldly anxiety and the lure of riches choke the word and it bears no fruit.

But the seed sown on rich soil is the one who hears the word and understands it, who indeed bears fruit and yields a hundred or sixty or thirtyfold. (Matthew 13: 18 - 23).

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This parable helps us examine where we are along the journey. Do we understand Jesus' teachings? Or do we go beyond understanding and go deep in spirit? Or we do understand, run deep spiritually but do we also steer clear of thorns as well?

Wherever we are along the journey, Easter is our liturgical –

chronological and spiritual – gift to celebrate the gift of eternal life, which begins in the here and now. Wherever we are along the journey, we keep trying to understand, to go deep spiritually, to get rid of thorns, and finally to yield plentiful fruits in service of God's children on Earth.

Rejoice! For He is Risen!

REFLECTION QUESTION:

Try to start a conversation with your family and/or friends about this question.

What does Jesus' Resurrection mean to you? Why?



“Harriet,” inquired one recent bride of another, by telephone, “when baking a cake, and the recipe calls for a cup of sugar, do you use a small cup or a large one?”

“That depends,” was the reply, “are you making a large cake or a small one?”



CATHOLIC QUIZ

1. What was the Jewish feast being celebrated the week Christ was crucified?
(a) Pentecost (b) Passover
(c) Hanukkah (d) Unleavened Bread
2. What was Jesus wrapped in before He was buried?
(a) Sheep skin (b) Linen clothes
(c) Golden robes (d) Goat skin
3. Who rolled away Jesus' tomb stone?
(a) Soldiers (b) God (c) Jesus (d) angel
4. How long did Jesus remain after His Resurrection before He ascended into heaven?
(a) 7 days (b) 14 days (c) 40 days (d) 50 days
5. The 3 days of prayer traditionally celebrated on the Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday before Ascension Thursday are called?
(a) Rogation Days (b) Ember Days
(c) Conciliation Days (d) Tempera Days



(Answers on page 7.)

In St. John's School for the Deaf's publications of the "Our Young People," there is a section that has their current news. I hope you will enjoy these various news clippings:


News
of
St.
John's



Loretta had charge of keeping the holy water font in Room 2B filled. One day she poured the remainder of the holy water into the font, and then, thinking to be helpful, she went to the water faucet and filled the bottle up again.

Father Walsh, C.S.S.R. gave a day of recollection for the older children at St. John's. We were happy to have Father as our guest while he was giving a mission for the Catholic deaf of Milwaukee.

Many thanks to the friend of Mike Walters who donated a thirty pound box of candy to St. John's. That ought to keep the children sweet for a long time.



Our Young People

THE FRIEND OF THE DEAF

TWO JOSEPHS

In honor of the Year of St. Joseph, here is a beautiful story borrowed from Our Young People: The Friend of the Deaf, March 1958 issue.

Little Joseph was standing in the school yard, intently watching Big Joseph, who was putting in repairs at St. Cecilia's.

Big Joseph was a carpenter, and had a hammer stuck in his belt, and a nail bag hung round his waist. Little Joseph was a schoolboy, and had a big, new, red, lead pencil – an H.B. – stuck in his belt, and a schoolbag slung over his shoulder.

He was thinking it must be great fun to be up on a ladder all day, and have no lessons to do. Perhaps Big Joseph was thinking it would be pleasant to be a little honest-eyed schoolboy, with nothing heavier than a schoolbag on one's shoulders.

The bell rang, school "went in," and Big Joseph kept his hammer still while the little ones said their morning offering, and said their prayers. Big Joseph had said no prayers that morning, or any other morning for – well, I would not like to say how long.

The sound floated up to the window where his ladder leaned. "Our Father, Who art in heaven, hallowed by Thy Name –" Big Joseph took off his hat.

"Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee—" Big Joseph bowed his head.

When the prayers were over, the hammer went on, noisily driving nails to their places, and many a time Little Joseph raised his blue eyes to the window, where he could see just the rim of a brown felt hat.



At lunch time he made overtures of friendship.

"Hullo!" he said shyly.

"Hullo!" smiled the man with the hammer.

"Please sharpen this, will you," and the boy held up his new, red, lead pencil, that had "snapped" in the making of an elaborate capital "D."

The carpenter obligingly sharpened the pencil to a beautiful

point, and Little Joseph smiled his thanks.

They lunched together, and the boy pressed his companion to have some of the sponge cake "that mother made."

"Mother makes such nice cakes," he assured him, with a proud smile.

"What's your name, sonny?"

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▶ TWO JOSEPHS - Continued from Page 5.

“Joseph – Joseph Curran. What’s yours?”

“Joseph Kenny.”

“Oh, are you a Joseph, too – and you are a carpenter? Now that is very nice. I suppose St. Joseph likes you very much, because he was a carpenter, too. I suppose he likes you better than me because I’m only Little Joseph – you are Big Joseph.”

“I think he likes you best, sonny,” Big Joseph said unsteadily.

“Oh, I’m afraid not. You see, I’m not very good. Sister scolds me a lot, because I never seem to be able to mind the board all the time, or listen to what she is saying always. I like looking around, and watching the children, and everyone who passes the window.”

Big Joseph sighed. Such little sins to be bewailing! Now, if he were to tell why St. Joseph could not like him “best!”

“This is St. Joseph’s month,” the little boy remarked, “and Sister said I’m to be very, very good to please him. I’ll try, but it’s hard, you know,” and the small sinner sighed and pressed his soft red lips into a determined straight line.

“Now, I must go and help Sister. May I have my lunch with you tomorrow?”

“Yes, sonny, of course.”

The days went on. They were not pleasant for Big Joseph. The children’s prayers floated up through the windows, or out through the doors, and wherever he worked their voices followed him.

What a long time since he had been at school. The Sisters had taught him, too – long ago – years and years ago – and he had never entered a school since the day he left St. Michael’s until he came to work at St. Cecilia’s.

It was a little old-fashioned school, St. Michael’s, and the desks were long and narrow. He always sat at the end, near the window. He was a little pure-souled schoolboy then, with honest eyes like Little Joseph’s.

Bang! Bang! rang the hammer on the nails. What a fool he was to let his thoughts go wandering in those old dead days. What a fool he was, with the grey hairs of old age already showing above his temples, to be thinking of the days when he was a little schoolboy!

He hammered and sawed and planed, and tried to drive away the memory of the old-fashioned school, and the thought of what he “should have been.”

Every day Little Joseph had lunch with him, and now it was Friday.

The fresh green of the trees hung over the school fence, and waved in the air when the wind blew through their branches.

Little Joseph had a bright yellow daffodil pinned in his coat, and was in the highest spirits.

He spread out his snowy serviette, set out his repast, and Big Joseph did likewise.

“Egg sandwiches,” said the little fellow, with a disdainful curl of his lips. “I don’t much care for them, you know, but it’s Friday. Fish sandwiches are nasty, and cheese nastier still, but eggs are not so bad after all.”

The carpenter had meanwhile commenced his lunch. Suddenly there was a crash. Little Joseph had started to his feet and upset the basket of tools.

“Oh,” he cried. “Oh, oh, Big Joseph, you are eating meat!”

The man actually blushed under the fire of those childish blue eyes.

“Oh, it’s Friday. You didn’t know, did you? Oh, say you didn’t know. You would not eat meat purposely on Friday? Would you?”

The man did not speak, but sat stupidly with the half-finished sandwich in his fingers.

Little Joseph moved closer to him. “You didn’t remember, did you? It’s no harm if you forgot.”

The man looked into the blue eyes, and tried to lie; but he could not.

“I know,” he said humbly.

Little Joseph’s eyes were wide open, horror-stricken.

Children are so given to hero-worship, and the boy had thought this big, strong man a hero, a wonderful hero, who could build houses, and was surely very dear to God and the good St. Joseph. And now –

“You won’t eat any more, will you? It’s a mortal sin, you know. Catholics should never eat meat on Friday. They do without it for a penance, because it was on a Friday Our Lord died to save everybody.”

Big Joseph knew all this; he learned it years ago, and kept the law rigidly – until – until – until he had gradually strayed away from the path.

The boy gathered up the lunch. “May I take it away to Tommy’s

► **TWO JOSEPHS - Continued from Page 6.**

dog? Here, you eat mine; they are not so bad; and I'll run home for more, because – "he stammered – "because you will want a lot bigger lunch than I do."

Big Joseph spoke not a word, he was ashamed even to look at the boy; but he put the half-finished sandwich on top of the others, and Little Joseph ran away down to the end of the school yard, and tossed the parcel over to Tommy's dog. Then he raced home for a big Friday lunch for his friend the carpenter.



That afternoon, when the children were saying their prayers, Big Joseph put down his hammer and listened as was his wont. And when the sweet baby voices commenced the act of contrition, Big Joseph joined in too; but, oh, so softly; none but the angels could catch the words.

The children commenced a novena for St. Joseph's feast day, and Sister Mary Philomena told them to ask him for anything they wanted. The carpenter heard every word of her instructions, and the lovely stories she told about his patron saint. No one could tell stories like Sister Mary Philomena, even the big carpenter fell under her spell, and his plane moved quietly, smoothly, keeping a sort of accompaniment to her soft, low voice.

Little Joseph listened joyfully. He knew one thing he would ask the good saint. He would ask him to make Big Joseph good, and not let him eat meat on Friday ever again; and Big Joseph asked almost the same thing.

Before the novena closed, the carpenter's work was finished, and one afternoon he packed up his tools, put his hammer through the handles of the basket, and slung it up on his shoulder.

Just as he reached the school gate, little pattering footsteps sounded behind him, and his namesake caught his hand.

"Goodbye," he panted. "I'm sorry you're going." His voice sank to a whisper. "I put you in my novena to St. Joseph. And here," he fumbled in the pocket of his blue sailor blouse. "Mother said I

could give you my tiny pocket statue of St. Joseph." He drew out a little tin case, about an inch in length, opened it, and revealed a small metal statue of St. Joseph. "Keep it always in your pocket. Mother will get me another one."

The man bashfully accepted the little gift, and bending down, pressed a shamefaced kiss on Little Joseph's high, white forehead. "Goodbye, my little mate," he said; and then hurried away, ashamed of his emotion.

Big Joseph is quite changed now, all through his "job" at the school, where he met Little Joseph; and commenced the novena with the children of St. Cecilia's.

The Back Pew - Jeff Larson



FOR SALE - Single owner tomb. Only used three days, and still has that new tomb smell. Reason for sale.. resident was resurrected.

Quiz Answers:

1b; 2b; 3d; 4c; 5a

Little Mary had been promoted to the third grade.

Meeting the second grade teacher whom she liked very much, she said, "Gee, Miss Kate, I wish you were smart enough to teach me this year, too."



ST. JOSEPH OF CUPERTINO, MODEL SAINT FOR THE MEANING OF EASTER

By Fr. Christopher Klusman

We truly have a huge group of saints, so it is never easy to figure out which saint can help us learn more about the meaning of Easter. Again, through prayer, one saint popped out: St. Joseph of Cupertino. I thought, what a nice saint because of his name, which is the same as St. Joseph. It is perfect during the “Year of St. Joseph.” Also, St. Joseph of Cupertino’s father is a carpenter. Let’s look at this unique and fascinating saint.

Before we discuss his birth in 1603, let’s discuss his father. His father worked as a carpenter, but he wasn’t good with money. Sadly, his father died before St. Joseph of Cupertino was born. Since his mother was left with so much debt, she had to run away (out of shame) to give birth to St. Joseph of Cupertino in a stable at the back of the house. He was born in Cupertino, in the Kingdom of Naples, Italy. As a baby and child, he was very sickly and seemed to be dying many times, but still lived. His mother became so tired of him. While his mother was a good person, difficult circumstances made her hard. When St. Joseph made any mistakes, she would punish him very severely, without mercy. When St. Joseph was a little more than seven years of age, he developed a running ulcer that would never heal. St. Joseph of Cupertino eventually learned that nobody wanted him, even his mother. He accepted that very early in his life. So many times, St. Joseph did not know what he wanted or what he was doing. When St. Joseph of Cupertino was trained to be a shoemaker, he was too distracted that it was not a possibility.

The thing about St. Joseph is that many of the smallest things, such as the ringing of bells, left him frozen, standing with mouth open and eyes looking elsewhere. He was earned the nickname, “Bocca Aperta,” which means “open mouth.” In reality, when St. Joseph would become “frozen,” it was when he would go into a deeply spiritual moment of visions and ecstasies with God. But, poor St. Joseph of Cupertino because he was accused of being a “lazy bum.”



When St. Joseph reached 17 years of age, a begging friar came into his village. St. Joseph realized that he could become a friar and go around begging for bread, as one does not have to be smart to do this. He applied at several places and was turned down. While one community took him in as a lay-brother on a trial basis, they found him dull, difficult to teach, and his moments of suddenly standing still in the middle of something annoyed the community. For example, he would be carrying food into the refectory and all of a sudden, he would “freeze” and drop everything on the floor. He would also go down on his knees in the most unusual places, not aware of anything around him. Sadly, he was stripped of his habit (which he said was like their stripping off his skin) and kicked out. He would later say that to be the hardest day of his life, like everything in heaven and earth shut him out. While he was out, he realized he lost his regular clothes. He looked horrible as he didn’t have a hat, boots/stockings, and a moth-eaten coat. He looked so horrible that dogs came after him and tore more of what he had worn. Shepherds thought he looked dangerous, so he came across many difficulties. At this time, he was 18 years old and he would eventually go back to his mother. This wasn’t easy, as his mother found him to be a burden and didn’t want him back again. His mother was worried about the public shame of a son who

was kicked out of the monastery. Her mother’s brother was a Franciscan, so she went to him and asked him to take St. Joseph so she could be rid of him. So, they took him in and gave him the habit of the Third Order layman and employed him as a servant, mostly to take care of the monastery mule.

While he would be in the stable, other friars would go there and notice a change in St. Joseph of Cupertino. They would be warmly welcomed by him. They were amazed at how humble he was, how light-hearted, how kind, and how willing he was to serve. St. Joseph was more careful and successful

► ST. JOSEPH OF CUPERTINO - Continued on Page 9.

► **ST. JOSEPH OF CUPERTINO - Continued from Page 8.**

at his work. He was able to also pray more and do more voluntary acts of penance. The Franciscans then decided to admit him into the Franciscan Order. While St. Joseph had always struggled to learn, as he was unfortunately called “The Dunce,” all efforts of teaching him was hopeless. Strangely, only one verse stayed with St. Joseph of Cupertino, which is a verse from Luke 11:27: “While [Jesus] was speaking, a woman from the crowd called out and said to him, ‘Blessed is the womb that carried you and the breasts at which you nursed.’”

Shockingly, St. Joseph of Cupertino had to pass tests by the bishop and special examination board into the diaconate and priesthood. When the bishop opened the New Testament, there was the same page of Luke 11:27! The bishop asked him to explain it and St. Joseph of Cupertino did. So he was admitted to the diaconate. A year later, the bishop was more than satisfied with what he heard of St. Joseph of Cupertino so he passed the test and became a priest at the age of 25!

The friars continued to struggle with him, even after realizing that when he would lose himself, he was actually losing himself in God. When St. Joseph of Cupertino would go out begging, he would come back with a full bag, but often without a sandal, girdle, rosary, or even parts of his habit. The reason was that people wanted relics of him so that the Holy Spirit could begin to work many miracles through him. Also, the people felt he looked like them and identified with him. Over 70 times, people said they saw him rise from the ground while offering Mass or praying. St. Joseph of Cupertino became so famous for the miracles (such as helping the blind see and curing a sick child) that he was finally kept hidden from the public, but he was happy for the chance to be alone with his beloved Lord.

One of his most famous flights was in front of Pope Urban VIII when he bent down to kiss the Pope’s ring that he flew almost 30 feet into the air in front of everyone! He couldn’t get down until the head of his order told him. Also, amid his ecstasies, St. Joseph would fly towards the altar or over it when in the church. In the refectory, during a meal, he would suddenly rise from the ground with a dish of food in his hands while the others in the room were surprised! Sometimes he



would be able to fly into a tree. Many flying (levitating) experiences!

Sadly, St. Joseph of Cupertino began to be accused as an imposter and mischief. He was reported to the Vicar General and then the inquisitors of Naples. He was then reported to the General of the Order in Rome. St. Joseph of Cupertino, for reasons not known, had to be kept in safe custody, forbidden from speaking to anyone except the religious with him. He was transferred to many other places. Finally, in 1657, when he was taken to the last place, he said that he would never leave this place. He told his companions that the first day on which he failed to receive Holy Communion

would be the day he would die. When his health turned for the worst, he received Extreme Unction. He requested that his body be buried somewhere and forgotten. He died on September 18, 1663, at the age of 60.

St. Joseph is the patron saint of air travelers, pilots, astronauts, people with learning disabilities, and students preparing for exams. Pope Clement XIII canonized him a saint in 1767. His feast day is September 18. His body is on display at the



► **ST. JOSEPH OF CUPERTINO** - Continued from Page 9.

Convent Basilica of St. Joseph of Cupertino in Osimo, Italy. Also, in that basilica, you will see an image of St. Joseph who seems to be flying behind the main altar.

Also, there is a great movie about St. Joseph of Cupertino that you can purchase that is also subtitled. It is called "The Reluctant Saint." It is another beautiful movie worthy to watch and enjoy!

Last, why did I write about him as an example for Easter? St. Joseph of Cupertino is a man of joy! He was called names and seen as nothing. People have seen his joy as idiocy, dumbness, naïve, and retarded. He didn't let that stop him nor think less of himself, even when people, like his own mother, didn't want anything to do with him! While Jesus never gave up and conquered sin, death, and the Evil One, St. Joseph never gave up either. He kept going until the Lord called him home to heaven. When you think about the challenges that St. Joseph of Cupertino went through and how God stayed with him, we are inspired to remember that through our trials and challenges that we can rise above them. If we let God, He stays with us, encouraging us to see the light. It doesn't require someone great to be great, but someone, even little, who knows the Risen Lord loved each one of us that He went through great lengths to suffer, die, and rise so that we can be with God with joy, happiness, and innocence for all eternity in the Great Light of God Himself! Alleluia!!!!!!

St. Joseph of Cupertino, pray for us!



SHOPPER: "How much are these tomatoes?"

GROCER: "Thirty-five cents, madam. They're very nice."

SHOPPER: "Did you raise them yourself?"

GROCER: "Yes, madam, they were thirty cents yesterday."



ST. JOSEPH, MODEL FOR THE EASTER SEASON

As begun from the Lenten section of this *Hand in Hand* newsletter, where we learned one example of how St. Joseph teaches us how to live according to the Lenten season, St. Joseph also has something to teach us about living the Easter season. St. Joseph is the patron saint of a happy death. During the Easter Vigil Mass, we see that Jesus won, conquering the forces of darkness (sin, death, and the Evil One)! Alleluia!!!!

According to Fr. Donald Calloway's wonderful book, *Consecration to St. Joseph: The Wonders of Our Spiritual Father*, "Saint Joseph died a holy and happy death. He died gazing upon Jesus and resting in the arms of Mary. What greater death could a person experience? ... God has designated St. Joseph as the Patron of the Dying because he wants us to experience a death similar to that of St. Joseph, a holy and happy death" (71). We often read of saints, when they were dying, would see Our Lord, the Blessed Mother, and/or saints come to bring them happily to eternity. I wish that when we are dying that we are graced with the beautiful gift of seeing Our Lord, the Blessed Mother, and St. Joseph! That is truly a happy death! Imagine how awesome that moment would be!?

Catholic Tradition told us that St. Joseph died sometime before Jesus began His public ministry. Jesus began His public ministry in the last 3 years of His blessed life, which means from the ages of 30 to 33 since Tradition says that Jesus was crucified and died at the age of 33. In Fr. Calloway's book, he said, "If St. Joseph were alive during the public ministry of Jesus, it would have been confusing for people to hear Jesus speak about his desire to take them to his Father. In order to avoid obscuring the primacy of the Heavenly Father, Joseph had to die

before the public ministry of Jesus began" (207). Isn't that an amazing act of love and humility? St. Joseph is so humble that he didn't want to confuse Jesus' teachings about God the Father that he died happily. Growing up, I had thought that St. Joseph felt very sad to have died before Jesus began His ministry, but learning of this made me realize that St. Joseph thought differently: St. Joseph died happily because he wanted to make Jesus shine and to do God's Will in the best way possible!

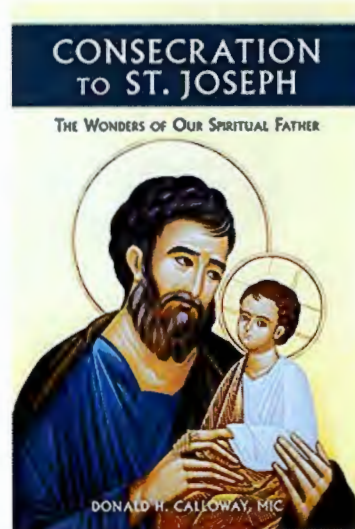
With St. Joseph as the patron saint of a happy death and this being the Easter season of rejoicing in Jesus' Resurrection, what is very interesting is Fr. Calloway's description of the resurrection of St. Joseph! That is something that we never really heard or learned about... I will be quoting a page about this topic in its entirety:

"In the Gospel of Matthew, we are told about an incredible event that happened to many people after the Resurrection of Jesus. It reads:

And behold, the veil in the sanctuary was torn in two from top to bottom. The earth quaked, rocks were split, tombs were opened, and the bodies of many saints who had fallen asleep were raised. And coming forth from their tombs after his resurrection, they entered the holy city and appeared to many. (Matthew 27:51-53).

It's an intriguing passage, to say the least. Who are the saints that came forth from their tombs at the death of Jesus? Well, we don't know exactly who they were because no names were given, but the Church has often thought that they are the prophets of the Old Testament, as well as St. John the Baptist and St. Joseph. It certainly makes sense that St. Joseph would be among their number.

If people rose from the dead at the death of Jesus – a fact that is clearly stated in the passage from Matthew's Gospel – would not St. Joseph have been one of them? Why would our Lord raise others from the dead and leave his own beloved father in a tomb? Saint Joseph is greater than all the Old Testament prophets, including St. John the Baptist. Saint Joseph is even greater than the grandparents of Jesus, Sts. Joachim and Anne. It should come as no surprise, then, that St. Bernardine of Siena, St. Francis de Sales, St. Pope John XXIII, and St. George Preca believed that St. Joseph rose from the dead at the death of Christ and, after appearing to many in Jerusalem, was assumed into heaven, body and soul, after the Resurrection of Christ.



HOW I DECIDED TO BECOME A PRIEST

Begun in the previous Fall 2019 Newsletter, an article/feature is chosen from an older Hand in Hand Newsletter to revisit important people, events, and places of our rich history. I hope you will enjoy this selection from the October 2005 Newsletter by then Seminarian Christopher Klusman. This article was selected in celebration of the upcoming May 21, 2021, the 10th Anniversary of his ordination to the priesthood. How the time flies...

By Christopher Klusman

I was born into a Roman Catholic family. My family was a profound influence to my faith ever since I was born. They never stopped going to church on a weekly basis and always maintained respect, devotion, and love for God, Mary, and the saints. From them, I saw what it was like to live faithfully.

My family took me to church and made sure I was baptized and received my First Communion. I took religious education classes (CCD) when I was an elementary school student. The religious education (CCD) classes were on

Celebrating
10 years



Christopher Klusman and Carmello Guiffre at "Theology on Tap."

Monday evenings at Sacred Heart of Jesus across the street from the St. John's Deaf Catholic Institute. After St. John's Deaf Catholic Institute closed, my parents took me to Mass there that was presided by Father Bill Key.

As I was growing up and attending Mass, I always had a lot of respect for priests. I was amazed of their willingness to make sacrifices for the priesthood. Growing up, I learned that the Deaf/hard of hearing can do anything, except for

► **BECOMING A PRIEST - Continued on Page 13.**

► **ST. JOSEPH - Continued from Page 11.**

If the Resurrection of Christ, as we read in the Gospel of Matthew, caused the bodies of certain saints to rise and appear to many, isn't it likely that St. Joseph shared in this privilege since he died before Christ? -St. George Preca

Taking it up one step further, if St. Joseph is one of the saints mentioned in the Gospel of Matthew who rose from the dead at the Resurrection of Jesus, entering the holy city of Jerusalem and appearing to many, who would St. Joseph most likely have gone to see? Why, his wife, of course! All this is speculation, but it does make for delightful meditation. Imagine the sweet reunion, the chaste, tear-filled embrace!" (210-1).

Isn't this an amazing explanation? It truly makes sense! St. Joseph is the father for Jesus on earth while being the husband of Our Lady! What a moment that is for St. Joseph to see his wife again! We hope that we can find out more in heaven as we can ask St. Joseph and Our Lady to share their experiences.

I will close here with a comment about St. Joseph's beautiful

last words. I hope they will comfort us to hold on to the Catholic faith that when we are dying, we may be able to be at peace, happy, and hopeful! St. Joseph, patron of a happy death, pray for us!



"Venerable Mary of Ágreda had a vision of being transported to the bedside of St. Joseph so as to witness his last breath and final words to his loving wife...

Blessed are thou among all women. Let angels and men praise thee; let all the generations know, praise, and exalt thy dignity; and may the Most High be eternally praised for having created thee so pleasing in his eyes and in the sight of all the blessed spirits. I hope to enjoy thy sight in the heavenly fatherland" (214-5).

► **BECOMING A PRIEST - Continued from Page 12.**

only one thing. I never heard or saw a Deaf priest, so I didn't think it would be a possibility. Instead of consciously striving to become a priest, I thought instead to learn more about the Catholic faith.

I attended public elementary and middle schools that had Deaf/hard of hearing programs. I was unhappy that I was not allowed to go to a Catholic school. My brothers and sister went to a Catholic school. I worked hard to get good grades, so that I could attend Thomas More Catholic High School. When I got accepted, I was so happy to finally take religion classes, which helped me learn more about Catholicism.

When I grew up and attended Mass, I was frustrated (except for Father Key) that there were no sign language interpreter services. I struggled to lip read the priests and the lectors, as well as trying to find any paperwork/books that would help give any understanding to what was going on during Mass. My family was so helpful in making sure I was able to follow along.

When I attended the University of Wisconsin – Madison, I met some wonderful people who became my close friends. They helped deepen my faith. I learned so many things about Christianity. My friends were from Christian churches and it taught me the importance of being friends with people from other faiths.

Since my faith deepened, I suddenly felt more and more curious about everything about religion. I watched videos, read many books, and asked many questions about Christianity. I realized that the more I learned about my faith, the more I wanted to learn. I would get angry at times when life gets so busy that I couldn't read, talk, or watch anything about religion!

I attended St. Dennis Parish in Madison, Wisconsin, and I loved and felt inspired by the wonderful Deaf people there. One of the people there was already one of my best friends who is an unbelievable Catholic and is a sign language interpreter. One time after Mass, she told me about Monsignor Nelson in Rockford, Illinois. I went to meet him at a Bible Study session with a group of close Deaf friends from St. Dennis Parish.

It wouldn't be a surprise to say that I was blown away by Monsignor Nelson! I really admired his style of teaching because he explains Catholicism so clearly through the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Also, he teaches the Deaf/hard of hearing as equals, in which he does not downplay or teach the "simple concepts," as is the problem in the education for the d/Deaf/hard of hearing. The Deaf/hard of hearing community there learned the same things as any other person would learn elsewhere.

At the end of [one] Bible Study session, Monsignor Nelson and I had a conversation. He asked me if I ever thought about the priesthood? I mentioned to him that I did think about it at several times growing up, but I never really thought of it as a possibility! His question hit me hard afterwards, because I realized that it made a lot of sense. Looking back, it explained why I was so curious about the Catholic faith and why I loved to read, watch, and talk about the Catholic faith as much as possible.

I thought about it and prayed about it. I got a new job and moved back to Milwaukee, Wisconsin, in which I joined St. Matthias Parish. Deacon Dave, Sue, and Pam Sommers, as well as the Deaf Ministry there, were so wonderful! I enjoyed being with them. I benefited from the workshops and retreat that St. Matthias offered to the Deaf Ministry. At the retreat, I had a conversation with Fr. Medas from

Boston, Massachusetts. He sensed that somehow, when he first saw me in the audience at the retreat that the Holy Spirit communicated to him that I was thinking about becoming a priest! And I didn't even tell him I was thinking about becoming a priest!

I also received a newsletter from the Deaf Ministry in Rockford, Illinois that they were offering RCIA/Confirmation classes. I contacted Monsignor Nelson about it because I wasn't confirmed yet. There were many reasons why: I finished my confirmation class with Father Key, but I was too young to be confirmed. Then high school came and nothing happened. I realized later that God was behind that plan. Monsignor Nelson stressed the importance of being confirmed, so he taught me in

**NOTE FOR UPCOMING SUMMER
2021 HAND IN HAND NEWSLETTER**

By Fr. Christopher Klusman

Reading the article that I wrote back in 2005 was an eye-opening experience for me and brought back many memories. I still can't believe that article was written 16 years ago!

In the upcoming Summer 2021 Hand in Hand Newsletter, I will write an article about looking back on my 10 years as a priest. Please keep me in your prayers, as I do for you.

► BECOMING A PRIEST - Continued from Page 13.

preparation for Confirmation. I finally became confirmed at St. Matthias Parish on the day of Pentecost, May 15, 2005. It was a great experience to be filled with the Holy Spirit.

Monsignor Nelson also helped my discernment if I should apply to the Seminary or not? After praying and investigating, I realized that God was calling me to apply to the Seminary. I attended an Ordination Mass for the Diocese of Madison and realized that it was what I wanted to do! I realized there that it is a beautiful gift to submit one's life to God and to obey his will. Who would refuse to listen to our loving God? I went through the application process and found out that I got accepted to St. Francis Seminary! It was a great time of joy!

MY FUTURE HOPES AND DREAMS AS A PRIEST

My hopes and dreams as a priest is that the Deaf/hard of hearing have equal opportunities to learn about Catholicism as everyone else. I hope that Deaf/hard of hearing can attend Bible Study sessions, retreats, and other events with a clear understanding of what is being said in their language, sign language. I hope also to have Mass on Saturdays and Sundays, so that the Deaf/hard of hearing can have options, instead of being limited to only one time slot.

My hopes and dreams as a priest is to reach out to the

huge population of Deaf/hard of hearing that are without religion. In the past, many Deaf/hard of hearing left the Catholic Church because of their frustrations that there were no sign language interpreters, lack of qualified interpreting (which makes the message unclear and/or difficult to follow), and/or no priests that could sign (whether Deaf and/or hearing.)

I hope that people will come back to the Catholic Church so that they can feel the same as I feel: inspired, faithful, happy, aware, important, loved, strong, and smart. All those feelings come from being in a prayerful and spiritual relationship with God and His people who found God in their lives.

In addition to all that, I would love to travel and present and lead workshops for the Deaf/hard of hearing in the United States, so that they can learn more about their faith, as well as gaining an awareness of other Deaf/hard of hearing Catholics in the other parts of the country. I hope to be involved in the NCOD and ICDA Conferences.

Another of my hopes and dreams is that we also have a Mass in which the church members who are hearing can worship together with the Deaf/hard of hearing because it is important that we accept all cultures into one "Body of Christ." It also teaches the hearing and other cultures that the Deaf community is rich in its culture, as well as being productive and active members in society. As a result, they can become aware of the Deaf/hard of hearing community and will be conscious of them to lead productive spiritual lives.

I also hope and dream that St. Matthias will continue to be a parish that serves all people, including the Deaf/hard of hearing. So many times have the Deaf/hard of hearing are forced to move just when they and everyone else began to feel comfortable with each other.

The Deaf Ministry deserve to have a Deaf priest! They deserve to have someone who can communicate with them clearly and minister the Sacraments with them. I also hope and dream that, when I become a priest, that the lay people are enthusiastic and eager to be involved in the Church. Also, I hope to work alongside a d/Deaf deacon, especially Deacon Dave Sommers.

Finally, my hope and dream now is to make it to ordination during the year 2011. I hope you will pray for me that, with your support and God's support, I will pass all my courses and complete my pastoral experiences, that I will be eligible to be ordained as a priest.

TRIP DOWN MEMORY LANE



Old arches, now gone, frame this view of the new school. Wrecking of the old building began in mid-June following an "auction" on two successive Saturdays to dispose of the mementos of an era.

DEAFNESS DOES NOT STIFLE MIKE WALTER: HE'S CARPENTER, STUDENT, EMPLOYEE [SIC]

In our Newsletters, we have interviews or articles about various individuals. In honor of Mike Walter, who had passed away last April 20, 2020, this article is reprinted here because of his skills with wood (carpentry) which is a nice fit within the Year of St. Joseph, who is also a carpenter himself. This article is from the LaCrosse Tribune, Sunday, March 18, 1973 edition.

By Grant Blum, Tribune Staff Writer



Michael Walter is 23 years old and totally deaf, but he apparently takes his mother's philosophy on life seriously.

As Mrs. Vernon Walter sums it up, "Keep that face wrinkled up, not down. I can't stand people who walk around as if they're the only ones in the world with a problem."

Although he has a handicap that prevents use of even a hearing

aid, Walter isn't spending time brooding over what might have been.

Instead, since his graduation from St. John's School for the Deaf in Milwaukee in 1969, he has done the following things:

He has a 41-hour-a-week job in the maintenance department of St. Francis Hospital.

He spends four nights a week in classes at Western Wisconsin Technical Institute taking courses he hopes will give him future skills.

He is developing an extensive antique and wood refinishing business along with an extensive shop to make wood and stone craft items for sale as additional income.

He serves as president of the 26-member Hiawatha Deaf Club.

He has passed a drivers licensing examination and enjoys driving his own car.

Although he understands what is being said through lip reading, Walter still uses relatively few words. Thus interviews

about him were done with his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Vernon Walter, R. 1, La Crescent, Minn., his boss, Fred Theisen, head of St. Francis Hospital's maintenance department, and Ansel Heram, instructor in cabinet making and plastics at WWTI.

Vernon Walter says that Mike is not coddled or babied, but encouraged to develop his own skills including an ability to earn his own living.

"Many times the public is afraid of the deaf and won't let them use their abilities," he said.

Michael attended St. John's because a waiting list existed at the Minnesota School in Fairbuilt [sic], Mrs. Walter said. He remained at Milwaukee, except for vacation periods, from age 3 until 1969, when he graduated with a high school diploma.

Mike didn't want to attend college, but instead chose to come home. He got a job with the St. Francis housekeeping department, where he worked for one year, then transferred to maintenance – a department he's been with for the past three years.

In the meantime, with the encouragement of his father, he became interested in woodcraft and related skills.

In the kitchen of the family home is a cabinet above the stove that represents the first project Michael built at WWTI. A table used at meals was refinished by Michael, as was a clock that hangs above the table.

In a bedroom is an inlaid chess table, while the living room décor includes a grandfather clock made by Michael. An antique table with what appears to be the inlaid head of a Spanish conquistadore sits near the clock.

"That table was a piece of junk and painted over with white



► MIKE WALTER - Continued on Page 16.

▶ MIKE WALTER - Continued from Page 15.



enamel before Mike worked on it," his father said proudly.

Mike then showed his "shop" as he calls it. The "shop" turned out to be a former chicken coop building – approximately 70 feet in length.

In the front part, various machines and a work bench occupy the space, while in the rear of the building was furniture scheduled for future work.

In the center of the building was a riding lawn mower.

"He bought that for \$5 and he's going to make it run again as his project in small engine repair (WWTI class)," his father commented.

"Mike's a pretty good scavenger," his father added. As proof, he showed slabs of marble from a demolition project at St. Francis Hospital. They'll be used for lamp bases and similar items.

Outside, in various piles, walnut logs and boards lay "for aging." Walter said it would be two to five years before Mike would use them in projects.

"He enjoys working with his hands," Mrs. Walter said. "We tell him that he has to rely on his 10 fingers and to make sure nothing happens to them."

She added: "He is very careful working in the shop." Mrs. Walter said that Michael hopes someday to be able to rely on his woodworking and related skills to bring in extra income.

To do this, he is currently taking four courses at WWTI, each of which meets one night a week for three hours. The courses include small engine repair, cabinet making, plastics and machine tools. He has taken one or two courses regularly at WWTI since 1969, but this is the first year he has taken four courses a week, Mrs. Walter added.

Mike's instructor rates him as a top caliber craftsman. "He has the mechanical ability. He can grasp things. You can show him or make a sketch," he said.

Heram added: "You have very little trouble explaining things to him."

In the class, lip reading is used since Heram does not know sign language and Mike's basic training was in lip reading instead of signs.

While the evening school courses don't have letter grades, Heram said Mike would be an "A" student if grades were given.

Heram said he's particularly impressed with Mike's sense of humor and refusal to let a handicap interfere with his efforts to learn.

"He's a barrel of fun. Everybody likes him. He's cheerful and always cracking jokes or a funny saying (by writing or gestures)."

Theisen also doesn't use sign language but relies [sic] on Michael's lip reading abilities for his job at St. Francis.

At St. Francis, Mike is a santiarian [sic]. In the mornings he collects trash containers. In the afternoons, he does odd jobs.

"He hasn't done much carpentry yet," Thiesen explains," but we already have two carpenters."

Theisen said Mike is easily



▶ MIKE WALTER - Continued on Page 17.

► **MIKE WALTER - Continued from Page 16.**

able to communicate – even though he can't be reached by such traditional methods as a bell system or paging.

"He's devised a sign language of his own. He's quite adept at reading lips and if necessary we write notes."

Theisen said Mike's job so far does not put him into much direct contact with patients who might be unaware that he is deaf.

But even here, Mike is improving communication ability.

"Since he's been here, he's starting to talk more. We're trying to encourage him in this," Theisen explained. "He can say more words than he used to and his words are plainer."

Because he is totally deaf, the words Mike does say come out in a monotone and often sound garbled.

Did he worry about having a deaf employe [*sic*] on his staff?

"Not at all," says Thiesen.

"When Mike first came to the department, I considered it a challenge to accept him and work with him. He's worked out quite well."

When he started working at St. Francis, Mike was given a list of job duties. Those duties are still scheduled in writing for him.

Mike is one of four children. An older brother, James, is a social worker in Philadelphia. A sister, Jeanne, 19, is a licensed practical nurse at St. Mary's Hospital in Rochester, while another sister, 13-year-old Peggy, is totally deaf and is attending the same St. John's School in Milwaukee that Mike attended.

Mike got his drivers license in 1967 after learning to drive in Milwaukee. He recently drove with his mother to Philadelphia to visit his older brother and family.

HISTORICAL CORNER: MISS MARIA FROEHLICH

In honor of Mother's Day on Sunday, May 9th, I will like to share with you about one person: Miss Maria Froehlich.

Why? Many students at St. John's School for the Deaf saw Miss Maria Froehlich like a "mother" to them. While St. John's School for the Deaf had early childhood students and classrooms, she was responsible for their dormitory needs, such as helping and caring for them (even if they have the flu). She did things a mother would do, since the children were in the dorms, away from home and their mothers (and fathers). Unlike today's Schools for the Deaf in which the students go home nearly every weekend, many of the students during her time would maybe have gone home rarely during Christmas and summer breaks.

Miss Maria Froehlich, a hearing person, arrived to St. John's School for the Deaf from Germany. She spoke German. She lived in St. John's School for the Deaf. Some of the Deaf members told me that her sign skills were appropriate for little kids (even having "home sign" with them), while not a



María Froehlich



MISS MARIA FROEHLICH
Domestic

fluent signer. Still, Miss Maria Froehlich is remembered fondly as a humble, calm, helpful, and easy-going person. Older students who see her around St. John's School for the Deaf are greeted by her with a "Hello, how are you?" In the St. John's School for the Deaf's 100th anniversary booklet in 1976, Miss Maria is named

as one of the people who gave 25 to 37 years of service at St. John's School for the Deaf. Even Deacon David Sommers remembered her as far back in the 1940s. She never married and stayed single her whole life.

A Happy Mother's Day to all mothers, including Miss Maria Froehlich who kindly took care of our deaf students at St. John's School for the Deaf as their "mother." And also, a Happy Mother's Day to the Mother of all Mothers, The Blessed Mother Mary!

Mary, Mother of the Church, pray for us!





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