

## Credo

4<sup>th</sup> March 2018



### The Scar

A little boy invited his mother to attend his elementary school's first teacher-parent conference. To the little boy's dismay, she said she would go. This would be the first time that his classmates and teacher met his mother and he was embarrassed by her appearance. Although she was a beautiful woman, there was a severe scar that covered nearly the entire right side of her face. The boy never wanted to talk about why or how she got the scar.

At the conference, the people were impressed by the kindness and natural beauty of his mother despite the scar, but the little boy was still embarrassed and hid himself from everyone. He did, however, get within earshot of a conversation between his mother and his teacher, and heard them speaking.

"How did you get the scar on your face?" the teacher asked.

The mother replied, "When my son was a baby, he was in a room that caught on fire. Everyone was too afraid to go in because the fire was out of control, so I went in. As I was running toward his crib, I saw a beam coming down and I placed myself over him trying to shield him. I was knocked unconscious but fortunately, a fireman came in and saved both of us." She touched the burned side of her face. "This scar will be permanent, but to this day, I have never regretted doing what I did."

At this point, the little boy came out running towards his mother with tears in his eyes. He hugged her and felt an overwhelming sense of the sacrifice that his mother had made for him. He held her hand tightly for the rest of the day.

By Lih Yuh Kuo

When we think of the ten commandments, a few immediately spring to mind. You shall not kill. You shall not steal. You shall not lie.

But do we always keep this one – "Remember the Sabbath day and keep it holy"?

In our world today, it's all too easy to fill our Sundays with activity. We can busy ourselves with housework, TV, shopping... and before we know it, the sun has gone down and the day is over.

In the gospel, Jesus is outraged by what he sees in the temple. The people are running roughshod over holy ground. They have forgotten this is a sacred place. "Take all this out of here," he exclaims, "and stop turning my Father's house into a market" (John 2:13-25).

We can take this as a sign for us today. Let us take out all which is unnecessary. Let us restore rest to our Sunday, and carve out time to listen to God's call in our lives.

Pope Francis says, "Sunday is meant to be a day which heals our relationships with God, with ourselves, with others and with the world... The day of rest, centred on the Eucharist, sheds its light on the whole week, and motivates us to greater concern for nature and the poor." (Laudato Si' #237)

How can you take time to rest and reconnect with God today?

## Feast Days

4 <sup>th</sup> March	3 <sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Lent
5 <sup>th</sup>	St John Joseph of the Cross
6 <sup>th</sup>	St Colette
7 <sup>th</sup>	Ss Perpetua & Felicity
8 <sup>th</sup>	St John of God
9 <sup>th</sup>	St Frances of Rome
10 <sup>th</sup>	St John Ogilvie

**Colette** was the daughter of a carpenter named DeBoilet at Corby Abbey in Picardy, France. She was born on January 13, christened Nicolette, and called Colette. Orphaned at seventeen, she distributed her inheritance to the poor. She became a Franciscan tertiary, and lived at Corby as a solitary. She soon became well known for her holiness and spiritual wisdom, but left her cell in 1406 in response to a dream directing her to reform the Poor Clares. She received the Poor Clares habit from Peter de Luna, whom the French recognized as Pope under the name of Benedict XIII, with orders to reform the Order and appointing her Superior of all convents she reformed. Despite great opposition, she persisted in her efforts. She founded seventeen convents with the reformed rule and reformed several older convents. She was renowned for her sanctity, ecstasies, and visions of the Passion, and prophesied her own death in her convent at Ghent, Belgium. A branch of the Poor Clares is still known as the Collettines. She was

**Frances'** life combines aspects of secular and religious life. A devoted and loving wife, she longed for a lifestyle of prayer and service, so she organized a group of women to minister to the needs of Rome's poor. Born of wealthy parents, Frances found herself attracted to the religious life during her youth. But her parents objected and a young nobleman was selected to be her husband.

As she became acquainted with her new relatives, Frances soon discovered that the wife of her husband's brother also wished to live a life of service and prayer. So the two, Frances and Vannoza, set out together—with their husbands' blessings—to help the poor. Frances fell ill for a time, but this apparently only deepened her commitment to the suffering people she met. The years passed, and Frances gave birth to two sons and a daughter. With the new responsibilities of family life, the young mother turned her attention more to the needs of her own household.

The family flourished under Frances' care, but within a few years a great plague began to sweep across Italy. It struck Rome with devastating cruelty and left Frances' second son dead. In an effort to help alleviate some of the suffering, Frances used all her money and sold her possessions to buy whatever the sick might possibly need. When all the resources had been exhausted, Frances and Vannoza went door to door begging. Later, Frances' daughter died, and the saint opened a section of her house as a hospital.

Frances became more and more convinced that this way of life was so necessary for the world, and it was not long before she requested and was given permission to found a society of women bound by no vows. They simply offered themselves to God and to the service of the poor. Once the society was established, Frances chose not to live at the community residence, but rather at home with her husband. She did this for seven years, until her husband passed away, and then came to live the remainder of her life with the society—serving the poorest of the poor.

Born in 1579, **John Ogilvie** belonged to Scottish nobility. Raised a Calvinist, he was educated on the continent. Exposed to the religious controversies of his day and impressed with the faith of the martyrs, he decided to become a Catholic. In 1596, at age seventeen he was received into the Church at Louvain. Later John attended a variety of Catholic educational institutions, and eventually he sought admission into the Jesuits. He was ordained at Paris in 1610 and asked to be sent to Scotland, hoping some Catholic nobles there would aid him given his lineage. Finding none, he went to London, then back to Paris, and finally returned to Scotland. John's work was quite successful in bring back many people to the Faith. Sometime later he was betrayed by one posing as a Catholic. After his arrest he was tortured in prison in an effort to get him to reveal the names of other Catholics, but he refused. After three trials, John was convicted of high treason because he converted Protestants to the Catholic Faith as well as denied the king's spiritual jurisdiction by upholding the Pope's spiritual primacy and condemning the oaths of supremacy and allegiance. Sentenced to death, the courageous priest was hanged at Glasgow in 1615 at the age of thirty-six.

The Passion of **Saint Perpetua, Saint Felicitas**, and their Companions is one of the oldest and most notable early Christian texts. It survives in both Latin and Greek forms, and purports to contain the actual prison diary of the young mother and martyr Perpetua. Scholars generally believe that it is authentic although in the form we have it may have been edited by others. The text also purports to contain, in his own words, the accounts of the visions of Saturus, another Christian martyred with Perpetua. An editor who states he was an eyewitness has added accounts of the martyrs' suffering and deaths.

Having given up active Christian belief while a soldier, **John** was 40 before the depth of his sinfulness began to dawn on him. He decided to give the rest of his life to God's service, and headed at once for Africa where he hoped to free captive Christians and, possibly, be martyred.

He was soon advised that his desire for martyrdom was not spiritually well based, and returned to Spain and the relatively prosaic activity of a religious goods store. Yet he was still not settled. Moved initially by a sermon of Saint John of Avila, he one day engaged in a public beating of himself, begging mercy and wildly repenting for his past life.

Committed to a mental hospital for these actions, John was visited by Saint John, who advised him to be more actively involved in tending to the needs of others rather than in enduring personal hardships. John gained peace of heart, and shortly after left the hospital to begin work among the poor.

He established a house where he wisely tended to the needs of the sick poor, at first doing his own begging. But, excited by the saint's great work and inspired by his devotion, many people began to back him up with money and provisions. Among them were the archbishop and marquis of Tarifa.

Behind John's outward acts of total concern and love for Christ's sick poor was a deep interior prayer life which was reflected in his spirit of humility. These qualities attracted helpers who, 20 years after John's death, formed the Brothers Hospitallers, now a worldwide religious order. John became ill after 10 years of service, but tried to disguise his ill health. He began to put the hospital's administrative work into order and appointed a leader for his helpers. He died under the care of a spiritual friend and admirer, Lady Ana Ossorio.