



# Fraternity of Fatherhood

## A Spiritual Fraternity for All Men

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### A Spiritual Work - Never With An Empty Plate

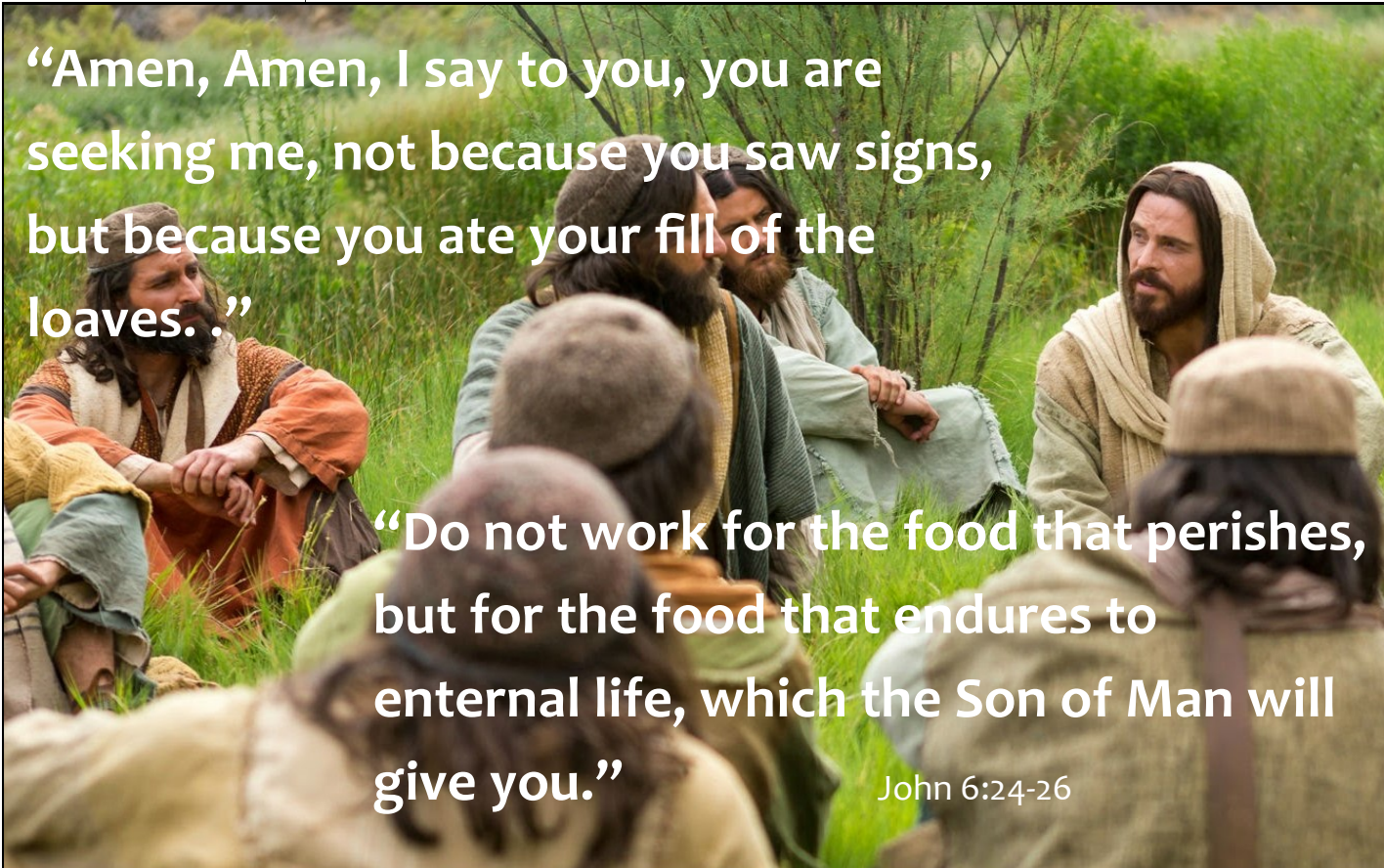
By Brendan McVicker

**SPIRITUAL  
WORKS OF  
MERCY—  
ACTS OF  
COMPASSION  
THAT CARE  
FOR  
PEOPLE'S  
EMOTIONAL  
& SPIRITUAL  
NEEDS.**

So, in the last newsletter the focus was the Corporal Works of Mercy—acts of love that care for people's physical and material needs. We hear of these quite regularly, not necessarily by the exact name, but we do hear of them in our parishes and communities which is a very good thing. But there is much more. Remember we are body and spirit. We tend to focus way more on our bodily needs than our spiritual needs. Unfortunately, it is not the other way around. This newsletter focus is on the Spiritual Works of Mercy, which are acts of compassion that care for people's emotional and spiritual needs. There are seven Spiritual Works of Mercy:

Admonish the Sinner  
Instruct the Ignorant  
Counsel the doubtful  
Comfort the Sorrowful  
Bear wrongs patiently  
Forgive all injuries  
Pray for the living and the dead

Jesus reminds us that we need not just bodily food, but more (...continued page 2)



“Amen, Amen, I say to you, you are seeking me, not because you saw signs, but because you ate your fill of the loaves..”

“Do not work for the food that perishes, but for the food that endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give you.”

John 6:24-26

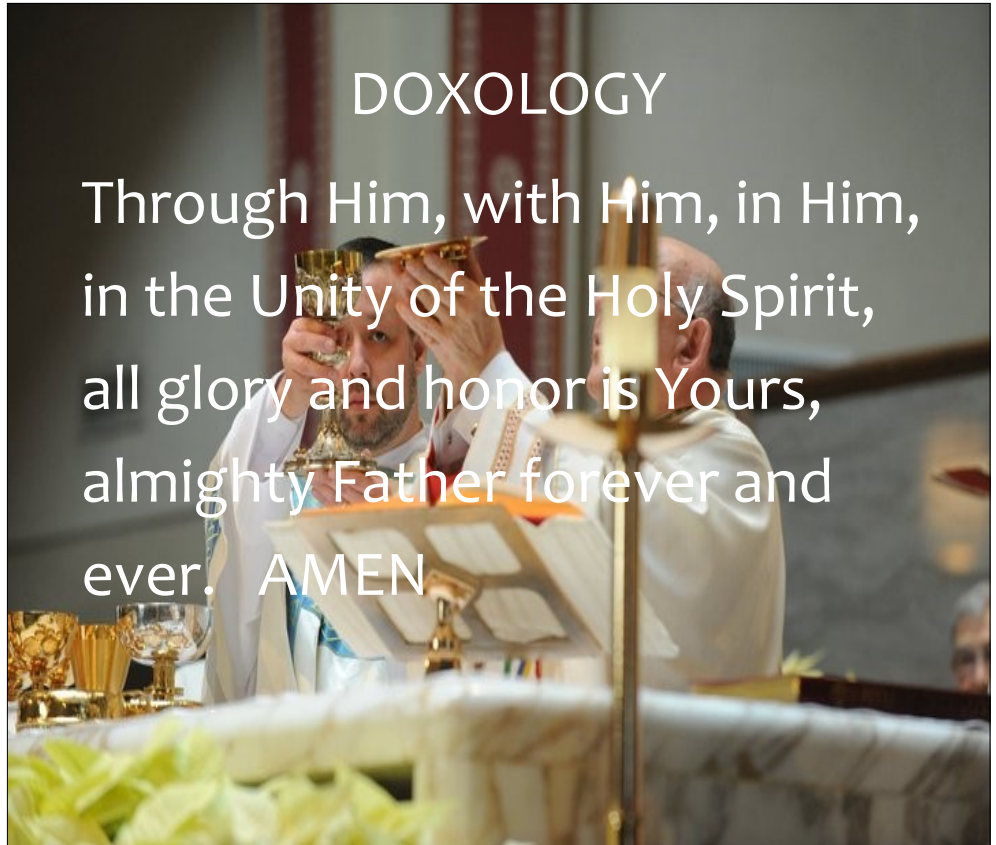
## A Spiritual Work—Never an Empty Plate

*...continued from page 1*

importantly spiritual food. John 6:24-27 hits this right on the head. I read this explanation from Msgr. Charles Pope and he says it so well that I am going to use it here. Jesus had just fed the multitudes by multiplying the loaves and fishes, a miraculous corporal work of mercy! That evening Jesus withdrew and sent the disciples in a boat across the Sea of Galilee. Some in the crowd seemed to like the idea of a free meal wanted still more. Here is where we pick up the story: So when the crowd saw that Jesus was not there, nor His disciples, they themselves got into boats and went to Capernaum, seeking Jesus. When they found Him on the other side of the sea, they said to Him, "Rabbi, when did you come here?" Jesus answered them, Amen, Amen, I say to you, you are seeking me, not because you saw signs, but because you ate your fill of the loaves. Do not work for the food that perishes, but for the food that endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give you. For on Him God the Father has set His seal" Jn 6:24-27

In other words, Jesus admonishes them (and us) not to be concerned only about food for the belly but also food for the soul, ie., Himself in the Eucharist, which He really wants to give us so that we make it to eternal life. But as you may recall, the people persist in asking for the merely natural, belly-filling bread. "Give us this bread always...like Moses

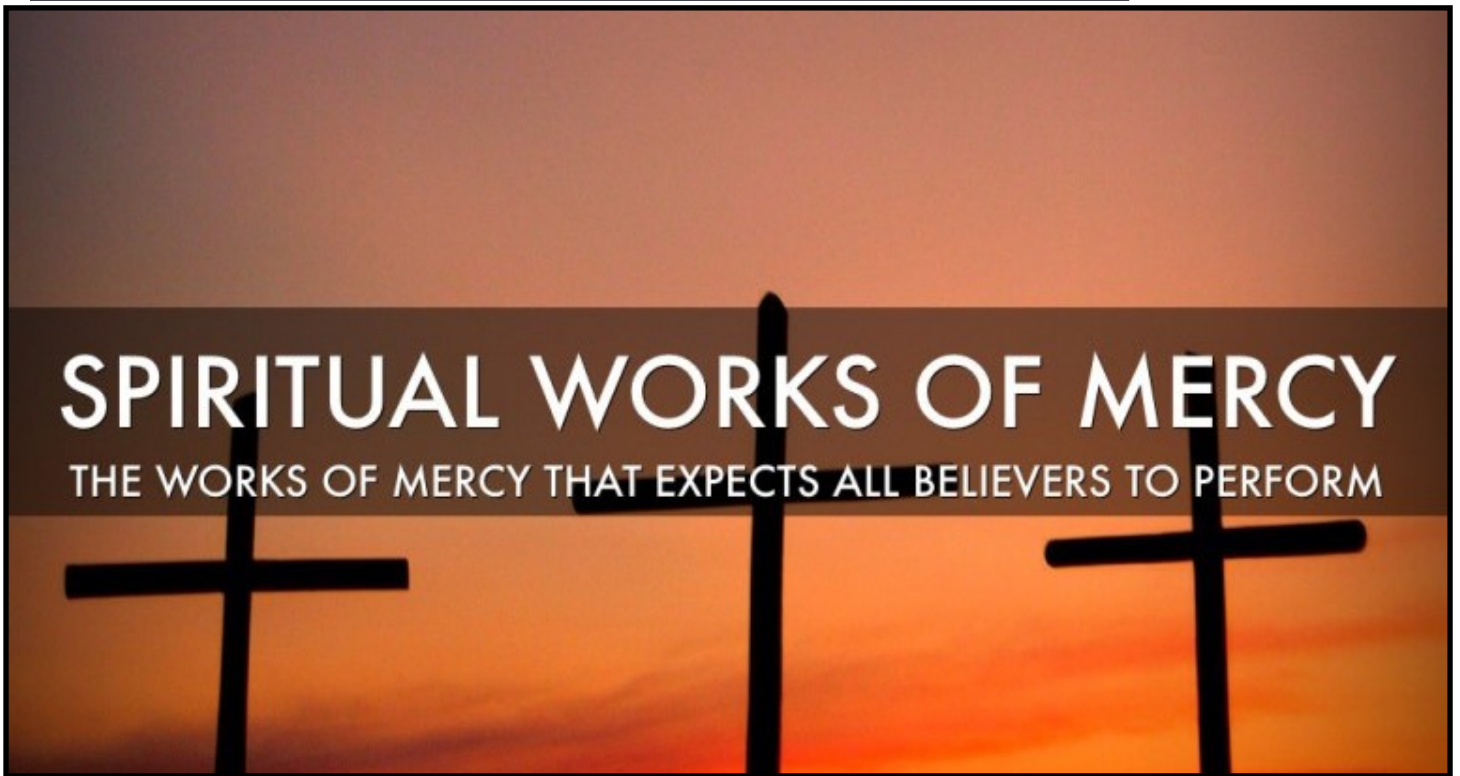
once did," they cried out. Almost in exasperation Jesus says, "I am the Bread of Life" (John 6:35). Just like today, many people in Jesus time were more concerned with their bodily needs, their corporal needs, rather than their Spiritual needs. So, to move forward in putting Spiritual Works of Mercy into practice, I want to share with you a gift that I hold very dear, a teaching that Fr. Pinto shared with me... Father said never come to mass with an empty plate. So what does this mean? We are not spectators at mass, we are not there to be entertained, we are participants and we come to mass with a purpose, a task to complete. At the Doxology, when the priest raises the Body and Blood of Christ at the altar and offers it back to the Father immediately before the great Amen.....at this time we do the same with our plate. Our plate that is filled with all our intentions, our works, our sorrows, our needs, our prayers for the living, our prayers for the dead, including the poorest souls in purgatory that have no one to pray for them. This is a very powerful spiritual work. It is very powerful. We are offering our plate in the intimate participation of the faithful in the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. The Catechism states "The lives of the faithful, their praise, sufferings, prayer, and work, are united with those of Christ and with His total offering, and so acquire a new value." (1368) How fortunate, how blessed we are to participate in this "the perfect prayer" the offering of Holy Eucharist at mass. So remember, never come to mass with an empty plate!



### DOXOLOGY

Through Him, with Him, in Him,  
in the Unity of the Holy Spirit,  
all glory and honor is Yours,  
almighty Father forever and  
ever. AMEN





## The Spiritual Works of Mercy

By: U.S. Conf of Catholic Bishops

The Spiritual Works of Mercy have long been a part of the Christian tradition, appearing in the works of theologians and spiritual writers throughout history. Just as Jesus attended to the spiritual well-being of those he ministered to, these Spiritual Works of Mercy guide us to "help our neighbor in their spiritual needs" ([USCCA](#)). The seven Spiritual Works of Mercy are listed below. After each work of mercy there are also suggestions and words of advice for living them out in our daily lives.

### COUNSELING THE DOUBTFUL

Everyone has moments of doubt in their faith journey. Nevertheless, we should always remember that Christ is the Way, the Truth, and the Life and turn to him along our way.

- Listen to counsel and receive instruction, that you may eventually become wise" ([Prov 19:20](#)).
- The Cross of Christ "the foolishness of God is wiser than human wisdom, and the weakness of God is stronger than human strength" ([1 Cor 1:25](#))
- Has someone asked you for advice? Orient your response to Christ, who is the Way, the Truth, and the Life
- Follow Christ with the witness of your life so that others may see God's love revealed in your actions
- Accompany a friend who is struggling with believing to join a parish group for service or faith formation, share a book you found useful in dealing with your friend's faith concern, and worship at Sunday Mass

### INSTRUCTING THE IGNORANT

Learn about our faith and be open to talking with others about our beliefs. There is always something more to discover about our faith.

- Go on a service trip or short term mission trip. No time? Donate to support someone on their service trip
- Volunteer to help with religious education programs at your parish
- Invite someone to go to mass with you this weekend
- Know your faith! Read through the [USCCA](#) to find out more about the Catholic faith and how to live it

## The Spiritual Works of Mercy

....continued from Page 3

### ADMONISHING THE SINNER

Do not judge, but be supportive in helping others find their way and correct their mistakes. Together we can learn to walk more closely with Christ.

- In humility we must strive to create a culture that does not accept sin, while realizing that we all fall at times
- Don't judge, but guide others towards the path of salvation (see [Mt 7:1-2](#))
- When you correct someone, don't be arrogant. We are all in need of God's loving correction.
- We should journey together to a deeper understanding of our shared faith
- "Remove the wooden beam from your eye first; then you will see clearly to remove the splinter from your brother's eye" ([Mt 7:5](#))

### COMFORTING THE SORROWFUL

Be open to listening and comforting those who are dealing with grief. Even if we aren't sure of the right words to say, our presence can make a big difference.

- Lend a listening ear to those going through a tough time
- Make a home cooked meal for a friend who is facing a difficult time
- Write a letter or send a card to someone who is suffering
- A few moments of your day may make a lifetime of difference to someone who is going through a difficult time

### FORGIVING INJURIES

Forgiving others is difficult at times because we do not have God's limitless mercy and compassion. But Jesus teaches us that we should forgive as God forgives, relying on him to help us show others the mercy of God.

- Let go of grudges
- Saying sorry is something we learn as kids, but how often do we really mean it? Forgiveness transforms hearts and lives
- Participate in the [Sacrament of Penance](#)
- Pray the [Divine Mercy Chaplet](#)

### BEARING WRONGS PATIENTLY

Do not be bitter about wrongs done against you. Place your hope in God so that you can endure the troubles of this world and face them with a compassionate spirit.

- Frustrated with someone? Step away from the situation, take a few deep breaths, pray the Our Father, asking God for patience

### PRAYING FOR THE LIVING AND THE DEAD

Prayer is one of the most powerful ways we can support others. Joining together in prayer for the living and the dead entrusts us all into God's care.

- Request a mass intention for a friend or family member who is going through a tough time
- Request a mass intention for a friend or family member who has passed away
- Keep your own book of prayer intentions, writing down the names of those who you are keeping in your prayers
- Ask a friend or family member if there is anything you can pray for them about
- Through prayer, entrust your cares and concerns for those around you to God

## Saints Corner - Maria Goretti - A Saint of Mercy

Feast Day: July 6  
Canonized: June 24, 1950  
Beatified: April 27, 1947  
Venerated: March 25, 1945

Maria Goretti was only twelve years old when she died in 1902, but the story of this young Italian girl has touched the hearts of Catholics everywhere for over 100 years. Maria's parents were hard-working tenant farmers who raised crops on land they rented. When she was nine, Maria's father died. Her mother moved the family to a building where another family lived—a father and his son. The son's name was Alessandro.

Maria kept house and watched her younger sister while her mother, brother, and older sister worked in the fields. She was afraid of Alessandro, who was 20. He had tried to kiss and touch her. Maria stopped him. She knew that God calls us to live the virtue of chastity by respecting and honoring our gift of sexuality. Maria wanted to keep her purity. Alessandro was angry. He threatened to kill her. Maria avoided Alessandro and tried to never be alone with him.

One day while Maria was caring for her sister, Alessandro found her alone and tried to force Maria into physical acts. When she refused, he stabbed her 14 times with a knife. Maria died the next day after telling her mother she forgave Alessandro. She received Holy Communion before she died.

At his trial, Alessandro was found guilty and sentenced to 30 years in prison. At first, he was angry, but soon he began to feel sorrow for his terrible sin. He said he dreamt that Maria visited him and gave him lilies. He changed the way he acted and began to treat people in kindly ways. When he was released from prison, the first thing he did was to go to Maria's mother to beg forgiveness. He later went to live with Franciscans as a layperson, working as a gardener and in other menial tasks.

Maria was canonized a saint in 1950. Both Maria's mother and Alessandro attended the ceremony in Rome. Like Maria, we can live the Sixth Commandment by respecting our bodies and sharing our love and friendship properly, as God calls us to do.



Join the Portland Fraternity of Fatherhood the 2nd Saturday of each month 7:30—9:30am. Morning mass at St. Mary's Cathedral followed with breakfast study session. Call Brendan McVicker for information at 503-358-4963

# Fraternity of Fatherhood

## CARRY YOUR FAMILY IN YOUR HEART - A CALL TO HOLINESS

**A husband/father's guide to his vocation and spiritual direction. Each Newsletter focuses on one of the Guidelines or Areas of Growth from the "Carry Your Family In Your Heart" book. These guidelines to our Fatherhood Vocation & Spiritual Formation have been formatted based on the Fatherhood Retreat Guideline Teachings & under Spiritual Direction of Fr. Santan Pinto, S.O.L.T.**

### Guideline: **GENEROUS**

Being generous helps us grow in Fatherhood. Not just generous with money but with our time, our patience, our prayers, our love and comfort. Fatherhood is a marathon of generosity. As fathers we need to have full commitment of generosity to our families.

St. Paul knew the truth of Jesus' words on the importance of giving, taking them to heart and giving all he had. Paul gave his time, his love, and testimony of his faith. As fathers, we have exactly the same to share with our families and friends. Be generous in receiving the love of your children any time, any place, any condition. If your children want to jump up on you when you come home, let them jump. Don't worry about the white shirt or slacks; or ice cream face. Try this without getting upset about the clothes and see what happens.

If and when someone who is poor asks you for money, please don't say, "I don't have money." Once you say this, who is to say that God will make sure you don't. Don't lie. If you must say "no", say "no", but never lie. By being generous, we never lose anything. Our spirit and hope grow. It is also important that we allow others to express their generosity to us. Receive graciously. As St. Francis says, it is in giving that we receive. God does not want our money, but he does want us to learn generosity. He challenges us to support His church and He will bless us beyond our own hopes. In Malachi 3:10, God says "Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house, and try me in this, says the Lord of hosts: Shall I not open for you the floodgates of heaven, to pour blessings upon you without measure".

Remember God is our Father. He will provide for us. He watches over us. He will never forsake you. Giving worldly riches is not most pleasing to our Father. God is most pleased when we are generous in giving our unending faith in God, shown through our daily concern for others.

Seek first the kingdom of God and everything else is given besides. You will prosper in life, in your job, in this world when you are generous and seek God first. Psalm 1 tells us so.

#### Scripture Reading Psalm 112

Learning generosity is a mission for us in this world. In the world, we hold things tight, we give only what we have to; it's hard to give and we set our limits. We need to learn to make giving and generosity the norm for us as fathers, not a chore. God shows us the path in this Psalm. If you fear the Lord, if you work to recognize the wonder and greatness of God, if you work to follow God's commands then you will be blessed by God. He will show you posterity and your generosity will last a lifetime. Your heart will be steadfast, strong and you will learn to assist the poor. You will learn generosity.

#### Scripture Reading Sirach 35:4-10

Your generosity is a sweet smelling prayer before God like incense rising up to Him. Your generosity will not be forgotten by God and He will repay you back sevenfold. Give with joy and cheerfulness.



## Fraternity of Fatherhood—Group locations & Area Coordinators

Fr. Pinto has encouraged us to grow and expand the Fraternity of Fatherhood all over the world. He has granted us his permission, his blessing and he guides us spiritually. It is with this confidence that we now move forward with humility, obedience and docile hearts. If you are interested in joining a Fraternity of Fatherhood group or if you would like to start a group in your city contact Ray Emnace, Mike Allison, Stacey Hill or Brendan McVicker.

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**Fraternity Sacramento Men**  
 ...  
**Meet every third Wednesday of the month.**  
**We meet at Denny's in Orangevale at 7:30 pm.**  
**Please contact Mike Allison with any questions at email address... (meallison5@gmail.com)**  
**Hope you can join!**

## The Chaplet of Divine Mercy—Take Advantage of the Gift

The On September 13, 1935, Sister Faustina had a terrible vision of a destroying Angel ("the agent of divine wrath") about to strike some place on the planet. She began praying, begging him to put off the punishment until the world did penance. At first, her pleas seemed in vain, but presently she saw the Holy Trinity and felt the power of Christ's grace in her soul. Again she began to plead for the world in words that welled up out of the silence of her soul: *"Eternal Father, I offer You the Body and Blood, Soul and Divinity of Your dearly beloved Son, Our Lord Jesus Christ, for our sins and those of the whole world; for the sake of His sorrowful Passion, have mercy on us"* (475).

Her prayer was answered and the angel was prevented from carrying out the chastisement. The following morning, Sister Faustina heard these interior words: *"Every time you enter the chapel, start reciting the prayer which I taught you yesterday"* (476).

Later, she was instructed in the recitation of the Chaplet of Divine Mercy: *"This prayer will serve to appease My wrath. You will recite it for nine days, on the beads of the Rosary, in the following manner: first of all, you will say one Our Father and Hail Mary and the I Believe in God. Then, on the Our Father beads, you will say the following words: 'Eternal Father, I offer You the Body and Blood, Soul and Divinity of Your dearly beloved Son, Our Lord Jesus Christ, for our sins and those of the whole world.' On the Hail Mary beads you will say the following words: 'For the sake of His sorrowful Passion, have mercy on us and on the whole world.' In conclusion, three times you will recite these words: 'Holy God, Holy Mighty One, Holy Immortal One, have mercy on us and on the whole world' "* (476).

Jesus Himself tells us why it is so important to recite this prayer: *"Recite the chaplet unceasingly that I have taught you. Whoever recites it will receive great mercy at the hour of death. Priests will recommend it to sinners as their last hope of salvation. Even in the case of the most hardened sinner, if he were to recite this chaplet only once, he would receive grace from My infinite mercy. I desire that the whole world know My infinite mercy. I desire to grant unimaginable graces to those souls that trust in My mercy"* (687).

*"Oh, what great graces I will grant to souls that say this chaplet; the very depths of My tender mercy are stirred for the sake of those who say the chaplet"* (848). *"At the hour of their death, I defend as My own glory every soul that will say this chaplet; or when others say it for a dying person, the indulgence is the same"* (811). *"Through the chaplet you will obtain everything, if what you ask is compatible with My will"* (1731).





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POSTAGE

Fraternity of Fatherhood

**We entrust the Fatherhood Fraternity to the patronage  
of St. Joseph.**



**St. Joseph ...Pray For Us.**



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To submit feedback and/or suggestions for future article topics, please email the editors,

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