



DAY ONE

January 17, 2015

Intercession

For the conversion of all hearts and the end to abortion.

Prayers

Our Father, 3 Hail Marys, Glory Be

Reflection

Today's Gospel reading from Mark (Mk 2:13-17) recounts Jesus dining with tax collectors and sinners. When the Pharisees question Jesus about this, he responds, "Those who are well do not need a physician, but the sick do. I did not come to call the righteous but sinners."* In a society where millions of people have fallen prey to the false promises of the culture of death, let us witness to the mercy of Jesus and invite all who've been wounded to experience his abundant love and healing.

Acts of Reparation (choose one)

- Go to an abortion clinic and pray, or set aside an hour today to pray for those who are struggling with a decision of life or death for their unborn child.
- Spend some time reflecting upon today's Gospel passage.
- Use Facebook or another form of social media to post something that builds up the culture of life.

One Step Further

Women's health, women's equality, and women's marriage prospects have suffered from over 40 years of nationally legal abortion throughout all 9 months of pregnancy. Learn how in "Life Matters: Roe Plus 40." (Visit www.bit.ly/RoePlus40 to access the full article).



Image: A mosaic of Our Lady of Guadalupe decorates a side altar in the Church of Santa Maria della Famiglia at the Vatican. Dec. 15. (CNS photo/Paul Haring)

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DAY TWO

January 18, 2015

Intercession

May those near the end of their lives receive medical care that respects their dignity and protects their lives.

Prayers

Our Father, 3 Hail Marys, Glory Be

Reflection

In today's Gospel reading (Jn 1:35-42), John the Baptist testifies that Jesus is "the Lamb of God." How often do we meditate on Jesus as the Lamb and our salvation? There is nothing we could ever accomplish on our own that could make up for our daily failures to love others with the merciful and sacrificial love of Christ. But in the Sacrament of Reconciliation, he forgives our faults, wipes the stain of sin from our souls and gives us the strength to begin anew with the help of his grace. Let us live each day in gratitude for the mercy God shows us!

Acts of Reparation (choose one)

- Take time to write a handwritten note to someone who is lonely or needing encouragement.
- Read about the life of a modern (19th or 20th century) saint. You might be surprised by how much you have in common with them.
- Go to bed a little early tonight, and spend some time talking and listening to God.

One Step Further

Various types of advance medical directives raise some concerns you should be aware of as you consider your health care options. Find out what they are in "Advance Medical Directives: Planning for Your Future." (Visit www.bit.ly/AdvanceMedicalDirectives to access the full article).



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DAY THREE

January 19, 2015

Intercession

May those who long for a child of their own be filled with trust in God's loving plan.

Prayers

Our Father, 3 Hail Marys, Glory Be

Reflection

It can be very difficult and painful when the Lord doesn't answer our prayers the way we hope. We may have many doubts and questions, wondering why we face the challenges that we do. Yet even though our suffering is often shrouded in a sense of mystery, we believe that the Lord loves us with great tenderness and compassion that is beyond our imagination. Knowing this, we can trust that "all things work for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose" (Rom 8:28).

Acts of Reparation (choose one)

- Smile. Ask God today for the grace to be extra joyful and share your love for Christ with those who need that encouragement the most today.
- Pray the Rosary, or even just a decade, today for someone who has hurt or disappointed you, and ask for the grace to forgive that person.
- We can sometimes forget how blessed we are to have many of our daily comforts. Give up sleeping with your pillow tonight.

One Step Further

Learn how some methods of conceiving a child pose serious concerns in "Life Matters: Reproductive Technologies." Visit bit.ly/ReproductiveTechnologies2011 to read the article.



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DAY FOUR

January 20, 2015

Intercession

May children awaiting adoption be welcomed into loving families.

Prayers

Our Father, 3 Hail Marys, Glory Be

Reflection

Let us reflect on today's reading from Hebrews (6:10-20), which reminds us to "hold fast to the hope that lies before us. This we have as an anchor of the soul, sure and firm" (Heb 6:18-19). We pray that children awaiting adoption would be filled with the hope of Christ and "the peace of God that surpasses all understanding" (Phil 4:7). We also remember that, we too, can cling fast to this anchor of hope, for we have received "a spirit of adoption, through which we cry, 'Abba, Father!'" (Rom 8:15). May our loving Father envelop each of us in His love today and open our eyes in faith, that we may see and rejoice in it.

Acts of Reparation (choose one)

- Make an act of faith, hope or love. (www.bit.ly/9DaysFaithHopeLove)
- Today, ignore your sweet tooth. Make healthy eating choices.
- Make a "quiet hour" today, turning off all electronic devices (cell phone, iPod, computer, television, radio, video game system), and retreat to your room. Spend some time in prayer or prayerful reading.

One Step Further

In "An Adoption Love Story," Jenny* shares her and her husband's story of adopting their son, Andrew. Read about some of the challenges, concerns, and joys on their journey at www.bit.ly/AdoptionLoveStory.

*Names changed for privacy



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DAY FIVE

January 21, 2015

Intercession

May all people reject pornography and discover the true meaning of love through an encounter and relationship with Christ.

Prayers

Our Father, 3 Hail Marys, Glory Be

Reflection

Today we honor the life of St. Agnes, a 12-year old girl martyred in Rome in 304 AD. Agnes never wavered in her commitment to remain a virgin and to give her whole life to the Lord, refusing proposals to marry. Her innocence and heroism facing death helped bring an end to the persecutions of Christians in Rome. Following the example of St. Agnes, let us remain steadfast in recognizing Christ, who is Love Incarnate, as the source and summit of our lives. May his love give us the determination and courage to live for him and for others, especially the most vulnerable among us. St. Agnes, pray for us!

Acts of Reparation (choose one)

- Don't push the snooze button. Get right out of bed and offer your day in prayer to God. "Awake, O sleeper, and arise from the dead, and Christ will give you light" (Eph 5:14).
- Fast from snacking today. Eat three meals only.
- It's easy to put our headphones on and ignore our siblings or parents. Instead, enjoy the opportunity you have to talk to them; ask them how they are doing.

One Step Further

Did you know that pornography addiction can numb the brain's ability to experience pleasure? Learn more by reading "Life Matters: Pornography and Our Call to Love" at www.bit.ly/CallToLove.



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DAY SIX

January 22, 2015

Intercession

May each person suffering from the loss of a child through abortion find hope & healing in Christ.

Prayers

Our Father, 3 Hail Marys, Glory Be

Reflection

Today, on this 42nd anniversary of *Roe v. Wade*, we consider the past four decades in which our society has legally permitted abortion. Since that tragic decision, many children's lives have been lost, and many suffer that loss—often in silence. Yet God's greatest desire is to forgive. No matter how far we have each strayed from his side, he says to us, "Don't be afraid. Draw close to my heart."

"In the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation, also called confession, we meet the Lord, who wants to grant forgiveness and the grace to live a renewed life in him. ... We bishops and priests are eager to help you if you experience difficulty, hesitation, or uncertainty about approaching the Lord in this sacrament. If you have not received this healing sacrament in a long time, we are ready to welcome you" ("God's Gift of Forgiveness": www.bit.ly/GiftOfForgiveness). Let us run into the arms of Jesus, who is love and mercy.

Acts of Reparation (choose one)

- Today, go visit an adoration chapel and spend some time with Jesus.
- Go to Confession—today, if possible—or during this week. Before you go, look up St. Faustina and learn a little about the message of Divine Mercy she shared during her life.
- Pray the Divine Mercy Chaplet for those who are suffering the loss of a child through abortion, asking that they find healing and peace.

One Step Further

- Hope After Abortion (www.bit.ly/HopeAfterAbortion)
- "How to Talk to a Friend Who's Had an Abortion" (<http://bit.ly/How2Talk>)
- "Life Matters: Forgiveness and Healing After Abortion" (bit.ly/ForgivenessHealing)



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DAY SEVEN

January 23, 2015

Intercession

For an end to the use of the death penalty in our country.

Prayers

Our Father, 3 Hail Marys, Glory Be

Reflection

As Catholics, we believe and put our hope in a merciful and loving God. We are conscious of our own brokenness and need for redemption. Our Lord calls us to imitate him more perfectly by witnessing to the inherent dignity of every human being, including those whose actions have been despicable. Our faith and hope is in the mercy of God who says to us, "Blessed are the merciful for they shall be shown mercy (Mt 5:7) and "I desire mercy, not sacrifices" (Mt 9:13). As Christians we are called to oppose the culture of death by witnessing to something greater and more perfect: a gospel of life, hope and mercy.

Acts of Reparation (choose one)

- Clean a room in your house without being asked or without telling anyone. Pray for your family members while you clean, "and your Father who sees in secret will repay you" (Matthew 6:6).
- Read about a Church teaching you don't understand in the Catechism.
- Make an honest assessment of your "giving finances" – are you giving too little? Make a resolution to give a set weekly or monthly donation to your parish or favorite local charity.

One Step Further

Charles J. Chaput, Archbishop of Philadelphia, summed up the case against the death penalty in these words: "As children of God, we're better than this, and we need to start acting like it. We need to end the death penalty now." Find out why in "Life Matters: A Catholic Response to the Death Penalty" at www.bit.ly/CatholicResponse.



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DAY EIGHT

January 24, 2015

Intercession

For an end to all domestic violence.

Prayers

Our Father, 3 Hail Marys, Glory Be

Reflection

“A correct reading of Scripture leads people to an understanding of the equal dignity of men and women and to relationships based on mutuality and love. Beginning with Genesis, Scripture teaches that women and men are created in God's image.” (“When I Call for Help: A Pastoral Response to Domestic Violence Against Women,” USCCB 2002. See: www.bit.ly/WhenICallForHelp).

Acts of Reparation (choose one)

- Do you love your cup of tea or coffee in the morning? Fast from caffeine today, or try your coffee black.
- Learn how to pray the Angelus prayer and consider saying it every day— on awakening, at noon or at 6 p.m. (or all three times).
- Give up your favorite form (or all forms) of social media for the day. Spend some of the extra time meditating upon a Scripture verse or passage.

One Step Further

Three in four Americans are reported to know a victim of domestic violence. Learn to recognize some of the signs in “Life Matters: Domestic Violence,” which discusses the painful assault on human dignity that is domestic violence. Read the article at bit.ly/LifeMattersDomesticViolence. (See also: “Domestic Violence” at bit.ly/FYMDomesticViolence. Other resources are available at bit.ly/USCCBDomesticViolence.)

If you believe someone you know may be in a troubled situation, you should call a hotline number for assistance, or encourage the person to do so themselves (911, the local hotline, or the National Domestic Violence Hotline [www.thehotline.org]: 1-800-799-7233/ TTY 1-800-787-3224).



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DAY NINE

January 25, 2015

Intercession:

May we treat others with the love & respect that is due to each person as a “masterpiece of God’s creation.”

Prayers

Our Father, 3 Hail Marys, Glory Be

Reflection:

When God created each of us, He did so with precision and purpose, and He looks on each of us with love that cannot be outdone in intensity or tenderness. Moreover, the Lord invites each of us to behold ourselves and each other with the same wonder and awe. “Even the weakest and most vulnerable, the sick, the old, the unborn and the poor, are masterpieces of God’s creation, made in his own image, destined to live forever, and deserving of the utmost reverence and respect.” - Pope Francis’ Day for Life Greeting

Excerpt from Pope Francis’ “Day for Life Greeting.” © 2013 Libreria Editrice Vaticana. Used with permission. All rights reserved.

Acts of Reparation (choose one)

- Say three Hail Marys for your parish priest. Without our priests, we could not have the Mass or the Sacrament of Reconciliation.
- Pray for your deceased relatives and those who have no one to pray for them.
- Spend quality time with a family member or friend; offer to help them with something with which they need assistance.

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One Step Further

Read the brief 2014 Respect Life Program flyer, from which today’s reflection was taken, at

www.bit.ly/2014Flyer.



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