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The Holy Father's Prayer Intentions For This Month

General Intention:

That every tendency to fundamentalism and extremism may be countered by respect, tolerance, and dialogue among believers.

Mission Intention:

That persecuted Christians may persevere, sustained by the Holy Spirit, in witnessing to the love of God for all, even for those who persecute them.

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Disciple

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Breaking Open the Word—Notes on the Sunday Gospels

Apr. 4 (Jn. 20:1-9)

In today's Gospel there is much significance in the fact that Jesus' burial clothes are found in the empty tomb. On one level the presence of the burial clothes symbolically informs us that Jesus' resurrection is substantially different from the resuscitation of the dead noted elsewhere in the Gospel (remember, for instance, that when Lazarus is raised from the dead he comes out of the tomb in his burial clothes—a sign that he will eventually die again). On the literal level the presence of the burial clothes is evidence that Jesus' body was not stolen from the tomb. Tomb raiders of that time were interested in the valuable linen burial shrouds and not the body of the deceased. In addition, if they had been

interested in taking Jesus' body they would hardly have made an effort to fold them neatly.

Apr. 11 (Jn 20:19-31)

The conclusion of today's Gospel (vv. 30-1) reading serves as a reminder for us as Catholic Christians that we revere Scripture as the written Word of God, but that we do not believe it alone contains the fullness of God's revelation. It is Scripture (the *written word*) and Apostolic Tradition (the *living word*) together which transmit the entirety of God's public revelation to us.

Apr. 18 (Jn. 21:1-19)

In today's Gospel Jesus tells

Peter to "feed my sheep." Here "Jesus entrusts to Peter the task of shepherding His entire flock. This supreme leadership position over the Church gives him a unique share in the authority of Christ, who is still acknowledged by Peter as the 'chief shepherd' (1 Pt. 5:4)."

Apr. 25 (Jn. 10:27-30)

In today's Gospel we have a definitive declaration of divinity on the part of Christ ("the Father and I are one"). In the original Greek it is important to note that Jesus is not saying here that He and the Father are simply "on the same page"; He is saying that He and the Father are the same thing (God).

Faith Foundations—Basics of Catholic Christian Belief

Treatment of the Body

(From the *Compendium of the Catechism of the Catholic Church*)

The following is a brief overview of Catholic belief about how we should treat our bodies

What duty do we have toward our body?

We must take reasonable care of our own physical health and that of others but avoid the *cult of the body* and every kind of excess. Also to be avoided are the use of drugs which cause very serious damage to human health and life, as well as the abuse of food, alcohol, tobacco and medi-

cine.

When are scientific, medical, or psychological experiments on human individuals or groups morally legitimate?

They are morally legitimate when they are at the service of the integral good of the person and of society, without disproportionate risks to the life and physical and psychological integrity of the subjects who must be properly informed and consenting.

Are the transplant and donation of organs allowed before and after death?

The transplant of organs is mor-

ally acceptable with the consent of the donor and without excessive risks to him or her. Before allowing the noble act of organ donation after death, one must verify that the donor is truly dead.

What practices are contrary to respect for the bodily integrity of the human person?

They are: kidnapping and hostage taking, terrorism, torture, violence, and direct sterilization. Amputations and mutilations of a person are morally permissible only for strictly therapeutic medical reasons.

(continued on next page)

Faith Foundations...Continued

What care must be given to the dying?

The dying have a right to live the last moments of their earthly lives with dignity and, above all, to be sustained with prayer and the sacraments that prepare them to meet the living God.

How are the bodies of the deceased to be treated?

The bodies of the departed must be treated with love and respect. Their cremation is permitted provided that it does not demonstrate a denial of

faith in the resurrection of the body.

An Act of Contrition

O my God,
I am heartily sorry for having offended Thee, and I detest all my sins because of Thy just punishments, but most of all because they offend Thee, my God, Who art all-good and deserving of all my love. I firmly resolve, with the help of Thy grace, to sin no more and to avoid the near occasions of sin. Amen.

OR

My God, I am sorry for my sins with all my heart. In choosing to do wrong and failing to do good, I have sinned against you whom I should love above all things. I firmly intend, with your help, to do penance, to sin no more, and to avoid whatever leads me to sin. Our Savior Jesus Christ suffered and died for us. In his name, my God, have mercy. Amen.



“We must take reasonable care of our own physical health and that of others but avoid the cult of the body and every kind of excess.”

Faith and Media—Reading and Viewing Recommendations

Book of the Month:

Defenders of the Faith in Word and Deed by Fr.

Charles Connor

Tired of all the misinformation and relentless attacks against the Faith? Help yourself to a healthy dose of encouragement with this book, written by our own Fr. Charles Connor (rector of St. Peter’s Cathedral, Scranton). This book highlights the lives of a number of ordinary Catholic men and women who lived extraordinary lives of faith and service in the name of the Church. There are many figures whose names will be

familiar to you (Ignatius Loyola, Bonaventure, Thomas Aquinas, etc.) as well as some you may be learning about for the first time (Philip Howard, Hilaire Belloc, Francis X. Ford, etc.). A good, quick read which is perfect for those who don’t have as much time for reading as they wish they did.

[This book is available at the Diocesan Resource Center, most libraries, and new and used book retailers.].

Film of the Month:

The Visitor

This well received film made

the USCCB’s top 10 list a few years ago and is an understated look at the experience of illegal immigrants in the United States and the issues connected with their presence here. Political questions are largely on the periphery of the plot which focuses on the daily lives of immigrants in New York City and an American professor who accidentally steps into their world.

[This film is available at most video rental/retail stores and libraries.]



Left: Defenders of the Faith in Word and Deed (Ignatius Press)

Right: The Visitor (Anchor Bay)

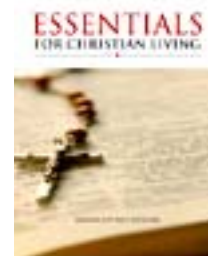
Disciple Catholic Scavenger Hunt—Play. Learn. Win.

To play, simply research the following questions and e-mail your answers to: **Brendan-Murphy @dioceseofscranton.org** by the end of April. If more than one person gets all of the questions right I will randomly draw a winner out of a hat.

Here are this month’s questions—Good luck!

1. Besides a Gospel, St. Luke wrote what other New Testament book?
2. What does the “Immaculate Conception” refer to?
3. Barabbas was the prisoner released in Jesus’

- place. What does his name mean?
4. What profession did St. Gianna Beretta Molla practice?
5. What are the 3 “sacraments of initiation”?



This Month’s Prize: Essentials for Christian Living