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### The Holy Father's Prayer Intentions For This Month

#### General Intention:

That Christians may contribute to alleviating the material and spiritual suffering of AIDS patients, especially in the poorest countries.

#### Mission Intention:

For the religious who work in mission territories, that they may be witnesses of the joy of the Gospel and living signs of the love of Christ.

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# Disciple

A monthly resource for adult Catholics of  
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## Breaking Open the Word—Notes on the Sunday Gospels

### Jul. 3 (Mt. 11:25-30)

In today's Gospel "Jesus invites disciples to follow and learn from Him as the model of perfect obedience to the Father (v. 27). Jesus invokes 'wisdom's' invitation to the humble in the Old Testament. In Sirach 51, wisdom calls 'Draw near to me' (51:23), 'put your neck under the yoke' (51:26), and 'see with your eyes that I have labored little and found for myself much rest' (51:27). These parallels reinforce Jesus' self-identification as 'wisdom' in 11:19."

### Jul. 10 (Mt. 13:1-23)

In today's Gospel we hear the parable of the sower. While Jesus tells the entire crowd the parable, He only explains its meaning to the disciples. As a biblical scholar notes, this "reflects His intention to ar-

range the Church hierarchically. He invests His authority in the apostles (and their successors) to administer the sacraments (28:19; Jn 20:23; 1 Cor. 11:25) and transmit God's truth through their teaching (28:20; Jn 17:17-20; 1 Cor 4:1)."

### Jul. 17 (Mt. 13:24-43)

In today's Gospel Jesus teaches the crowd through more parables. It is interesting to note that in the Gospel of Matthew, "Jesus shift from straight-forward teaching (chaps. 5-7) to parables (chap. 13) immediately following His rejection by the Pharisees (12:14). Like the OT prophets Jotham (Judges 9:7-15) and Nathan (2 Sam 12:1-6), Jesus speaks parables for the benefit of the faithful and the judgment of unbelievers."

### Jul. 24 (Mt. 13:44-52)

In today's Gospel we hear two parables that stress the same point.—"the kingdom's value is inestimable, and surrendering earthly attachments is required to obtain it. This may entail literal poverty (religious) or spiritual poverty (5:3) for those whose state in life involves ownership of property (laity)."

### Jul. 31 (Mt. 14:13-21)

"Jesus' multiplication of the loaves appears in every Gospel. The event anticipates the Eucharist, a point that St. Matthew reinforces by using the same series of verbs (taking...blessed...broke...gave) here (14:19) and at the Last Supper (26:26; Mk. 14:22)."

## Faith Foundations—Basics of Catholic Christian Belief

### The Moral Conscience

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

The following is a brief overview of Catholic belief about the moral conscience.

#### What is the moral conscience?

"Moral conscience, present in the heart of the person, is a judgment of reason which at the appropriate moment enjoins him to do good and to avoid evil. Thanks to moral conscience, the human person perceives the moral quality of an

act to be done or which has already been done, permitting him to assume responsibility for the act. When attentive to moral conscience, the prudent person can hear the voice of God who speaks to him or her.

#### What does the dignity of the human person imply for the moral conscience?

"The dignity of a human person requires the uprightness of a moral conscience (which is to say that it be in accord with what is just and good according to reason and the law of God).

Because of this personal dignity, no one may be forced to act contrary to conscience; nor, within the limits of the common good, be prevented from acting according to it, especially on religious matters."

#### How is a moral conscience formed to be upright and truthful?

"An upright and true moral conscience is formed by education and by assimilating the Word of God and the teaching

*(continued on next page)*

## Faith Foundations...Continued

of the Church. It is supported by the gifts of the Holy Spirit and helped by the advice of wise people. Prayer and an examination of conscience can also greatly assist one's moral formation."

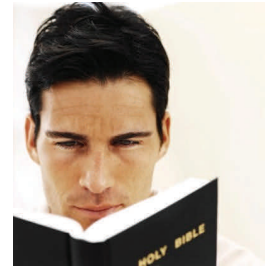
### What norms must conscience always follow?

"There are three general norms: 1. one may never do evil so that good may result

from it; 2. the so-called *Golden Rule*, 'Whatever you wish that men would do to you, do so to them' (Mt. 7:12); 3. charity always proceeds by way of respect for one's neighbor and his conscience, even though this does not mean accepting as good something that is objectively evil.

### Can a moral conscience make erroneous judgments?

"A person must always obey the certain judgment of his own conscience but he could make erroneous judgments for reasons that may not always exempt him from personal guilt. However, an evil act committed through involuntary ignorance is not imputable to the person, even though the act remains objectively evil. One must therefore work to correct errors of moral con-



"An upright and true moral conscience is formed by education and by assimilating the Word of God and the teaching of the Church."

## Faith and Media—Reading and Viewing Recommendations

### Book of the Month:

#### St. Thomas Aquinas by G.K. Chesterton

Most people who know me know that Chesterton is my favorite author. This slim biography of Aquinas is one of my all time favorites. This is not your standard biography in the sense that it follows a "he was born in the year \_\_\_\_, and then he did \_\_\_\_, and then he did \_\_\_\_," etc., etc. Rather, it gives you a portrait of Aquinas' personality, the traits that made him unique, and a clear understanding of why he was impor-

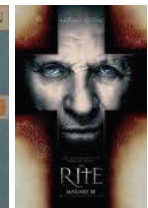
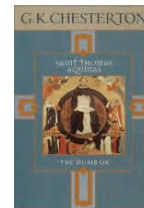
tant during his life and today. Some of the greatest Aquinas scholars ever consider this book the best intro to his thought. Highly recommended.

### Film of the Month:

#### The Rite

When this movie came out in theaters a priest I know called it the best Catholic movie he'd ever seen. Personally, I wouldn't go that far, but it is a good movie to watch with a teenager/young adult in your life who has doubts about the existence of the supernatural. Based on actual events, the

movie chronicles the experience of a young seminarian who is sent to be trained as an exorcist at a time when he is questioning his faith. The movie has its scary/creepy moments (as you would expect) and the acting is good but, in all honesty, there was something that left me a little unsatisfied. Perhaps it was because I've already seen *The Exorcism of Emily Rose* (which I recommended a few years ago). *Emily Rose* is also based on actual events, but is somehow more powerful, in my opinion. Check them both out and judge for yourself.



Left: St. Thomas Aquinas (Doubleday)

Right: The Rite (New Line Cinema)

## Catholic Calendar—Upcoming Opportunities for Adult Faith Formation

### Faith Formation Bible Study Program

#### A Quick Journey through the Bible

St. Stanislaus Kostka Parish Hall, Wilkes-Barre  
July 7, 14, 21, 28, August 4, 11, 18, 25 (Thursdays) 6:00-7:30 p.m.

#### Presenter:

Brendan Murphy

This eight-part series provides an excellent introduction and overview of the Bible from a Catholic perspective. The study covers salvation history

through talks that are complemented by group discussion, useful maps and charts, and information for home study.

### A Biblical Walk through the Mass

Diocesan Center, Scranton  
July 11, 18, 25, August 1, 8 (Mondays) 2:00-3:30 p.m.

#### Presenter:

Brendan Murphy

This program is a five-part study that provides a more in depth study of the Liturgy. Based on the revised

translation of the Mass that goes into effect in Advent 2011, this study explores the biblical roots of the words and gestures experienced during the Mass and explains their profound significance.

#### Fee for either Bible Study:

\$30

(which includes all materials)

#### To register:

Call 570.207.2213, Ext. 1107.

"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