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The Holy Father's Prayer Intentions For This Month

General Intention:

That the shameful and monstrous trafficking in human beings, which sadly involves millions of women and children, may stop.

Mission Intention:

That priests, religious women and men, and lay people involved in apostolic work may understand how to bring missionary enthusiasm to the communities they serve.

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Disciple

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Breaking Open the Word—Notes on the Sunday Gospels

May 2 (Jn. 13:31-33a,34-35)

In today's Gospel Jesus delivers the new commandment of love. "The Torah commanded *human* love for ourselves and our neighbor (Lv. 19:18). Jesus commands *divine* love for one another that is modeled on His own acts of charity and generosity. This supernatural love comes not from us but from the Spirit (see Rm. 5:5 and CCC 1822-29)."

May 9 (Jn. 14:23-29)

In today's Gospel Jesus promises the gift of the Holy Spirit. "Sent from heaven to complete the teaching ministry of Jesus and give the apostles an accurate understanding of the Gospel (16:12-13). The Spirit also works through the sacraments to renew the world with the

graces and blessings that Christ died to give us (3:5, 6:63, 20:22-23 also see CCC 243, 729)."

May 16 (Jn. 17:20-26)

In today's Gospel Jesus prays to the Father for the unity of those who believe in Him and says that through this unity "the world may know that You have sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me" (v. 23). Here Jesus envisions a unity that is visible and not merely spiritual in nature. The unity of the Trinity, the Church's source and life, is the "source and pattern" of the Church's unity (17:11, 21-22).

May 23 (Jn. 20:19-23)

In today's Gospel we see that "Jesus' ministry of mercy and reconciliation will continue

through the apostles (2 Cor. 5:18-20, Jas 5:14-15). The power to 'forgive and retain' sins in the name of Jesus is elsewhere described as the power to 'bind and loose' (Mt. 16:19; 18:18). This is seen as the institution of the Sacrament of Reconciliation."

May 30 (Jn. 16:12-15)

In today's Gospel Jesus tells the apostles that when the Holy Spirit comes He will guide them "into all the truth" (v.13). "The guidance of the Spirit is Christ's guarantee that the gospel will not be corrupted, distorted, or misunderstood by the apostles or their successors (the bishops) during the Church's earthly pilgrimage."

Faith Foundations—Basics of Catholic Christian Belief

Prayer in the Age of the Church

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

How did the first Christian community in Jerusalem pray?

At the beginning of the Acts of the Apostles it is written that in the first community of Jerusalem, educated in the life of prayer by the Holy Spirit, the faithful "devoted themselves to the teaching of the apostles and to the communal life, to the breaking of the bread, and to the prayers" (Acts 2:42).

How does the Holy Spirit in- tervene in the Church's

prayer?

The Holy Spirit, the interior Master of Christian prayer, forms the Church in the life of prayer and allows her to enter ever more deeply into contemplation of and union with the unfathomable mystery of Christ. The forms of prayer expressed in the apostolic and canonical writings remain normative for Christian prayer.

What are the essential forms of Christian prayer?

They are blessing and adoration, the prayer of petition and intercession, thanksgiving and praise. The Eucharist contains and expresses all the forms of prayer.

What is "blessing"?

The prayer of blessing is man's response to God's gifts: we bless the Almighty who first blesses us and fills us with his gifts.

How can adoration be de- fined?

Adoration is the humble acknowledgement by human beings that they are creatures of the thrice-holy Creator.

What are the different forms of the prayer of petition?

It can be a petition for pardon or also a humble and trusting petition for all our needs either

(continued on next page)

Faith Foundations...Continued

spiritual or material. The first thing to ask for, however, is the coming of the Kingdom.

In what does the prayer of intercession consist?

Intercession consists in asking on behalf of another. It conforms us and unites us to the prayer of Jesus who intercedes with the Father for all, especially sinners. Intercession must extend even to one's enemies.

When is thanksgiving given to God?

The Church gives thanks to

God unceasingly, above all in celebrating the Eucharist in which Christ allows her to participate in his own thanksgiving to the Father. For the Christian every event becomes a reason for giving thanks.

What is the prayer of praise?

Praise is that form of prayer which recognizes most immediately that God is God. It is a completely disinterested prayer: it sings God's praise for his own sake and gives him glory simply because he is.

How does Jesus teach us to pray?

Jesus teaches us to pray not only with the Our Father but also when he prays. In this way he teaches us, in addition to the content, the dispositions necessary for every true prayer: purity of heart that seeks the Kingdom and forgives one's enemies, bold and filial faith that goes beyond what we feel and understand, and watchfulness that protects the disciple from temptation.



“The Holy Spirit, the interior Master of Christian prayer, forms the Church in the life of prayer....”

Faith and Media—Reading and Viewing Recommendations

Book of the Month:

***Catherine of Siena* by Sigrid Undset**

This book, written by the Nobel Prize winning Catholic convert Sigrid Undset, examines the remarkable life of St. Catherine of Siena. Relying on the extensive notes and letters of Catherine herself and her confessors and acquaintances, Undset presents an inspiring portrait of a woman who completely devoted her life to God as a laywoman. Though God's plans for her life differed from her own, this obscure woman with no formal education would

go on to become arguably the most influential figure of her day in both spiritual and temporal affairs (both Popes and Kings sought—and listened to—her advice. I personally found my prayer life enriched by reading this book.

[This book is available at ignatiuspress.com and most new and used book retailers.]

Film of the Month:

The Blind Side

This feel good film is based on the true story of Michael Oher, a big kid with lots of potential, but no one to develop it. Mi-

chael, who ends up homeless, is taken in by the upscale Touhy family, whose children attend the same school. Working together, the Touhys provide Michael with the stability and encouragement he needs to develop his gifts while, in return, Michael helps the Touhys learn what family is all about. This film touches on some worthy themes: the importance of family, the need for love in order to thrive, and the insufficiency of material possessions when it comes to true happiness. [This film is available at most video rental/retail stores and libraries.]



Left: *Catherine of Siena* (Ignatius Press)

Right: *The Blind Side* (Alcon Entertainment)

Catholic Calendar—Upcoming Opportunities for Adult Faith Formation

“Called to New Life through the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA)”

**Saturday, May 22, 2010
9:00 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.
Fatima Renewal Center
Cost: \$15.00 per person, includes lunch
Presented by Rev. Robert Simon**

The ritual test and the beauty of the Church's vision of this gradual initiation will lead us into concrete discussion on the stages and periods of the RCIA process. The workshop will also offer suggestions for compiling strategies, for working together as teams, for finding/using catechetical resources, and for devising meaningful parish ritual celebra-

tions. Participants will learn how the parish community can become a vital part of the RCIA process.

To register, call: Fatima Renewal Center at 570.563.8500

“Always be prepared to make a defense to any one who calls you to account for the hope that is in you...”

~1 Pt. 3:15