

AUGUST 2026

Pinhi

SUNDAY GOSPEL REFLECTIONS
& CATECHESIS



DOMINICAN NOVITIATE OF THE ANNUNCIATION
Manaoag, Pangasinan

What's on

Binhi August 2026

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BINHI is the official monthly publication of the Novices of the Dominican Province of the Philippines, formed at the Dominican Novitiate of the Annunciation in the Minor Basilica of Our Lady of the Rosary of Manaoag. Faithful to its name, *Binhi* ("seed") seeks to sow the seeds of faith, truth, and contemplation in the hearts of its readers.

Rooted in the Dominican pillars of prayer, study, community, and preaching, **BINHI** invites every reader to encounter Christ more deeply, embrace the wisdom of the Church, and grow in holiness. Through its reflections, articles, and catechetical content, it hopes to cultivate hearts that bear lasting fruit for the glory of God and the service of His people.

CATECHISM OF THE MONTH

DOMINIC DE GUZMAN



**"SANTO DOMINGO DE GUZMAN,
PRAYLENG MALUGOD AT
HUWARAN SA EBANGHELYO "**

**" Si Kristo na ang tanging Katotohanan ang naging
kanyang sandigan sa misyong tinatahak, kaya't
marami ang muling nagbalik sa pananampalataya."**

A Reflection by Br. Jaderick Kheen A. Bautista

Si Domingo de Guzman ay ipinanganak sa España sa bayan ng Caleruega noong mga ika-pitong dekada ng ika-12 siglo. Nagmula at pinalaki sa pamilyang marangya at tapat sa Simbahang Katoliko, siya'y napag-aral nang maayos at lumaki sa pananampalataya. Bata pa lamang siya noong palagi niyang sinasamahan ang kanyang ina na si Jane de Guzman upang sumimba sa isang monastery ng mga Benediktino. Noong nadatnan niya ang mga gawi ng mga monghe, nagsimula ang kanyang pagnanais na maging isang lingkod ng Diyos.



Kalaunan, pumasok siya bilang isang prayle sa Canon Regular ni San Agustin sa bayan ng Osmá, na nasa panunungkulan ni Obispo Diego de Acebo. Noon, pinadala ng hari ng Castille ang dalawa sa isang misyong diplomatiko. Natagpuan ni Domingo ang nangangambang panganib sa banal na Santa Iglesia: Ang Erehiya, o ang maling katuruan, ng mga Cathars at Albigensians. Sa pag-uwi ng dalawa, pumunta sila sa Timog Pransya upang tugunan ang problemang ito. Dito sinimulan ni Domingo ang buhay pangangaral na ayon sa Ebanghelyo, sa halimbawa ng mga apostoles, at ni Kristo.

Maraming panganib ang naka-abang sa kanila. Habang sila'y nasa sentro ng mga malalaking bayan na hawak ng mga erehe, sila ay hindi lamang nangangaral sa taong tumaliwas sa pananampalataya kundi pati na rin sa mga nais kumitil ng kanilang buhay. Subalit sa kabila ng lahat ng ito, nanaig ang grasya at awa ng Diyos at dulot nito ang pagbalik ng napakaraming tao sa pananampalataya. Si Kristo na ang tanging katotohanan ang naging kanilang sandigan sa misyong tinatahak nila.





Samakatuwid, hindi natapos ang misyon ni Domingo dito. Kalaunan, binawian ng buhay si Obispo Diego at dahil dito, umalis ang ilang mga kasama niya sa misyon. Ngunit, hindi nawalan ng loob ang Banal na Mangangaral. Kalaunan, may isang grupo ng mga babae, na dati'y mga erehe, ang lumapit sa kanya upang makapaglingkod sa Simbahan.

Sila ay naging mga mongha sa ilalim ng pamamalakad ni Domingo at sa kanila unti-unting nagsimula ang pundasyon ng isang Orden na ang gampani'y mangaral para sa kaligtasan ng mga kaluluwa.

Malakas pa ang presensya ng mga erehe at ipinagpatuloy pa rin niya ang pangangaral. Pinagpala siya ng Diyos ng maraming biyaya. Isa sa kanyang mga milagro ay ang pagpapatunay na totoo ang Mabuting Balita na itinuturo ng Inang Simbahan. Naghamon ang mga erehe ng isang paligsahan kung saan maghahanda ang parehong panig, sila laban sa Katoliko, ng mga dokumento na nagpapatibay sa kanilang pananampalataya. Itatapon ang mga ito sa apoy upang mapatunayan kung sino ang mga totoong tagasunod ng Diyos.



Itinapon ng mga erehe ang kanilang dokumento at ito ay agad-agadang nasunog. Subalit, nang itinapon ni Domingo ang kanyang mga dokumento, lumipad ito palayo ng tatlong beses at hindi nasunog. Marami ang bumalik sa pananampalataya. Marami din ang iba pang mga milagro na naisagawa niya sa tulong ng Diyos. Siya rin ay isang taong laging nag-aayuno at nagbibihilya, nagluluksa dahil sa kasamaan ng mundo. Samakabilang-

palad, siya ay nangangaral ng may buong galak at tuwa, isinasabuhay ang kanyang mga itinuturo at tapat na huwaran ni Kristo.



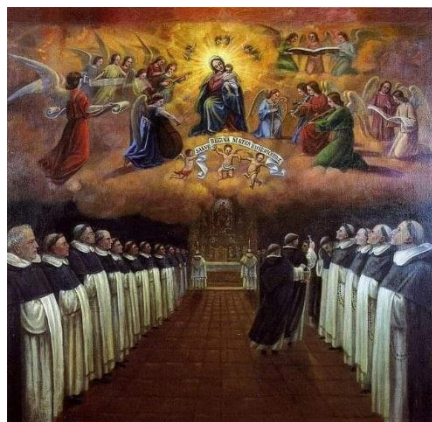
napakamahalagang misyon ng pagpapangaral sa katotohanan ni Kristo.

Pagkatapos ng ilang taong walang sawang pagsusumikap na itatag ang Orden at ipangaral si Kristo, siya ay namayapa noong ika-anim ng Agosto, 1221, sa piling ng mga prayle na miyembro ng itinatag niyang Orden sa Bologna, Italy. Isang tunay na saksi kay Kristo at tagasunod sa buhay ng mga apostoles. Siya ay ikinanonisa noong ika-lima ng Agosto, 1234, ni Papa Gregorio IX. Hindi naging hadlang ang kamatayan upang ipatuloy ipalaganap ang Mabuting Balita sa mundo para sa kaligtasan ng mga kaluluwa.

Beate Pater Dominice, ora pro nobis!



Noong Abril 25, 1215, bunga ng kanyang pangangaral at panalangin, itinatag niya sa Toulouse, France ang “Order of Preachers (O.P.)” o ang Dominican Order upang mas lalo pa niyang maipalaganap si Kristo, hindi lamang bilang isang indibidwal pero bilang isang komunidad na nagsusumikap, laban sa mga kahinaan at kasamaan na dulot ng mundo, at magkakasamang tumatahak sa buhay ng kabanalan. Sa 22 ng Disyembre, 1216, inaprubahan ni Papa Onorio III ang Orden, isang tanda ng pagkilala sa



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01

“Dawn with Apo Baket”

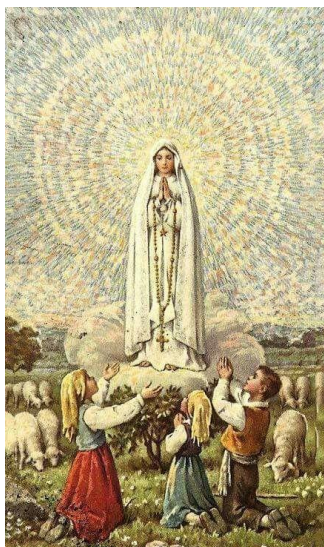
A CATECHISM on the Traditional Dawn Rosary in Manaoag

by *Br. Elijah D. Gonzales*

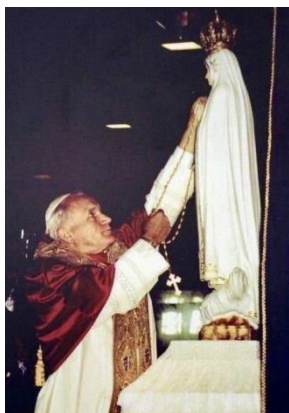
Every first Saturday of the month, while much of the world is still asleep, pilgrims quietly make their way to the Minor Basilica of Our Lady of the Rosary of Manaoag. Some come with joyful hearts, others with burdens too heavy to carry alone. Parents pray for their children. Students ask for wisdom. The sick seek healing. And many simply come to thank God for His countless blessings. Before the day begins, they choose to begin it with prayer.



There is something profoundly beautiful about praying at dawn. In Sacred Scripture, the morning is often a sign of hope and new beginnings. It was early in the morning that Jesus withdrew to pray (Mk 1:35), teaching us that before facing the demands of the day, we should first seek the Father. As the darkness slowly gives way to the light, we are reminded that God's grace is stronger than our fears, worries, and uncertainties. Every sunrise quietly proclaims that God's mercy is always new (Lam 3:22–23).

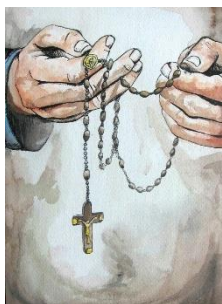


The First Saturday Dawn Rosary carries an even deeper meaning. Saturdays have long been dedicated to the Blessed Virgin Mary, who remained faithful even in the silence between Good Friday and Easter Sunday. In the Fatima apparitions, Our Lady invited the faithful to observe the Five First Saturdays as an act of reparation to her Immaculate Heart through Confession, Holy Communion, the Rosary, and meditation on its mysteries. This devotion is not simply about honoring Mary; it is an invitation to draw closer to Jesus, to whom she always leads us.



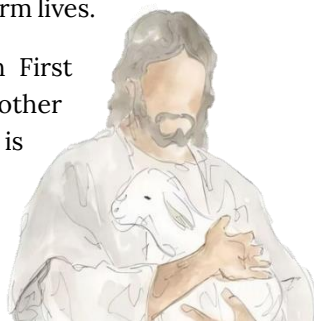
Pope St. John Paul II described the Rosary as a "compendium of the Gospel" because every mystery allows us to contemplate the life of Christ (*Rosarium Virginis Mariae*, no. 18). Although the same prayers are repeated, the Rosary is not meant to be mechanical. Like the steady rhythm of our breathing, its repetition creates space for silence, reflection, and deeper communion with God. Through Mary's eyes, we learn to see Christ more clearly, love Him more deeply, and follow Him more faithfully.

Praying the Rosary in Manaoag gives this devotion a unique significance. According to local tradition, the name *Manaoag* means "to call," recalling the Blessed Virgin's invitation to the farmer who first encountered her. Every pilgrim who comes to this Basilica responds to that same call—a call not merely to ask for favors but to encounter Christ. This is why the Rosary naturally leads to the Eucharist, the "source and summit of the Christian life" (CCC 1324). Mary always prepares our hearts to receive her Son, echoing her words at Cana: "Do whatever he tells you" (Jn 2:5).



Many people come to Manaoag hoping for miracles, and throughout the centuries countless prayers have been answered through the intercession of Our Lady. Yet the greatest miracle often happens quietly. It is the heart that learns to forgive, the sinner who returns to God, the anxious soul that finds peace, or the weary pilgrim who leaves with renewed hope. These are the miracles that transform lives.

As the first light of dawn fills the Basilica each First Saturday, it reminds us that every new day is another invitation to begin again with Christ. The Dawn Rosary is more than a monthly tradition; it is a journey of faith. With every bead, we place our lives in God's hands. With every mystery, we draw closer to Jesus. And with Mary beside us, we learn that the surest path to Christ is always a pilgrimage in faith, hope, and love.



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02

“Inevitably Enough”

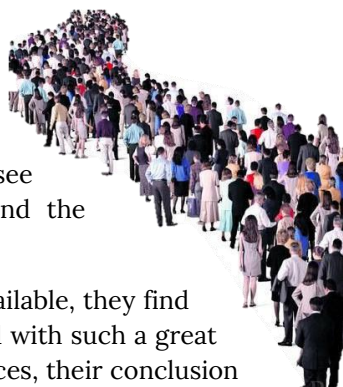
A REFLECTION on the GOSPEL of the 18th Sunday in Ordinary Time
by *Br. Elijah D. Gonzales*

One of our most common human experiences is insufficiency—moments when what we have seems just not enough for what is being asked of us.

Throughout life, we face situations that reveal our limitations: responsibilities that feel overwhelming, challenges that exceed our abilities, and circumstances that remind us of our weaknesses. During these moments, we often focus on what we lack rather than on what God can accomplish through us.



This human experience is reflected in the Gospel account of multiplication of the loaves and fish. Before the miracle takes place, the disciples are confronted with an impossible situation. They see thousands of hungry people, a deserted place, and the approaching darkness of the night.



When they look at what is available, they find only five loaves and two fish. Faced with such a great inadequacy and such limited resources, their conclusion is understandable: it is not enough.

Perhaps this is why this Gospel speaks so deeply to us. In many ways, we are like the disciples. We measure what we have against what is demanded of us. We look at our struggles, responsibilities, weaknesses, and the needs of those around us, and we quickly conclude, “I cannot do much. I do not have enough.”

This sense of insufficiency appears in many aspects of our lives. We believe we do not have enough time to be present for others, enough patience to forgive, enough courage to begin again, or enough strength to carry another burden.



Like the disciples, we often see our limitations before recognizing the possibilities of God’s grace. When we see scarcity, Jesus sees an opportunity for grace. He does not ask us to create what we do not have. He simply asks us to offer what is already in our hands.



“Bring them here to me.” These words reveal the heart of God. He does not wait until we possess extraordinary gifts or perfect abilities before He works through us. He receives our simple offerings and transforms them through His grace. A small act of kindness, a sincere prayer, or a humble sacrifice can become an instrument of blessing when placed in the hands of Christ.

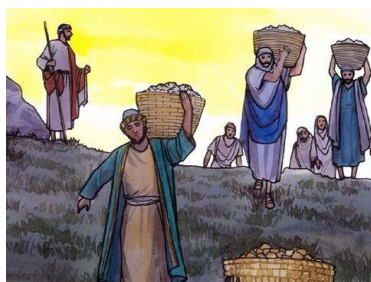


The Gospel also reveals our tendency to withdraw when faced with overwhelming needs. Like the disciples who wanted to send the crowd away, we sometimes distance ourselves from the suffering of others because we feel inadequate. However, Jesus reminds us that compassion is not only about recognizing another person's hunger or pain; it is about allowing ourselves to become part of God's response.



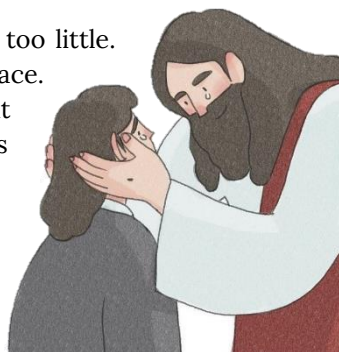
The twelve baskets of leftovers reveal the abundance of God's love. He is never limited by human insufficiency. What seems small in our eyes can become abundant when surrendered to Him. Therefore, the question of this Gospel is not simply, “How much do I have?” but rather, “Am I willing to place what I have in the hands of Christ?”

Human beings will always find reasons why something seems impossible. We will always notice what is missing and what we cannot do. Yet the disciples had only five loaves and two fish, and when they placed them in the hands of Jesus, they became enough for a miracle.



God does not ask us to give what we do not have. He only asks us to offer what is already in our hands with a willing and wholehearted heart. Through His love, our weaknesses can become opportunities for grace, our limitations can become instruments of His power, and our small sacrifices can become blessings beyond what we could ever imagine.

For in Christ, nothing offered with love is ever too little. What we surrender in faith is transformed by His grace. And this is the mystery we are called to trust: that through God's hands, a wholehearted sacrifice is inevitably enough.



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09

“The True Meaning of Love: Sacrifice”

A REFLECTION on the GOSPEL of the 19th Sunday in Ordinary Time

by Br. Christiano Bima Winata

“Jesus said to them: Courage! Don’t be afraid, it’s me.”

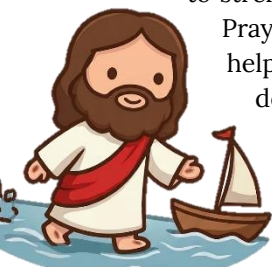
Today’s Gospel tells us about how Jesus helps Peter and his disciples on the boat because of the strong waves and wind. Sometimes this also happens in our lives. We face a lot of problems and trials, and we do not know how to solve them.

My brothers and sisters, in today’s Gospel Jesus reminds and teaches us that He will always be at our side. Although we cannot see him physically, He always works in us silently. Now we must trust in him always because if we always rely on him, He will never abandon us. We should surrender all things to Jesus Christ. Let him work within us.

There is a reason why we always face a lot of problems and trials in our lives: a good Father does not pamper his children but educates them to become independent and resilient individuals; therefore, when the world treats them unfairly, they will not be disappointed because they are used to it.

“Don’t be afraid.” Jesus is always at our side. He knows what we need. And we should always pray to God and ask God to strengthen us. If we do not pray to God, how can God help us? Praying is the best way to communicate with God. It can also help us build a deep relationship with God. Sometimes prayer does not have to be expressed in words – silence is also a form of prayer; we allow God to speak and touch our hearts so that we can understand God’s will.

Therefore, let us continue to walk in faith, even when the path before us is filled with uncertainty. Like Peter, who began to sink when he took his eyes off Jesus and focused on the storm, we too can lose hope when we concentrate only on the problems and trials of life. However, when we fix our eyes on Jesus and place our complete trust in Him, He will reach out His hand to save and strengthen us. Through faith, prayer, and complete surrender to the Lord, we will find the courage to face every challenge, knowing that Jesus is always with us and will never leave nor forsake us.



AUGUST

14

"The True Meaning of Love: Sacrifice"

A CATECHISM on the Life and Works of St. Maximilian Kolbe

by Br. Alexander Bryan Loardy

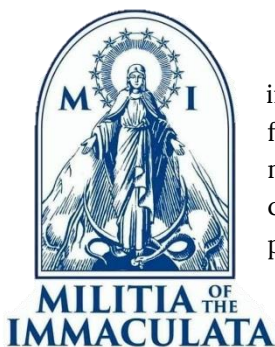
St. Maximilian Kolbe was born as Raymund Kolbe on January 8, 1894, in Zduńska Wola, Poland, which was then under Russian Imperial control. He was the son of weavers. His parents were Julius Kolbe, an ethnic German weaver, and Maria Dąbrowska, a Polish midwife. His parents were relatively poor, and in 1914 his father was captured by the Russians and hanged for his part in fighting for an independent Poland.



Although he was initially known as a somewhat impulsive and energetic child, his life took a profound spiritual turn around the age of ten after a mystical vision. "That night, I asked the Mother of God what was to become of me, a Child of Faith. Then she came to me holding two crowns, one white, the other red. She asked me if I was willing to accept either of these crowns. The white one meant that I should persevere in purity, and the red that I should become a martyr. I said that I would accept them both." Aged only 13, Kolbe and his elder brother left home to enroll in the Conventual Franciscan seminary in Lwow. This seminary was in Austria-Hungary, and it meant illegally crossing the border.

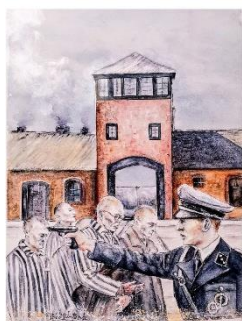
In 1910, he was given the religious name Maximillian and was admitted as an initiate. He took his final vows as a friar in 1914. After a short period in Krakow, Poland, Kolbe went to study in Rome, Italy. He received a doctorate in Philosophy at the Pontifical Gregorian University in 1915. In 1919, he also received a doctorate in Theology from the University of Saint Bonaventure. Maximilian Kolbe was ordained as a priest on April 28, 1918. Following his ordination and the completion of his studies, he returned to his home country, the newly independent Poland, in 1919 to begin his active ministry.





St. Maximilian Kolbe can be credited with at least four important accomplishments. The first one is that he founded the Militia Immaculata because of his strong motivation to ‘fight for Mary’ against enemies of the church. The second is that Kolbe utilized the latest printing technology to spread the Catholic faith. He helped the Immaculata Friars to publish high-quality pamphlets, books, and a daily newspaper.

The monthly magazine grew to have a circulation of over 1 million and was influential amongst Polish Catholics. Kolbe even gained a radio license and publicly broadcasted his views on religion. The third is that he built Niepokalanow, a massive monastery and apostolic center that housed over 700 of his Franciscan brothers. It is called “The city of the Immaculata.” The fourth is that He travelled to Japan, spent several years serving as a missionary, and built a monastery in the outskirts of Nagasaki.



At the start of the Second World War, when Poland was overrun by the Nazi forces in 1939, he was arrested under general suspicion on 13 September but was released after three months. On being released, Kolbe and the community at Niepokalanów helped to hide, feed, and clothe around 3,000 Polish and Jews refugees.

On 17 February 1941, he was arrested by the Gestapo for hiding Jewish people and was sent to Auschwitz concentration camp. There, Kolbe was treated brutally and disrespectfully. Despite the awful conditions of Auschwitz, people reported that Kolbe retained a deep faith and accepted his mistreatment with surprising calmness.



In July 1941, three prisoners appeared to have escaped from the camp. As a result, the Deputy Commander of Auschwitz ordered 10 men to be chosen and starved to death in an underground bunker. When one of the selected men, Franciszek Gajowniczek, heard he was selected, he cried out, "My wife! My children!" At this point, Kolbe volunteered to take his place.



The deed and courage of Maximilian Kolbe spread around the Auschwitz prisoners, offering a rare glimpse of light and human dignity in the face of extreme cruelty. After the war, his reputation grew, and he became a symbol of courageous dignity. Kolbe was beatified as Confessor of the Faith in 1971, and was canonized as a martyr in 1982 by Pope John Paul II, who himself lived through



the German occupation of Poland. At his canonization, Pope John Paul II said, "Maximilian did not die, but gave his life for his brother."

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15

"Pledge of Future Glory"

A CATECHISM on the Dogma of the Assumption

by Br. Josiah Tristan A. Dela Cruz

"The Immaculate Mother of God, the ever-virgin

Mary, having completed the course of her earthly life, was assumed body

and soul into heavenly glory." This is the proclamation of Pius XII that defined the dogma of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary through the apostolic constitution *Munificentissimus Deus* promulgated on November 01, 1950.



She who carried in her womb the incarnate Son of

God "by an entirely unique privilege, completely overcame sin by her Immaculate Conception, and as a result she was not subject to the law of remaining in the corruption of the grave, and she did not have to wait until the end of time for the redemption of her body."



While the Sacred Scriptures does not give us an account of Mary's assumption into heaven, the Holy Spirit has led the whole Church to believe in her glorification. Since the ancient times of the Church, the belief that Mary was assumed into heaven was widespread already, which is in keeping with the dignity of her being the Virgin Mother of Christ.

Early traditions commemorate her "Dormition," which teaches that after her earthly life she peacefully fell asleep, not tasting the sting of death. This belief may have arisen from believing that because her immaculate



conception preserved her from original sin, and this original sin has brought death to the world, so she was preserved from experiencing death. In one of his letters, Paul also writes that "the resurrection of Christ is the first fruits of those who have fallen asleep." Whether or not Mary died or slept is still a matter of theological debate until now, but it does not diminish our belief that she, in the words of St. John Damascene, "who had kept her virginity intact in childbirth, should keep her own body free from all corruption even after death."

In her assumption, God fulfilled His promise in the words of Mary's Magnificat, that "looking upon the lowliness of his handmaid, he has lifted her up." As she fully conformed herself to the will of God, and has united her whole life to the mysteries of the life of her Son, so also God has willed that she should also share in the glory of her Son in heaven, a merit gained through Christ's triumph over sin and death by His Passion and Resurrection.



With hope, we also look forward to sharing in this glory, to which the Virgin Mary continually calls and leads us. Rightly, she is called the exemplar and mother of the Church, for she is our beacon and guide, a sure sign of hope that, like her, we can also share the merits of Christ.



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16

“The Way We Crumble”

A REFLECTION on the GOSPEL of the 20th Sunday in Ordinary Time
by *Br. Josiah Tristan A. Dela Cruz*

In the celebration of the Holy Mass, the priest consecrates the bread through the power of the Holy Spirit, and it becomes truly the Body of Christ. As we receive this one Bread, broken and shared, we “enter into communion with Christ and form but one body in Him” (Catechism of the Catholic Church, c. 1329). For this reason, we, the members of the Church, form the mystical Body of Christ with Jesus as the Head.



Today, we reflect on these three things – the Bread that is Christ’s Body, and we, the members of that same Body. We hear in the Gospel the encounter of Jesus with a Canaanite woman, a Gentile, whose daughter was tormented by a demon. Despite being called a dog, a common derogatory term for people not of Israelite origin, she humbled herself, accepted her unworthiness, and admitted her lowliness. Placing great faith in Jesus’ mercy, she proclaimed that even only the crumbs would be enough for a dog like her and her daughter.



In our time, we have in our midst people, who like this Canaanite woman, are in the peripheries of our society – the poor, the sick, the needy, the hungry, the dying, and those who live in the darkness of unbelief or estrangement from God.

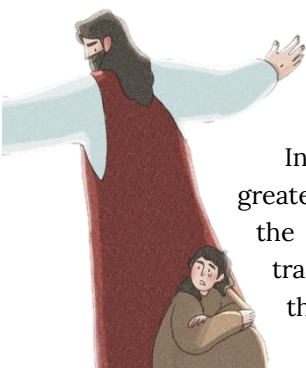


We, the members of the Body of Christ, the Church, are the bread of the world.

The Gospel invites us to allow ourselves to crumble, that is, to be broken and shared, and to be instruments of God’s love and mercy for others. By our crumbling – our self-giving – we satisfy the world’s hunger and longing for God.



We are as nothing before God. We are unworthy of all the good things we receive from Him because we always choose to turn away from Him. We are often proud, unlike the Canaanite woman, yet God still chooses to look down upon us with eyes of mercy and remains faithful to His promises.



In return for all the graces we receive, of which the greatest of all is Jesus, whom we receive in the Holy Eucharist, the Bread of Life, broken and shared for us, may we be transformed into what we receive that we may be the bread that gives life to our world.

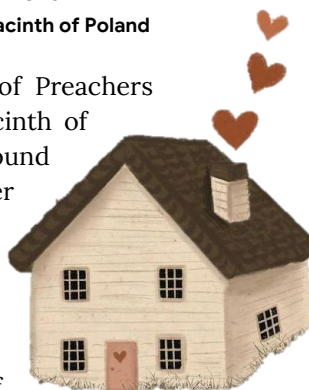
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17

“The Apostle of the North”

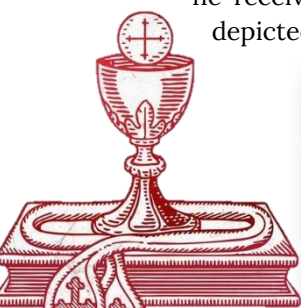
A CATECHISM on the Life and Works of St. Hyacinth of Poland
by **Br. Michael Horas Korompis**

Every August 17th, the Order of Preachers honors the memorial of Saint Hyacinth of Poland, a friar and priest. Born around 1185 to noble parents near Wrocław (Breslau) in Upper Silesia, Poland, Hyacinth, also known as Jacek, grew up in a home filled with love and kindness, thanks to his devout Catholic parents.



His early education was entrusted to his uncle, a pious priest who would later become the Bishop of Kraków. Hyacinth displayed remarkable learning and piety from a young age. His well-rounded disposition and strong faith, combined with his brilliant mind, allowed him to advance quickly through his studies in Kraków, Prague, and eventually Bologna, Italy. He was ordained and became a canon of the cathedral in Kraków.

On a journey to Rome in 1220, he was attracted to the Order of Preachers by the holiness and preaching of Saint Dominic. From St. Dominic, he received the habit of the Order of Preachers. This event is depicted in a painting at the Dominican Church of Santa Sabina.



Because of his spirit of prayer and his zeal for the salvation of souls, he was sent to preach and establish the Dominican Order in his native land, Poland. In 1221, he was sent with Henry of Moravia to establish the Order of Preachers in Poland. The priory of Krakow was established in 1222 and the Province of Poland in 1225. Hyacinth labored many years in this region and established priories at Gdansk and at Kiel.



Like so many saints in the Order of Preachers, Hyacinth was devoted to Mary, the Mother of God. To her he attributed his success, and to her aid he looked for his salvation. Hyacinth devoted himself to preaching the Gospel, encouraging his followers to nurture the practice of study, and opening new Dominican monasteries. He was tireless in his efforts and extended his missionary activity through Russia, Lithuania, the present-day Czech Republic and Slovakia, Austria, Bohemia, Greece, Turkey, and northern China. After crossing the Baltic Sea, he preached in Denmark, Sweden, and Norway and is also said to have visited Scotland.



Hyacinth is remembered for many extraordinary miracles, but the most celebrated is the Miracle of Kiev. During the Tartar siege of Kiev, Hyacinth was reverently celebrating the Holy Mass, unaware that enemy soldiers had nearly reached the doors of the church. Only after the Mass had concluded did he realize that the attackers were about to storm the church and plunder everything inside. Without a moment's hesitation, Hyacinth resolved to safeguard the Blessed Sacrament. Still wearing his liturgical vestments, he took the ciborium containing the consecrated Hosts and hurried toward the church exit.

As he passed a statue of the Blessed Virgin Mary, he heard a mysterious voice saying, "Hyacinth, my son, why do you leave me behind? Take me with you, and do not abandon me to my enemies." Hyacinth immediately turned back, embraced it, and through God's grace, he was able to lift and carry it while continuing his escape. He successfully fled the church unnoticed, preserving both the Holy Eucharist and the image of the Blessed Virgin Mary. This remarkable scene, with Hyacinth carrying the ciborium in one arm and the statue of Our Lady in the other, has become the most iconic representation of his life.





The miraculous account continues as Saint Hyacinth and the people of Kiev fled from the advancing Tartar army and arrived at the banks of the Dnieper River. Faced with the deep and seemingly impassable waters, the people were overcome with fear. Hyacinth, however, confidently urged them to trust in God and follow him. With unwavering faith, he stepped onto the surface of the river and began to walk across it.

Encouraged by his example, the people followed and safely reached the opposite shore. Many Polish historians have traditionally accepted this event as a historical occurrence. According to long-standing tradition, Hyacinth's footprints remained visible on the surface of the water after he crossed, and for centuries afterward, they were said to reappear whenever the river became calm.

After unceasing labor and vast journeys, Hyacinth spent his last few months of life in a monastery he had founded in Krakow. He fell ill on the feast day of St. Dominic, August 8, 1257.



Although worn out and weakened by illness and fever, he kept watch in the service of God until his death by celebrating Mass on the Feast of the Assumption. He was anointed at the foot of the altar on August 15th, 1257 and died at the same day. Hyacinth was canonized in 1594 by Pope Clement VIII, and he was the seventh Dominican to be raised to sainthood. His feast day is celebrated on August 17th.



AUGUST

23

“With Great Knowledge Comes Great Responsibility”

A REFLECTION on the GOSPEL of the 21st Sunday in Ordinary Time
by *Br. Benz Louise B. Genelazo*

“Knowledge is power,” according to the English philosopher Francis Bacon. In the Spider-Man film, Uncle Ben once told the main character, Peter Parker, “With great power comes great responsibility.” From this, we can say that knowledge brings responsibility.

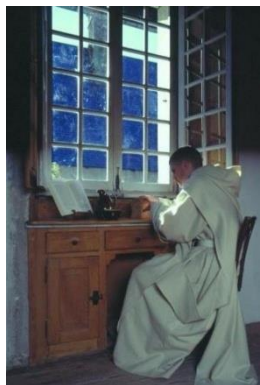


Our Gospel today highlights how Jesus entrusted Peter with the care of His Church, giving him the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven. This happened after Peter professed his knowledge in Jesus as the Messiah, the Son of the Living God. It is the same Church – the Catholic Church – that still stands today after more than 2,000 years, with Peter serving as the first pope. Today, Pope Leo XIV serves as his 267th successor. It is to

the Church that Jesus promised the powers of death would never overcome. It is also the same Church to which Jesus entrusted His authority through Peter, declaring whatever Peter binds on earth shall be bound in heaven.

Reflecting on the Gospel, I remember the last position I held in the government agency before deciding to enter the Order of Preachers. Before taking the position, I had already served in the same agency for almost three (3) years, and when an opportunity for promotion was offered, I saw it as a chance for professional growth. There were several applicants at that time, including both my senior and junior colleagues, but after the entire application process, I was the one chosen from among all the candidates. Despite the pressure of my new role, given the huge and significant tasks and responsibilities entrusted to me, what motivated me was the opportunity to contribute to the goal of the organization – extending its service to the local farmers in our area.





Now that I'm in the Order of Preachers as a novice, my mission may differ from what it was when I was still working in terms of its outcome, yet it remains the same in principle: to serve, but this time, by preaching the truth for the salvation of souls. I am now persevering in the formation – in prayer and studies – so I can better contribute and offer the best version of myself to Him, to His Church, and His people.

This is one of the many reasons for my decision to finally enter religious life

– to be part of the mission of the Church entrusted to Peter. Jesus' words in the Gospel show how the Church plays a vital role in God's plan of salvation.

The Catechism of the Catholic Church does not teach that only members of the Catholic Church can be saved. Rather, it teaches that, "the Catholic Church possesses the full means of salvation" (CCC 830). While God's mercy can extend beyond the Church, it would be difficult to attain salvation without the fullness of truth.



As Christians, we believe that "Christ is the Head of the Body, the Church" (CCC 792). We are its members and "become part of His body the moment we are baptized" (CCC 804). Our Gospel today invites us to recognize the authority that Jesus entrusted to the Church through Peter – an authority that continues to guide us towards God's kingdom. Our knowledge of the Church and of the truth gives us a shared responsibility to participate in the mission of His plan of salvation. May we see it as a blessing to belong to the One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church and as an opportunity to enlighten others with the truth – Jesus Christ. Amen.



AUGUST

28

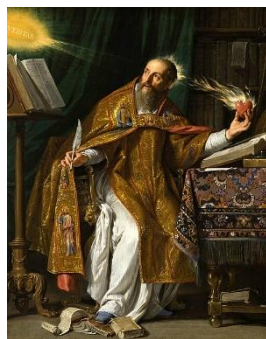
“What Can Behold God?”

A CATECHISM on the Life and Works of **St. Augustine of Hippo**

by **Br. Robert Jairus B. Murillo**

St. Augustine of Hippo is considered a juggernaut of Western Christian thought.

Every August 28th, in the liturgy of the Universal Church his memorial is celebrated. In the Dominican liturgy, this is celebrated as a feast. The Order of Preachers recognizes St. Augustine as a Holy Father, because St. Dominic chose to follow the Rule of St. Augustine. Eight hundred years after the Order’s birth, we still abide by it (OP East, 2016).



Augustine was born on November 13, 354 AD, in the town of Thagaste in the Roman province of Numidia Proconsularis — now Souk Ahras, Algeria — to a pagan father named Patricius and a devout Catholic mother named Monica (Augustine, 1960), who herself, would later become a saint. Due to the circumstances of his time, he was not baptized as an infant, but was raised by his mother to be relatively devout (Augustine, 1960).

Augustine first went to school in his hometown of Thagaste and then in the nearby university town of Madauros, where he perhaps became acquainted with pagan literature and the works of Plato for the first time. His final years of study were spent in Carthage in 370 AD (Augustine, 1960). Inspired by the books he read on philosophy, he was hungry for knowledge and wisdom.



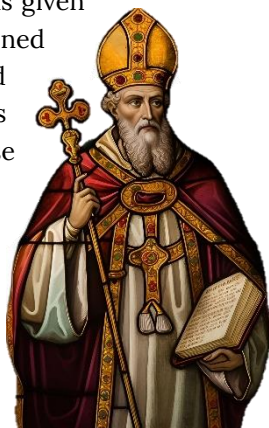
However, it was also in Carthage where Augustine underwent a moral decline; as he writes, “I came to Carthage, where a cauldron of shameful loves seethed and sounded about me on every side” (Augustine, 1960). During these years, he became a member of the Manicheans, a pseudo-Christian sect influenced by Gnosticism and dualism. It was also in Carthage where he got involved with a woman from a lower class and fathered a child with her. He kept her with him as a concubine for some years before sending her away due to civil and moral reasons (Augustine, 1960).

Augustine began his teaching career back in his hometown, then in Carthage, and later in Rome. The last years of his teaching career were in Milan, where he was a professor of Rhetoric, and where his hunger for knowledge and wisdom would finally be satiated (Augustine, 1960). After being moved by the brilliance of Milan's bishop, St. Ambrose himself, he was finally baptized into the true faith by the same saint in 387 AD (Augustine, 1960). For many years, Monica had been praying for her son's conversion. Unfortunately, she died shortly after Augustine's Baptism (Augustine, 1960).



Returning to Thagaste a year later, now a Catholic, Augustine sold his patrimony and established a religious community of which His son, Adeodatus, became a member. Unfortunately, Adeodatus passed away around 389 or 390 AD (Augustine, 1960).

In 391 AD, he went to Hippo, where the bishop, Valerius, needed an auxiliary. By the preference of the people, Augustine was given the position of the bishop's auxiliary and was then ordained into the priesthood. Within five years, Augustine replaced Valerius as the Bishop of Hippo, holding the office until his death. As a cleric, Augustine dedicated himself to intense preaching and the defense of Truth against heresies, such as Manicheanism and Donatism, a heresy teaching that the validity of the sacraments is determined by the spiritual state of the minister (Madrid, 2020). Augustine died as the Bishop of Hippo in 430 AD.



Augustine's writings became the foundation in shaping Western medieval theology and philosophy. He is praised for works such as *The City of God*, *The Confessions* —an autobiography— *De Trinitate*, and *De Doctrina Christiana*, not to mention his sermons. Notable, too, was his debate against Pelagianism, which taught that man can earn salvation by sheer willpower and good works.

Augustine argued, based on St. Paul, that man is so corrupted by original sin that he has no means whatsoever to merit salvation for himself. Man is saved by the grace of God, which He gives to man so that man might come to seek Him and love Him. The good works of man are not his own, as “God works it in us to freely choose the good” (Doctor of Grace: Why We Study St. Augustine, n.d.).

The rest of the saint’s teachings can be found throughout the Catechism of the Catholic Church where he is most cited, i.e., 87 citations (Doctor of Grace: Why We Study St. Augustine, n.d.). Indeed, Augustine stands as a pillar of the Church’s intellectual tradition. Because of his immense contributions to the Church, Augustine was canonized by popular acclaim and made a Doctor of the Church by Pope Boniface VIII in 1298 AD (Bishopsbulletin & Bishopsbulletin, 2026). Thus, St. Augustine is the patron saint of philosophers, theologians, and printers —because of his extensive writings.



There is much more to say about the great St. Augustine, but one can never do justice in fitting the vastness of Augustine’s brilliance into the mediocrity of this writing. The life of St. Augustine is the perfect example of how grace works in our lives. No matter how far we think we can run from God, He never stops chasing after us and calling us back to Him, sending us all that we need to realize that He loves us, and we, in turn, cannot but love Him.

Great are the things we can do when we turn back to God. Great is what we may become when we flee from the world, like St. Augustine, who lived a life of disordered loves but found True Love in the “Beauty ever ancient, ever new” (Augustine, 1960) and became a great Doctor of the Church.

May we love that same Beauty so that we may behold it completely, for it is not the mind that can behold the vastness of God; it is the heart.



JULY

29

“Huwag Mangyari ang Kalooban ko, Kundi ang Iyo”

A REFLECTION on the GOSPEL of the 22nd Sunday in Ordinary Time
by *Br. Michael Jim L. Sitchon*

Ang tunay na pananampalataya ay nagsisimula sa walang alinlangang pagtitiwala sa Diyos sa halip na umasa sa sariling kakayahan lamang. Sa tuwing dumarating ang mga pagsubok at suliranin, madaling panghinaan ng loob ang tao kung siya ay nakasalalay lamang sa sariling lakas. Ipinapaalala sa atin ng Mabuting Balita na ang Diyos ang tunay na pinagmumulan ng karunungan, kalakasan, at tamang patnubay.



Ang pagtitiwala sa Kanya ang nagbibigay ng pag-asa, katatagan, at lakas ng loob upang harapin ang bawat hamon sa buhay. Kapag isinasapuso natin ang ating pananampalataya sa Diyos, matatanto natin na Siya ay higit na mas makapangyarihan kaysa sa ating mga takot at pangamba.

Batid ni Hesus na Siya ay magdurusa, mamamatay, at muling mabubuhay bilang bahagi ng kalooban ng Diyos na iligtas ang sangkatauhan. Bagama't hindi lubos na naunawaan ng Kanyang mga alagad, lalo na ni Pedro, ang Kanyang ipinahayag, hindi nagbago ang Kanyang pasya at nanatiling tapat sa Kanyang layunin.

Ipinakita Niya na ang tunay na pagsunod sa Diyos ay nangangailangan ng katapatan at katatagan, kahit may mga taong hindi nakauunawa o tumututol dito. Hindi Niya hinayaang manaig ang takot, pagdududa, o pagtanggì ng iba sa Kanyang ninanais para sa ating kaligtasan. Dahil dito, nagsisilbi Siyang huwaran na nagpapaalala sa atin na magpatuloy sa paggawa ng kabutihan at tumalima sa kalooban ng Diyos sa kabila ng anumang pagsubok.



Hindi kailanman ipinangako ni Hesus na maginging madali ang pagsunod sa Kanya. Sa halip, itinuro Niya na ang bawat taong nagnanais maging tunay na tagasunod ay kailangang unahin ang Diyos, kahit na nangangahulugan ito ng pagsasakripisyo. Hindi dapat nakatuon ang buhay sa pansariling kagustuhan o pansamantalang kasiyahan, kundi sa tapat na pagsunod sa kalooban ng Diyos.



Maaaring kailanganing isuko ang sariling kaginhawaan, mga pansariling adhikain, o maging ang mga tagumpay na iniaalok ng mundo upang manatiling tapat sa Kanya. Bagama't mahirap ang landas na ito, nagdudulot naman ito ng tunay na kapayapaan, mas malalim na layunin sa buhay, at patuloy na paglago ng pananampalataya.

Ipinaalala rin ni Hesus na ang tunay na tagumpay ay hindi nasusukat sa dami ng kayamanan, kapangyarihan, o mga pagwawagi sa mundong ito. Ang pinakadakilang tagumpay ay ang pagkakaroon ng matatag at masiglang ugnayan sa Diyos. Maaaring makamit ng tao ang lahat ng kanyang ninanais, ngunit mawawalan ng tunay na kabuluhan ang kanyang buhay kung mapapalayo naman siya sa Diyos.

Ang mga bagay na materyal ay pansamantala lamang at maaaring mawala anumang oras, samantalang ang pananampalataya at pag-ibig ng Diyos ay may walang hanggang halaga. Dahil dito, hinihikayat tayo ng Panginoon na ituon ang ating mga puso't isipan sa mga bagay na may mas malalim na kahulugan na siyang magpapaunawa sa atin ng Kanyang kagustuhan para sa bawat isa sa atin.

Sa pamamagitan ng ating mga salita, pagpapasya, at mabubuting gawa, maaari tayong maging sagisag ng Kanyang pag-ibig at katapatan. Hindi kailangang maging pari, relihiyoso o relihiyosa upang tugunan ang pagtawag ng Diyos.

May kanya-kanya tayong bokasyon sa buhay ayon sa mga ipinagkaloob Niya sa atin; at kung anuman ito, ang pagiging tapat sa mga gawain na iniatas sa atin ang siyang magpapahayag ng kaharian ng Diyos, at gayundin ang magpapatunay sa katuparan ng pakikibahagi sa tungkulin ni Kristo. Sa ating patuloy na paghakbang kasama ang Panginoon, tayo ay nagiging mga saksi sa Kanyang kabutihan, biyaya, at walang hanggang pagmamahal.



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