

Serenity

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Our Mission

Continuing the work of Saint Jeanne Jugan, our MISSION is to offer the neediest elderly of every race and religion a home where they will be welcomed as Christ, cared for as family and accompanied with dignity until God calls them to himself.

Cover Photos

Front cover: Little Sisters, a novice and postulant from St. Ann's Novitiate at the Eucharistic Congress.

Right: Rev. Roger Landry blesses elderly nursing home residents in Columbus, OH.

Inside back cover: photos provided by Olympian James Dorrian, Jeanne Jugan Residence, Bronx, NY.

Outside back cover: Bishop Andrew Cozzens blesses the faithful in Lucas Oil Stadium, Indianapolis.

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THEY CAME FROM EVERY TOWN AND CITY



We devoted the last issue of *Serenity* to the National Eucharistic Pilgrimage; in this issue we have the joy of reporting on our Congregation's participation in the National Eucharistic Congress, held in Indianapolis in July. Thirty-one Little Sisters, a novice and a postulant had the grace of attending the Congress which, in the words of one participating Sister, "served as both a consolation and an exhortation." Below, a few of the Sisters' reflections set the stage for the pages that follow.

One of the Sisters shared that the following passage from St. Mark's Gospel, which was proclaimed during the Congress' closing Mass, was a marvelous sign of Providence. "People were coming and going in great numbers, and they had no opportunity even to eat. So they went off in the boat by themselves to a deserted place. People saw them leaving and many came to know about it. They



The Little Sisters pose with EWTN's Montse Alvarado, one of the event's emcees.

hastened there on foot from all the towns and arrived at the place before them. When he disembarked and saw the vast crowd, his heart was moved with pity for them, for they were like sheep without a shepherd; and he began to teach them many things” (Mark 6:31-34).

The Congress was “a blessing for the Universal Church, whose members came from ‘all the towns’ — 60,000 to be precise — to unite themselves with other sheep in order to follow our Eucharistic Shepherd together,” she reflected.

Another of our Sisters shared her amazement at the number of participants in Indianapolis. “Who could ever imagine 50,000 people gathered together in one place to adore the Lord? Sounds rather like my image of heaven. And that’s exactly how I would describe those days of the National Eucharistic Congress! HEAVEN! It must have been, because under any other circumstances, 50,000 people gathered in one place would definitely not be my idea of heaven! That’s 50,000 people all trying to get from one place to another at the same time! And 50,000 people trying to buy their meals at the same time! And use the restrooms! And see the exhibit hall! ... But

we 50,000 Catholics were all there together for the Lord. So, the sacrifices that come with such a huge crowd became occasions for practicing virtue, especially charity!”

“Three things stand out for me,” she continues. “Naturally, with 50,000 people, there is a lot of waiting in line — even just to get down the hallway! But I must say that I was overjoyed to wait in such a long line for CONFESSION!” In fact, many of our Sisters commented on how edified they were to witness thousands of people lining up for Confession.

“Another powerful moment, or I should say — moments — were the times of Mass and Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament in Lucas Oil Stadium,” Sister continues. “There was a strength and energy in praying with so many people — receiving our Lord and adoring our Lord — in a place that usually holds sports games and rock concerts! These were intense times of prayer in which I felt so happy to belong to the Church and to pray together as Church.”

Sister described what she considered the third highlight of the Eucharistic Congress — Saturday afternoon’s Eucharistic Procession. Women religious were asked to lead the procession, which wound its way from Lucas Stadium to the War Memorial. “The sight of all these people lining the streets, all the way to the War Memorial, really brought tears to my eyes ... I couldn’t stop thinking that here we were, processing through the streets of this big city, with the Blessed Sacrament behind us, everyone adoring the Lord — we really were in heaven! It was incredible and real!”

The National Eucharistic Congress really was incredible. Bishop Andrew Cozzens of Crookston, Minnesota, who has spearheaded the National Eucharistic Revival, said the experience reminded him of Ephesians 3:20-21, in which St. Paul says God has the power to do more than “all that we ask or imagine.”

“God is able to do immeasurably more than you ask or imagine. And that was my experience,” Bishop Cozzens said. “God showed us at this Congress how good he is and how much he loves us, and that he’s not done yet.” 🌟

Eucharistic Revival builds unity

Remarks of Cardinal Christophe Pierre, Apostolic Nuncio,
at the opening of the Eucharistic Congress.

What is Eucharistic revival? We know that such revival, while it is always accompanied by sacramental devotion, must extend beyond devotional practices as well. When we are truly “revived” by the Eucharist, then our encounter with Christ’s real presence in the Sacrament opens us to an encounter with him in the rest of our life. This means seeing him everywhere we go. It means meeting him in the interactions we have with others. Not only is he present in our family, friends, and communities; but he is also present in our encounters with people from whom we would otherwise consider ourselves “divided.” This might include people from a different economic class or race, people who challenge our way of thinking, and people whose perspective is informed by experiences that differ greatly from our own. When we encounter such people — and when the competitive logic of the world urges us to become defensive — Christ is present to be a bridge. Christ, the firstborn of all creation, wants to be a bridge between people who are members of the same human family: people who are children of the same Father in heaven, and whose destiny is to be united in love within the same eternal household. If we are experiencing true “Eucharistic revival,” then one of the signs will be a greater movement on our part to build bridges of unity.

Why does our engagement with the Eucharist impel us toward unity? Because, when we celebrate the Eucharist, we experience the One who built the first bridge, who crossed the distance and made himself one with us, and even when we were separated from



The four groups of Perpetual Pilgrims gather with Bishop Andrew Cozzens and Cardinal Luis Antonio Tagle, the Pope's representative to the Congress.

him. This is the One who is with us, making himself present in the complex but concrete realities of our daily lives. And so, to believe in the real presence of Christ is not only to say: In these forms of bread and wine are his body, blood, soul, and divinity. Of course that's true! But Christ is also present in the assembly of his believing people. Not only that, but he is present to people who struggle to connect with him because of wounds, fear, and sin. We need to be there with him, accompanying such people, and helping them to experience the real presence of Christ's love.

Adoration, is essential to our relationship with Christ — but it is important that we treat it as that: a relationship. If, in the act of Eucharistic adoration, we were to look at the Sacrament merely as an “object” to be admired, then we would be remaining, as it were, “on the outside.” To adore Christ is to relate to him. Pope Benedict explained: “The Latin word for adoration is *ad-oratio* — mouth to mouth contact, a kiss, an embrace, and hence, ultimately love. Submission becomes union, because he to whom we submit is Love. In this way submission acquires a meaning, because it does not impose anything on us from the outside, but liberates us deep within.”

Upon relating to Christ in this way through adoration, we can also relate to others in a way that reverences the presence of God in them.

I remember my mother telling me, you know, in the Church, when the Blessed Sacrament is brought from the altar to the tabernacle, people stand up. Do you stand up when your children, your friends, even your enemies have received

the Blessed Sacrament in themselves? What is the difference?

This, then, is what it means to live a truly “Eucharistic life.” The adoration spills over into our daily life: our life of relating to others, our way of seeing others. When we are actually revived by the Eucharist — let us say, transformed by the Eucharist — we do not remain the same as we were. When we do receive Christ, not just outwardly and partially, but inwardly and fully, then we begin to see differently. We see with the eyes of Christ; we see reality with his eyes. We think differently, because, as St. Paul says, “we have the mind of Christ.”

Eucharistic revival, then, must involve pastoral conversion. You remember Pope Francis speaking about pastoral conversion. The problems that our mission of evangelization must confront are not problems that we can solve on our own. How to deal with modernity, how to love the person who thinks differently, how to overcome division, and how to face suffering: these are not problems with human-powered solutions. It is only God’s power that can heal di-



vision, redeem suffering, and speak a saving word to those who are captured by deceit. God's power comes to us in the Eucharist. But we can't be agents of God's power if we insist on seeing the same, thinking the same, and controlling God's gifts. This is the worst. We pretend to be the master of the game. We have to let ourselves be possessed by the Spirit of God, and go where the Spirit leads.

Let's be honest. We, all of us, we are afraid to go where the Spirit leads us. Is that not true? Maybe this should be the main fruit of the Eucharistic Revival. To be a people animated by the Spirit. A people able to listen to the voice of the Spirit. You remember when Pope Francis speaks about synodality, he says, the first step is precisely that: Listen to one another and listen to the Spirit in the person we listen [to]. The fruit of the Eucharistic Revival.

Let us all pray for true Eucharistic revival. May this revival open our eyes to the ways that Christ is living and operating in the reality before us, and may it impel us to join him in his work. I encourage you, during your adoration these days, to let the Lord reveal to you any places of resistance. You know what resistance is. We have all, all kinds of resistance. You know, we would like to, but no. Pope Francis speaks about remaining in our zone of comfort. Even, you know, our Church could be our zone of comfort, isn't it? It's ok, I don't agree with you, but I'm comfortable with my opinion. We need time to think about that. Often, we resist the work of Christ when we are afraid to let go of our own understanding and control — afraid to allow his wisdom and power to lead. But the Eucharist is a gift from God. We don't fabricate the Eucharist, we receive it. But by surrendering our reliance on our own certainties, our own plans, our agendas — You know we have all agendas, and we are clever enough to follow our agenda, and to convince ourselves that our agenda is better than the agenda of God. Because God has no agenda. God loves us. And he leads us by Love. Not to manipulate us. Not to achieve his agenda. He is the only one who can lead us to new life. By following him, we can become true apostles of his Kingdom. 📌



Little Sisters from various houses pose with two of our Jeanne Jugan lay associates.

Food For the Journey

By Sr. Bernadette Rose

“It’s time to stop living for God, but starting living from him.” After I heard Monsignor James Shea speak these words during his keynote at the Eucharistic Congress, I believe my reaction was the same as Simon Peter’s when the Lord first said to him, “Follow Me”: a feeling of amazement. I kept hearing these words spoken to me in prayer, and I thought to myself, “How do I do more than just live for you, Jesus?” A year ago, I gave myself to Him completely and forever as a Bride of Christ in the Congregation of the Little Sisters of the Poor, but I still wondered, “How do I start living from you, Lord?”

As I prayed, the Lord led me to look at the beautiful example of our Mother, Saint Jeanne Jugan. She is an example *par excellence* because she knew where to draw her strength — the Eucharist. The Body and Blood of Our Lord were the source of her joy, her



Sr. Bernadette Rose poses with a young girl named Bernadette. Left: Another youngster receives a stand-up image of Jeanne Jugan specially made for kids.

happiness and her constant companion. Being stripped of her title as foundress and finding herself back at our Motherhouse among the novices was one of many moments in her life when she learned to live from our Eucharistic Lord completely and totally. She was “reduced to a zero” and “had fallen into oblivion,” but she knew how to unite herself to all the Masses being celebrated around the world and offered her life to the Lord for the salvation of souls.

During this three-year Eucharistic Revival, I hope that the world will look to Saint Jeanne Jugan as an example where they can find their strength and joy by receiving Jesus in Holy Communion and adoring him in the Blessed Sacrament. Then being nourished by him who is true food and true drink, may believers be able to tell others, as Monsignor Shea at the end of his keynote, “Starving people listen! We have found where the food is, we have found where the food is!” ✎

Our Lord revealed himself to me through these Eucharistic encounters

By Sr. Amanda Marie, second-year novice

It was an immense privilege to attend the tenth National Eucharistic Congress, particularly during this special time of my formation. Seeing 60,000 Catholics gathered for Mass and Eucharistic adoration was indescribable. In a way, it was a glimpse at heaven, and it brought to mind the vast number of saintly souls who join us in a hidden way at every single Eucharistic Sacrifice. What a gift it was to experience how intimately God desires to be with us! His yearning for us is so great that he does not wait for us to reach heaven in order to experience greater union with him: He left us the Eucharist and brought heaven down to us!

The passage of our Constitutions that discusses the Eucharist came to life for me over the course of this grace-filled week. We were living and breathing these words! I hope this reflection will express my gratitude for all who made this pilgrimage possible, and will give a glimpse into the way our Lord revealed himself to me in these Eucharistic encounters, most especially among my fellow Little Sister pilgrims. I pray that the blessings received will be a source of renewed courage and strength for each Little Sister as she continues onward in God's will for her life.

Each morning I took a moment to read this passage of the Constitutions in preparation for our long days of navigating crowds and receiving all that the Lord had in store for us. The passage begins,

“The summit of our prayer is participation in the Eucharistic Sacrifice, memorial of the death and resurrection of Christ, in which he nourishes us with his Body, transforms us, unites us with each other, and offers us with him to the Father.”

How fitting it was to begin our days of Eucharistic

renewal with the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass! It was a great strength to receive the Eucharist with so many of our Little Sisters from all over the country, some reunited after many years, others just meeting for the first time. This cohesive act of faith allowed us to offer ourselves with Christ to the Father, recollect our thoughts, and prepare our hearts for what the day would bring. It was evident that each one of us made a sincere effort to be totally surrendered and joyfully receptive to the foreseen and unforeseen renunciations our Lord would ask of us that day.

The Constitutions continue:

“To participate in it (the Mass) each day in a full and active way, we deepen within ourselves the dispositions of universal charity and humble forgiveness, according to the Lord’s teaching. The Body of Christ received with humility, gratitude and love, will increase our generosity, purity of intention and joy.”



It was so inspiring to see our older Sisters desirous of fully participating in the events, and all the efforts our Little Sisters made to help them along the way. Whether it was pushing a wheelchair amidst masses of people, walking at a slower pace between venues, making the sacrifice to be absent from certain presentations in order to sit with or assist a tired or sick Little Sister, I could clearly see the fruits of our participation in the Eucharistic Sacrifice manifesting themselves throughout the day.

At the end of the week, our physical energy levels were decreasing, yet, there was a great spiritual energy buzzing through the crowds and our Little Sisters. I never saw anyone fail in expressing her gratitude or showing an abundance of mercy in the face of little inconveniences. Above all, I witnessed my Little Sisters from every stage in life witnessing to the joy of their consecration.

There is a church across the street from the Indianapolis Convention Center that held perpetual adoration throughout the week. We also had the opportunity for adoration during the evening Revival sessions at Lucas Oil Stadium — 50,000–60,000 of the faithful adoring the Real Presence of Jesus all at once! In both experiences, Our Lord’s closeness to us was clearly felt. One afternoon, after what seemed to be a futile effort to view certain exhibitions in the midst of increasing crowds, a Little Sister who had been a



Sr. Amanda Marie (front, left) with her fellow Little Sister participants.



St. John the Evangelist Catholic Church, which served as an adoration chapel, was always full.

faithful friend to me all week looked at me and said, “Let’s just get out of here and go where Jesus is!” With a smile and sigh of relief I fully agreed! So off we went to St. John’s for what turned into a profound 2.5 hours of Eucharistic adoration.

This Eucharistic passage of our Constitutions concludes: “*Our prayer before the Blessed Sacrament gives witness to our faith. It is a proof of gratitude, an expression of love, and a duty of adoration*

towards Christ who is ‘in our midst and dwells with us, full of grace and truth.’ It renews within us the grace of the Eucharistic Sacrifice and gives the possibility of prolonging our prayer for half an hour.”

As we quietly prayed together, I was touched to realize in that moment, that Jesus was resting his compassionate gaze upon us, dwelling personally with us and all who were gathered in St. John’s. Our Lord reminded me of what we are called to practice in our communities, to “look upon each of our Little Sisters with the Lord’s own gaze of love.” Most often, this gaze of love is one which simply assures the recipient, “I am with you.” It is in the Eucharist that we can learn to do this, to see with eyes of faith, to discern the truth about who we are, to receive the gifts of grace that God wants

to bestow upon us through our Little Sisters, and in turn, be a revelation of Christ's love to them, to be truly with them. As we concluded our time of prayer together, I was in awe at God's mysterious designs, how he can bring someone into our lives for a specific purpose, at a time when we most need the gift only she can offer. How



The Blessed Sacrament is processed through the streets.

blessed I was to have my Little Sister companion this week, both of us brought together by God's wisdom, to be a unique gift to one another by the grace of his Eucharistic presence.

Deep gratitude fills my heart for the opportunity to attend the National Eucharistic Congress, especially during these days of novitiate immersed in greater contemplation of our consecrated life. As Little Sisters, God wants to give us so much in the Eucharist! Our Heavenly Father knows that through his Son Jesus, fully present in the Eucharist, we will obtain the strength we need to love without counting the cost, the courage to serve him constantly, the fervor to sacrifice ourselves for the sake of many souls, and the peace that flows from a heart that is joyfully docile to the Holy Spirit. I am sure I will spend my life praying with these Eucharistic treasures and hope that by God's grace, my life will sincerely witness to what our Constitutions propose in article 29:

"We will draw from the Eucharist, a source of purity and sacrament of love, the grace to offer ourselves unceasingly, in union with the sacrifice of Christ." ✞



An intense moment of Eucharistic adoration in Lucas Oil Stadium.

Becoming Eucharistic missionaries, on fire with Eucharistic love

By Maria Ciaravino, Little Sister postulant

As I begin to write this reflection, I am filled with profound gratitude for the blessing it was to attend the tenth National Eucharistic Congress. This gratitude is reflective of the great gift of Jesus in the Eucharist, something we are so unworthy of, yet it reveals his merciful love without end. I am just beginning to unpack this event and will be my entire life. As I pray about this, two messages resound in my heart: His deep personal love for us and the call to go out and be Eucharistic missionaries.



The Eucharist is love itself. Love that the Father so freely poured out, in all humility, to dwell with us personally and intimately. So much so that he brought 60,000+ people together to speak revival to our hearts. He spoke this love as we worshiped as the Body of Christ during the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. As Jesus was present in the center of the stadium while we knelt in silent adoration. As he offered his merciful love through countless priests during the Sacrament of Confession. As he walked with us (his followers) through the streets of Indianapolis in the Eucharistic procession, while thousands knelt in reverence.

It was through these encounters, and many others, that I was permeated by the deep, personal love of my Father. This is the same



Cardinal Sean O'Malley celebrates Mass.

personal love that he pours out each day in every Mass, every adoration chapel, and as he abides with us in every tabernacle. I was touched to the core to look around that stadium and think of the Father smiling at each of his children present. It reveals his desire to be with us, to transform us, and to speak love. This Eucharistic love is what we are created for, what we long for, and the only thing that can satisfy our hungry hearts. It is this love that sustains and consoles us in the darkest days. His love is the light to guide us on our pilgrim journey to eternal life. As I continue my

journey with Christ, this indescribable love resonates so deeply and profoundly in my heart.

Only when we experience this encounter with our Eucharistic Lord do we hear the personal invitation to be on mission, to bring the light of Christ to a thirsting world. This love calls us to bring Christ to others who long for him. So much of the Congress spoke about being a Eucharistic missionary, set on fire with Eucharistic love. I am reminded how the gift of Christ's body and blood, poured out for us, requires us to respond as a gift. If we fix our gaze by always turning to the Eucharist, he will lead us to extending that Eucharistic love to those most in need, especially those who do not know him. Cardinal Christophe Pierre said "to be totally revived opens us up to see him everywhere we go." The fruit of a personal encounter with Christ in the Eucharist transforms us to encounter Christ in one another.

Dr. Edward Sri stated that we must be disciples who walk on "two feet." The two feet are our love of God and love of neighbor.



Maria Ciaravino surrounded by Little Sisters.

This revival is taking place during a time where we are constantly surrounded by evil, war, isolation, loneliness, etc. We have to think about how much we can change that by spreading Christ's message of hope, rooted in the Eucharist. In a world that so desperately needs the message of Christ's love, he sends us out as his disciples.

These two messages are at the heart of revival in the Church. In one of the closing talks by Mother Adela Galindo, foundress of the Servants of the Pierced Heart of Jesus, she encouraged us to contemplate the Blessed Mother as we go forth from the Congress. Mother said "in imitation of our Blessed Mother we are invited to open our hearts to the Lord." It was through her deep, interior life that she initiated the Eucharistic mission of the Church at the Visitation. What better model can our Lord give us than our most loving Mother, Mary, she who is Mother of the Eucharist! So, we entrust this revival to her, trusting she will guide us in a deeper trust, faith, and love to live Eucharistic lives proclaiming the Good News. And we ask the Holy Spirit to continue to set our hearts ablaze! 📌

Eucharistic and missionary conversion

Homily of Cardinal Luis Antonio Tagle, Pro-Prefect of the Dicastery for Evangelization, and Papal Envoy to the National Eucharistic Congress

My dear brothers and sisters, we thank our God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, the God who is Love, for gathering us, a family of faith, at this closing Mass of the National Eucharistic Congress. I bring to you the fatherly blessings of His Holiness Pope Francis. The Holy Father prays, as we all do, that the Congress may bear much fruit for the renewal of the Church and of society in the United States of America. Before coming here I asked the Holy Father if he had a message for you. He said, “Conversion to the Eucharist.” Since the Eucharistic Congress will be followed by a sending of Eucharistic missionaries, I would like to offer some points for reflection on the connection between Eucharistic conversion and missionary conversion.

First point: Mission and gift

The theme of our National Eucharistic Congress is taken from the sixth chapter of the Gospel of John. In the fullness of time the Father sent his Eternal Word who became flesh through the Holy Spirit. He was present among us human beings as one like us in the flesh, except in sin. The Son sent by the Father came as a life-giving gift in the human flesh of Jesus. “My flesh for the life of the world,” Jesus himself declares. We should note that Jesus’ description of his being sent by the Father is always connected to the gift of his flesh for others. In John 6:38 he says, “For I came down from

heaven not to do my own will, but the will of the One who sent me.” Jesus has a profound consciousness of having been sent, of being on a mission. He also says in John 6:32, “My Father gives you the true bread from heaven.” But what is this bread? He says in verse 35, “I am the bread of life.” Jesus is sent to be given by the Father to others. He is not sent just to wander around and to enjoy himself. He is sent to be given. The missioner is a gift. Mission is

not just about work but also about the gift of oneself. Jesus fulfills his mission by giving himself, his flesh, his presence to others as the Father wills it. The presence of Jesus in the Eucharist is a gift and fulfillment of his mission. “This is my body for you, my blood for you,” always “for you, for all.” In Jesus mission and gift of self meet. The Eucharist is a privileged moment to experience Jesus’ mission as a gift of himself.

Dear friends, it occurred to me that where there is a lack of missionary zeal, maybe it is partly due to a weakening in the appreciation of gifts and giftedness. Do we still look at ourselves, persons, objects, work, society, events and creation within the horizon of gift? Or is this horizon disappearing? If our horizon is only that of achievement, success and profit, there is no room to see and receive gratuitous gifts. There is no place for gratitude and self-giving.



Cardinal Tagle delivers his homily at the closing Mass.



There will only be a relentless search for self-affirmation that eventually becomes oppressive and tiring, leading to more self-absorption or individualism. When pessimism takes over, we see only darkness, failures, problems, things to complain about; we do not see gifts in persons and events. Those who do not see gifts in themselves and in others will not give gifts, they will not go on a mission. In fact

some people prefer to relate with “friends” or “dates” generated by artificial intelligence because they do not see gifts in flesh and blood persons. Husbands and wives, what do you see in each other — a gift or a problem? Children, what do you see in your parents — a gift or an ATM card? Parents, what do you see in your children — a gift or a burden? Priests, what do you see in your bishops? Religious men and women, what do you see in your religious superiors? Bishops, what do you see in your priests and deacons? Friends, what do you see in a poor person? In a sick person? What do you see in someone different from you? Like Jesus let us give a gift of presence to each other. Go to Church, go to Mass with the gift of your flesh, voice, sweat, tears, smiles. Jesus gives his flesh, why can we not give him and the community the gift of our fleshly presence?



Maria and Little Sisters pray during the closing Mass.

Second point: Leaving the presence of Jesus

Is Jesus a gift or a problem? He told his listeners in John 6 that to receive him means first to believe in him, and secondly to eat his flesh and drink his blood. The disciples who were initially eager to listen to him started doubting. They said, “This saying is hard. Who can accept it?” (John 6:20). They also questioned whether he had been sent by God since they knew him as the son of Joseph and Mary (John 6:42). As a result of this, many of his disciples left him, meaning “they returned to their former way of life and no longer accompanied him” (John 6:66). They returned to a way of life without Jesus. They chose his absence rather than his presence in their lives. Instead of accompanying him, they walked alone. Their rejection of the gift of Jesus’ word, body and blood meant they would not walk with him and neither could he send them on mission.

I invite you to pause and ask rather painful questions about the mysterious rejection of Jesus by his disciples. Is it possible that we disciples contribute to the departure of others from Jesus? Why do some people leave Jesus when he is giving the most precious gift of eternal life? Why do some baptized turn away from the gift of

Jesus in the Eucharist? Does our biblical, catechetical and liturgical formation allow the gift of Jesus' person to shine forth clearly? Does our Eucharistic celebration manifest Jesus' presence or does it obscure it? Do Mass goers manifest the presence of Christ through their witness of life, charity and mission? Do our parish communities provide an experience of Jesus' closeness and caring? Are our families still the primary teachers and transmitters of the faith? Do the youth feel listened to and heard about their search for Jesus? What cultural mindsets challenge the faith in Jesus' word and gift of self? Now I shift my line of questioning. Maybe there are people who desire to be present with the Lord but hesitate to come, like the poor, the homeless, the migrants, the refugees, the indigenous people, the hearing impaired, the elderly and many other "hidden" people who might feel they do not belong. But let us not lose heart. Jesus will not get tired of coming to us with the gift of himself, even when he is wounded.

Third point: Eucharistic missionaries

After the departure of some disciples, Jesus asked the twelve apostles, "Do you also want to leave?" Simon Peter answered him, "Master, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. We have come to believe and are convinced that you are the Holy One of God" (John 6:27-29). Jesus is asking each one of us, "Do you also want to leave me like the others?" I hope we can answer like St. Peter, "We will stay with you. We refuse to live far from your presence." But let these not be empty words. Like St. Peter we should believe with conviction. Jesus does not impose himself on anyone. He appeals to our interior freedom. Faith and conviction are our gifts to Jesus who gives himself to us. So I ask you: will you stay with Jesus?

Those who choose to stay with Jesus will be sent by Jesus. The gift of his presence and love for us will be our gift to people. We should not keep Jesus to ourselves. That is not discipleship. That is selfishness. The gift we have received we should give as a gift. Have

you experienced the tenderness of Jesus towards his tired disciples, offering them time to rest and eat, as recounted in the Gospel today? Go and share Jesus' tender love to the weary, the hungry and suffering. Have you experienced Jesus' compassion and guidance when you were like sheep without a shepherd? Go and share Jesus' shepherd's caress to the lost, confused and weak. Have you experienced Jesus' wounded heart uniting those who are separated from each other (as St. Paul states in his letter to the Ephesians)? Go and share Jesus' gift of reconciliation and peace to those who are divided. In his letter to me, Pope Francis expressed the hope "that the participants of the Congress, fully aware of the universal gifts they receive from heavenly food, may impart them to others." A Eucharistic people is a missionary and evangelizing people.

Let me close by sharing an experience. When I was a parish priest I noticed a woman who was extraordinarily devoted to the Church. On Sundays she arrived early to help in all the Masses and other activities, and went home only when the church had been cleaned and the doors closed. One day I thanked her for her dedication and thanked her family for allowing her to serve. Her answer surprised me, "Father, do not worry about my family. I stay here in Church and attend all Masses because I do not want to see my husband and children. I wish every day were a Sunday so I could avoid my family." Dear friends, when the priest or deacon says, "The Mass is ended. Go in the peace of Christ," please go! Go! What you have heard, touched and tasted, you must share with others. We have received the gift of Jesus, let us go to proclaim Jesus zealously and joyfully for the life of the world. ✎



St. Gianna and Pietro Molla on their honeymoon, October 1955.

Gianna Emanuela Molla: Sharing my Saint Mom and holy Dad with the world

In April our Little Sisters in Washington, D.C. received an unexpected visit from a very special person, the daughter of a Saint. Dr. Gianna Emanuela Molla is the youngest child of St. Gianna Beretta Molla and her husband Pietro, the child for whose life her mother gave her life in April, 1962. The story of St. Gianna Molla's "extreme sacrifice," as her daughter calls it, is well known throughout the Church, especially in the pro-life community. She was beatified by Pope John Paul II in 1994 and canonized by him in 2004.

Like her mother, Gianna Emanuela chose a career in medicine. But while the mother specialized in pediatrics, the daughter chose the field of geriatrics, inspired by her paternal grandmother, whose sufferings following a stroke deeply impacted her as a teen. In addition to her medical practice, over the years Gianna Emanuela has dedicated as much time as she could to sharing her mother's story around the world.



Gianna with her father, Pietro, on his 95th birthday, July 1, 2007.

While the Church has officially recognized the holiness of her mother, Gianna Emanuela also firmly believes in the heroic sanctity of her father. Since his death in 2010 she has spoken about him and worked to publish his writings — but she is not the only person to believe that her father Pietro is also a saint — her Saint Mom was the first to believe this, as can be read in the letters she wrote him!

Her mother’s brother, “Venerable” Father Alberto Beretta, a missionary physician and Capuchin friar, wrote to her father in March 1964, after the death of his daughter Mariolina at the age of six. “Pietro dearest, ... Courage, sursum corda! It is the design of God, of His Divine Providence, inscrutable to us; we know that it is a design of love. By testing you so hard, in depriving you of what you hold most dear in this life, He manifests His predilection for you, because He wants you a day very close to Him, very high in the Glory of Paradise, close to Gianna and Mariolina.”

“I totally agree with my Uncle!!!” she exclaimed, adding that her father has a reputation for holiness well beyond her own family!

“More and more people, from various parts of the world — cardinals, bishops, priests, consecrated persons, including cloistered nuns, and lay people — tell me and write to me that the Lord has

blessed me with two “saint parents,” that Gianna and Pietro are two “saint spouses,” and that they pray to them asking for their intercession.”

“I lived 48 years of my life with my Dad,” Gianna Emanuela explains, “and I can testify that my Mom ... helped him, day by day, to carry his cross, and to accomplish, in a heroic way, the will of the Lord; and when the Lord called him to Himself he was more than worthy to live with her forever!”

“According to God’s will, my parents lived their married and family life together for only six and a half years, then Mom flew to Paradise. During the 48 years that Dad lived without her visible presence, they continued to be ‘one heart and one soul,’ spiritually very united and in communion: true love, which is love that lasts forever, really is much stronger than death!”

Gianna Emanuela’s admiration for her father, “a holy dad and a single parent for almost half a century,” is striking.

“During this very long time,” she explained, “my Dad became both father and mother to me and my siblings; he suffered alone another huge sorrow, losing his daughter Mariolina at the tender age of six, only two years after his adored Spouse’s death; he continued to work tirelessly and very generously as a most esteemed engineer and company executive, doing a lot of good to so many workers; finally, he most generously worked very hard in sharing his Saint Spouse, my Saint Mom, with the world, for the good of the Universal Church.”

In January 2003, Gianna Emanuela felt it her duty to leave her profession as a geriatrician to care for her dear father. He was 90 years old when he started to have serious health problems, because of which he needed the continuous presence of a doctor so that he could remain at home, as he wished.

“I thought: since he has always loved my siblings and me with a boundless love, this is the least I can do for him; if I devote all my time to him, this is the greatest gift I can give to him, together with loving him; if God’s will had been different, my Mom would now be beside him. Keeping always near him, I felt I would make her happy,

too; it was like doing something for her as well.”

“That’s how I had the grace, the joy and the honor to assist him during the last seven years and three months of his long life, night and day; I felt like I was an instrument in God’s hands by helping him as a physician too. On April 3, 2010, Holy Saturday, he joined his most beloved Spouse in Paradise, at the age of almost



Gianna Emanuela Molla with Sr. Margaret Regina, superior of our community in Washington, D.C.

98. He had a lucid mind until the very last day of his life, and during these years we spent together I was able to know still more about my Mom through him.”

“I remember that my Dad prayed a great deal, and that he continued to thank the Lord, for everything; I was struck by the fact that, although he had suffered tremendously in his long life, he always said to me: ‘Eternity will not be enough for me to thank the Lord for all the graces He has granted me in my long life,’ referring, in particular, to the grace of having been able to be present at the proclamation of my Mom as a Saint by Pope Saint John Paul II in St. Peter’s Square in Rome.”

We Little Sisters were deeply struck by our time spent with Gianna Emanuela, by her memories of her father and his obvious virtue. As a geriatrician and a daughter who gave up her career to care for her aging father, we felt her a kindred spirit.

Addressing the serious shortage of geriatric caregivers — not

Prayer for Private Devotion to Pietro Molla

God the Father, I thank You and I praise You for having given us, in Your infinite Love and in Your boundless Mercy, together with a Saint Mother, “a saintly papa, not of gold, but of diamond, the biggest and most precious one there is on this earth!” (Saint Gianna).

Along with his long life, he witnessed to the Holy Gospel in an exemplary way, as a young person, as an engineer and a company executive, as a fiancé, as a spouse, as a father and a widower for 48 years. During this long time, he suffered from another huge sorrow, losing his daughter Mariolina at a tender age. He always fulfilled and humbly accepted Your Holy Will, following the example of the Blessed Virgin Mary and of Saint Joseph, to whom he was so very devoted. He gave witness to the sacred good of Life until his last breath.

Lord Jesus, with Your Grace and Your Blessing, with which You never cease to fill our hearts from Your glorious pierced Heart, and together with the Heavenly Mother, help us to have the same unshakeable faith of Pietro, his great spirit of prayer, service and sacrifice, his sacred respect for every human person, his deep humility, piety and confidence in Your Divine Providence, his great love and charity towards neighbor, his steadfast and unconditional acceptance of Your Holy Will, even when it is difficult to accept.

Holy Spirit, I implore You to hear and answer Pietro’s prayers, “coming from a heart that has always loved You and served You in a saintly way” (Saint Gianna), so that, through his intercession, I may receive this grace which I humbly ask of You and which I have at heart in a particular way, so that I may, one day, pray to him as a “saint”, like his saintly wife. Amen.

Our Father • Hail Mary • Glory be

To participate in the work of promoting the glorification of Pietro Molla on part of the Church or who wishes to report graces received through the invocation of his help, email: StGiannaPietroMollaUSA@gmail.com. For more information visit www.SaintGiannaPietroMolla.org.

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to mention vocations — we asked her how she thought more young people could be motivated to devote themselves to the care of the elderly. She responded how important it is to teach children, from a very young age, to respect and honor the elderly, because every human person has equal dignity, from the youngest to the oldest.

As our encounter with Gianna Emanuela concluded, it occurred to us that just as those in the prolife movement ask St. Gianna to intercede on their behalf, perhaps we who are committed to the elderly could find in Pietro Molla a heavenly advocate! As Gianna Emanuela confided to us, “My Saint Mom testified to the sacredness of human life from conception, and my holy Dad testified to the sacredness of human life until his last breath!” 🌻



Kicks, Scores, and Goals: The Life of 1956 Olympian Jim Dorrian

James Patrick Michael “Jimmy” Dorrian was born at Queens General Hospital in Astoria on March 5, 1931, the second child of Jimmy “Red Dog” Dorrian and Mary Elizabeth Doherty Dorrian. His parents had met in Belfast and immigrated to the United States in search of a better life after experiencing anti-Catholic bigotry at home.

After settling in Rockaway, Queens, Jimmy’s parents brought their first child, Tess over from Ireland, where her grandmother had been caring for her. They eventually had three more children.

Everyone in the Dorrian family had bright red hair, so they decided to audition for the 1939 Broadway play, *Life with Father*, which was based on the true story of *The New Yorker* essayist Clarence Day.

Jimmy also auditioned for the 1946 movie *The Yearling*, based on the 1938 Pulitzer-Prize winning novel of the same name. In his younger years, he bore a striking resemblance to Robert Redford!

In his youth Dorrian enjoyed many activities, some of which were quite mischievous. He recalls swimming nude at 135th Street in the Bronx and jumping on the third rail of the subway.

Jimmy wasn't always up to no good, however. He worked for the milkman on the weekend, helped his brother with his newspaper route, and labored as a box boy/bag boy at Macy's. Jimmy also constructed his own shoe-shine box and shined shoes outside the subway station at 138th Street.

By age 13, Jimmy's primary interest was sports. He played golf, hockey, and roller hockey and was on the basketball team at his church in Throggs Neck. The German Stadium was one block from his house. When he looked through the fence at members of the New York Sport Club Soccer Team practicing, he thought immediately, "That's for me."

Dorrian joined the team, and was quickly promoted from the "B" team to the "A" team. He remembers, "I was small but agile. I had stamina, and I improved a great deal on an ongoing basis."

Jimmy and the other members of the New York Sport Club won the Dr. Manning Cup Football Competition Championship, a tournament for under-19 boys' teams, in 1947 and 1948. Jimmy played the position of left half-back. "I covered a lot of ground during each game, and I expended a tremendous amount of energy." He added that his focus was 100% on soccer during this period. "No girls."

When Jimmy graduated from high school, the draft was compulsory. Rather than wait to be drafted, he signed up for the Navy and was immediately called up to boot camp. He then completed two six-month cruises in the Mediterranean, followed by shore duty in Naples, Italy. He also served on an aircraft carrier in the waters near Cuba and Haiti.

When tryouts for the 1956 Olympic Team were announced, Jimmy was all in. The East Coast, West Coast, and Armed Forces each held playoffs locally, and those who survived those rounds met in St. Louis — approximately 20 to 25 men — from which the U.S. Olympic Soccer Team players were chosen.

Jimmy remembers good weather at the Opening Ceremony in Melbourne. The U.S. team played warm-up games with Korea and the Philippines and won both games. In the preliminary round they were defeated by Yugoslavia and did not advance. Jimmy commented, “The Yugoslavian team was more sophisticated — very well trained, with lots of practice. We lost after one game, and then it was time to go home.”

The team did not stay for the Games’ Closing Ceremony. Instead, they flew to Fiji, where they played soccer with the natives, and then to Hawaii, before returning home. Each team member received a \$450 check for their efforts.

Jimmy played with the Danish Athletic Club in 1956, and with a professional team from the American Soccer League from 1956-1960.

For 28 years, he coached soccer at the Mount Saint Michael Academy in Mount Vernon, NY. Each day he began work in a local deli at 7:00 a.m., followed by soccer practice at Mount Saint Michael at 2:00 p.m. “You gotta work ‘em, push ‘em,” says Jimmy.

In Jimmy’s 28 years as coach at Mount Saint Michael’s, his team won over 300 games. He was also the coach who first encouraged soccer teams from each of the five boroughs to play with one another, a practice that enhanced the skills of all the players.

Jim Dorrian married his Irish sweetheart, May, on December 30, 1953; together they had six children. Today the family includes 15 grandchildren. May passed away in 2010.

Working seven days a week to support his family left Jimmy little time for Sunday Mass for many years. Today, he is a daily communicant at Jeanne Jugan Residence, and devotes long moments to prayer for the souls in purgatory.

Although Jim Dorrian never quite reached the heights of Olympic glory, his positive influence on the lives of generations of youngsters, the love he lavishes on his children and grandchildren, the friendships he has made at Jeanne Jugan Residence and his efforts to lift others to the glory of everlasting life have all impacted the world more than the passing glory of Olympic medals. 📌



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