

FRATERNITY OF FATHERHOOD

VOLUME 14 | ISSUE 3
SEPTEMBER, 2025



A SPIRITUAL FRATERNITY
FOR ALL MEN



Fr. Santan Pinto
SOLT
Founder of The Fraternity
of Fatherhood

A Eucharistic Word: Viaticum, Food for the Journey

Michael Heinlein

Each of us will receive holy Communion one last time. In the course of sickness and death, the final reception of holy Communion before death is called viaticum, which means “food for the journey.” Viaticum unites the dying person intimately with Christ in his or her passover from death to life.

In ordinary circumstances, this should be arranged with attentiveness to the person’s condition when there is at least a little time to spare. When it can be difficult for the dying person to receive holy Communion, it is a consolation to remember that the fruits of the last Communion we’ve received do not have an expiration date and remain living, effective, and fruitful still. A spiritual communion could be recited with or for the dying person. Given its importance, greatest care should be taken that family and friends don’t wait too long to request viaticum. *(Excerpt from Today’s Catholic Guest Commentary, Michael Heinlein)*



The Love of Two Mothers

Mike Allison

I'd like to share a personal story with you. My mother just recently passed away. She was 87 years old. Her and dad raised four children. I'm the oldest and have two brothers and a sister.

Mom and dad got divorced nearly 40 years ago and at my age it still hurts sometimes. It still is a bit shocking and surprising for me and I'm 66 years old.

Mom loved her family very much, her children, her grandchildren and her great grandchildren. She always wanted to know everything that was going on in our lives. She sent cards, made phone calls all the time and of course said many prayers for us. I loved mom very much and miss her. After so many years of caring for others in love and friendship and much hard work, she had what I would call a “happy and holy death”. More on that in just a little bit...

In growing up, I had many challenges in my relationship with mom. I'm ashamed to say I wasn't very patient and sometimes got very exasperated by mom's desire to control. I failed to see her in her goodness. ...continued page 2

... continued The Love of Two Mothers

She liked to cling to the past when we were young children and often had a hard time letting go and realizing that we were full grown adults.

By God's Grace and Mercy

God gave me a great grace to have the opportunity to ask for mom's forgiveness and to tell her how much I loved her. I know she loved me very much, and I loved her too. There was another mother who helped me in healing the relationship that I had with my mom and that is our Mother Mary in heaven.

As I grew closer in my relationship to Mary, she taught me how to be closer to Jesus and also how to be closer to my own earthly mother. I was learning to see her through the eyes of goodness and love and learn, patience; the kind of patience that my brother modeled with her taking care of her in her last few years at his home.

I witnessed my brothers' great sacrifice of love and patience and kindness with mom even through many difficulties. My brother challenged me once saying "Mike, you have a great love for God in your faith and you need to show our mother the same love that you have for Mother Mary in heaven because she's our mom."

He was right and I'm so grateful to him for telling me that so directly and I'm grateful to Jesus and Mary for helping me to heal the relationship I had with my loving mother on earth.

When mom passed away, a friend of mine sent me a note. It said "remember her at her best."

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Isn't this how God wants us to look at every person in our life to see them through the eyes of goodness and remember them at their best and help them to be their best?

My dad used to tell me to just be yourself. This is actually quite good advice because as I grew older, I realized that I'm most "myself" when I'm modeling my life after Jesus, because I'm created in the image of God. Jesus teaches me how to live a life of goodness and grace, love and sacrifice, and when I'm doing this, I'm most "my true self."

A Happy Holy Death

Mom became seriously ill right as I began a three week Eucharistic Pilgrimage to each of the 21 missions in California. The Camino De California aspires to become the Santiago of the West.

This was an amazing pilgrimage, walking and driving with Jesus to every mission doing processions, having Mass, Adoration, doing works of mercy, visiting prisoners, helping the poor

... continued on page 3

... continued The Love of Two Mothers

and just being with Jesus and sharing Him with the world.

We followed Him. We didn't take Him anywhere. He took us and we followed Him. It's was a great movement in the Church and Jesus did many miraculous things during this period of time that we hope will change lives forever. Our pilgrimage ended in the Cathedral in Los Angeles on Corpus Christi with many Bishops, the Papal Nuncio, Priests, Brothers, Nuns, Religious Sisters and lay people celebrating this great feast of the Body and Blood of Jesus.

The Cathedral was within an hour or so from where my mom was in the hospital Riverside, California. However, I was not going to be able to visit her because of the responsibilities I had to return vehicles and drive people where they needed to go at the end of this pilgrimage. But, on the last day, several events changed that enabled us to have five or six extra hours that we hadn't counted for because of some cancellations of events. I was suddenly free to be able to go visit my mother.

I learned from a sister who I became friends with on the pilgrimage that she had been praying that something would happen to allow me to have the opportunity to go see my mom and her prayer was answered. When I learned this, I mentioned to a Priest, who was one of the Franciscan Friars of the Renewal, on the pilgrimage with us, that I could now go visit my mom, and without hesitating, he offered to go with me to visit where he could anoint her and give her the sacraments. He got permission from his superior and he followed me to visit mom at the hospital. Upon his arrival, I was in the room and we visited Mom along with my brother and sister. We then left the room where Father heard my mother's confession and she was able to receive the holy Eucharist and receive the Apostolic Blessing. This was an amazing gift from God and a great grace for my mother and fulfilled the Hope we had for her.

(If you don't already know what the Apostolic Blessing is - it's a great gift from the church offered to someone who's at the point of dying to free them from their sins and bring them to eternal life. Please see the link below and understand the great gift This is from the church in the importance of it for a person who's dying.)

Prayer to Saint Joseph for a Happy Death

O Blessed Joseph, you gave
your last breath in the loving
embrace of Jesus and Mary.
When the seal of death shall
close my life, come with Jesus
and Mary to aid me. Obtain
for me this solace for that
hour - to die with their holy
arms around me. Jesus, Mary
and Joseph, I commend my
soul, living and dying, into
your sacred arms.

Amen.

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Mom lived for about five weeks after she received this blessing and she was anointed two other times. Each of our family members had private time with mom to tell her how much we loved ... continued on page 4

... continued The Love of Two Mothers

her to be with her and tell her what was on our hearts. We held her, loved her and surrendered her to the mercy of God. The last priest to see Mom alive was a Malkite Catholic Priest, who quickly made himself available to bring Mom Holy Communion. At this time, mom was in and out of sleep and awareness and consciousness. When Father showed up at my brother's home and went over to her bedside and said to her “Nancy, I’m here to bring you Jesus”, she immediately opened her eyes and said audibly. ***“It’s so nice to wake up to God.”***

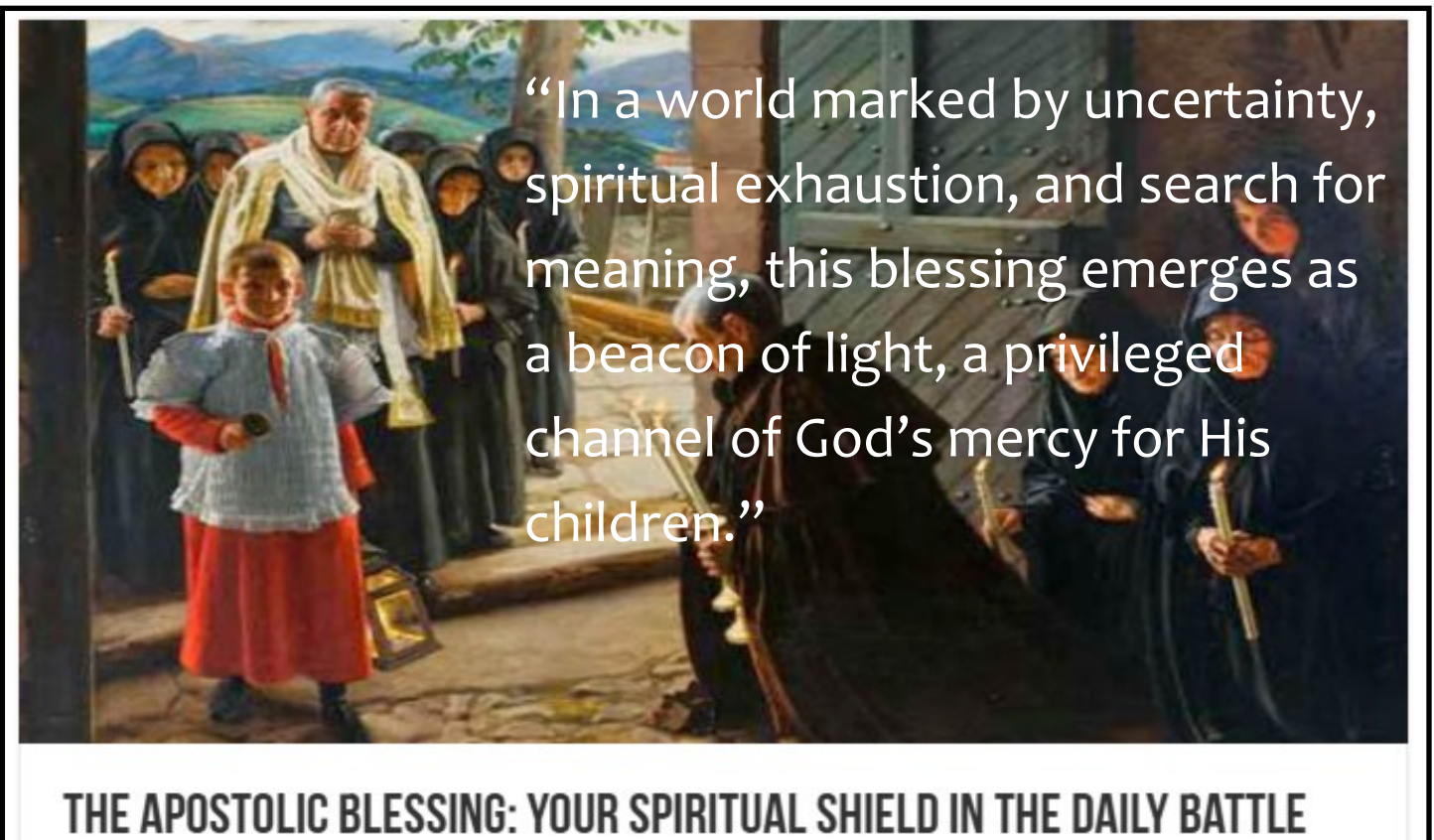
Me and my siblings were all with mom at the time of her death and prayed the Divine Mercy chaplet for her 10 minutes before she went home to our Lord.

This my brothers, is what we would call a happy and holy death.

My hope in sharing this personal story is that you too will avail yourself to the Sacramental life of the Church and all its gifts that brings about our true happiness and that you learn to love your own mothers and to look to Mother Mary to help you in all of your broken relationships, because she brought Jesus to us who is the healer of all things. God bless you, brothers.

Apostolic Blessing:

<https://catholicus.eu/en/the-apostolic-blessing-your-spiritual-shield-in-the-daily-battle/>



Ten Ways to Prepare for a Happy & Holy Death

Fr. Ed Broom, OMV

The most important moment in our life is the very moment that we die. This will determine our destiny for all eternity. Either we will be saved or damned. Either we will be with God for all eternity or we will be lost for all eternity. The best way for all of us to have a holy death is to right now and until we die prepare for a holy and happy death. Hopefully these short but poignant ten sign posts can help you to make the right decisions so that when you die the Lord Jesus will be your Savior waiting to open up the eternal gates of Heaven to receive you!

1. Live Each Day.

Live each day of your life as if it were your last; indeed it could be. Jesus warns us: “He will come like a thief in the night.” Be prepared!

2. No to Sin, Yes to God!

Sin leads to sadness, slavery and death. Let us renounce sin at all costs and turn to God who gives life. Jesus said: “I am the way, the Truth, and the Life.”

3. Do What You Are Doing.

This is a key concept of the saints. It means to live the Sacrament of the Present moment and always strive to do your duty and obligation with the best of intentions—meaning for the honor and glory of God!

4. Fall? Get up again!

If you fall into sin, which will happen because we are all sinners, then get up right away. Never put off your conversion for tomorrow; rather move on your conversion immediately—before the sun goes down!

5. Love.

Aim always for the greatest of all virtues: love! Jesus clearly tells us what is the greatest of all commandments and it is a double commandment: to love God with all our heart, mind, soul and strength. But the second part is to love our neighbor intensely as we love ourselves. With reference to a holy death, Saint John of the Cross teaches us: “In the twilight of our existence, we will be judged on love.” Let us aim for a more intense and burning love every day! Like the Virgin Mary let us die of love!

6. Bring Others to Heaven.

Venerable Archbishop Fulton Sheen gives us great advice on how to get to heaven. “If you want to get to heaven, then take somebody to heaven with you.” Jesus says, “By their fruits they will be known.” Our desire should be to love what God loves and God loves the salvation of immortal souls. Hopefully this will be our ardent and all-consuming desire!



... continued page 6

... continued Ten Ways to Prepare for a Happy & Holy Death

7. Think of Heaven!

Of enormous value in attaining a holy and happy death is the constant thought of gaining heaven but also the meditation on actually what heaven is! Saint Paul gives us a mere glimpse with these inspiring words: “Eye has not seen, ear has not heard, nor has it entered into the mind of man the wonderful things that God has prepared for those who love Him.”

Do this! Think of the happiest two hours of your life, multiply that by a million times and then add eternity to it— meaning forever and ever and ever. You have a mere taste or mere glimpse of the glory of Heaven that awaits you!

8. Tell Jesus What You Want.

From the depths of your heart talk to Jesus and express to Him the greatest desire of your heart and it is this: that you want to grow to love Him more and more each day, but that you want to love Him in heaven for all eternity. Tell Jesus this, but remind Him every day. Ask your Guardian Angel to come to your aid!

9. Purgatory and Suffering.

Why not ask the Lord Jesus to give you your Purgatory here while on earth? It is so true the saying: “Pay now or pay later!” Indeed much better to pay here while on earth then to pay in the fires of Purgatory after we die.

How can this become a reality? Simple but hard at the same time. We all have to suffer and in many ways: physically, emotionally, economically (many of us), socially, and spiritually. Why not offer your suffering for the conversion of sinners, the purification of the souls in Purgatory but also that this suffering on earth would serve to be your Purgatory on earth to allow you to go quickly to heaven? Many of us never thought of this but God does not want us to go to Purgatory; rather, He wants us to go straight and directly to heaven, nonstop!

Let us be honest, heaven is closed not due to bad will on the part of God, but due to our own pride, selfishness, egotism and resistance of God’s grace. Why not beg to correspond to God’s graces and accept your sufferings in this life so as to be united with God immediately upon death, which means eternal life!

10. Mary: Queen of Saints and Angels.

The saints all agree on this spiritual maxim: “Mary is the quickest, most secure, and the most efficacious pathway to Jesus and to heaven.” Why not turn right now to Mary and beg for the grace to go to heaven. Ask Mary in prayer what is the major obstacle in your life that is blocking your free access to Jesus and heaven. Then beg our Lady for the grace to overcome that obstacle or spiritual detour on the Highway to Heaven.

Exploring The Apostolic Pardon

Fr. James Goodwin, Diocese of Fargo



To reflect on the last things, one of which is death, is a longstanding Catholic custom. This is not a pleasant subject, but it is good to consider our final end and how we prepare for it. As the old saying goes, *memento mori* (remember death).

One great gift that the Church gives to us when death is near is the apostolic blessing or apostolic pardon. This blessing comes with a plenary indulgence, which means the recipient is granted the remission of all the temporal punishment due to sin already forgiven. The Church teaches that priests should not fail to impart this blessing on the dying and that the faithful should be instructed about it. Even if the dying person has already received a plenary indulgence this is the one time they can receive another on the same day. The Code of Canon Law entrusts this responsibility especially to the pastor (Canon 530.3), but any priest can and should offer it to those in danger of death. Normally, only the pope can grant a plenary indulgence with his blessing, but this is one of the times any priest has that same power. If he should forget, the faithful are encouraged to request this special blessing to their dying loved ones.

If a priest is not available, the Church still grants to the dying the opportunity to receive the plenary indulgence at the moment of death. This is granted to those who have been in the habit of reciting some prayers during their lifetime. In this case, the Church supplies for the three conditions required for a plenary indulgence namely sacramental confession, holy Communion, and prayers for the pope. The use of a crucifix or cross is highly recommended. It is the earnest desire of the Church to offer this indulgence in the broadest way possible to those who are in danger of death.

... continued page 8

... continued Exploring The Apostolic Pardon

There are two forms of the apostolic blessing in the Church rites for the dying:

A. “Through the holy mysteries of our redemption may almighty God release you from all punishments in this life and in the life to come. May he open to you the gates of paradise and welcome you to everlasting joy.”

B. “By the authority which the Apostolic See has given me, I grant you a full pardon and the remission of all your sins in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.”

Often the apostolic pardon is given in the context of what is referred to commonly as the “last rites.” This consists principally of viaticum, which is holy Communion as “food for the journey,” and the commendation of the dying, although confession and anointing of the sick may be administered then, too. At the moment of death, the Church is present to offer the sacraments so at that pivotal time Christ’s grace and presence is near.

The rite called the Commendation of the Dying is intended to “help sustain the union of the soul with Christ until it is brought to fulfillment after death.” It expresses the desire for God’s mercy and confidence in Christ. Others who are present can join in the prayers and assist the person at their last moments. These prayers can help and give consolation, especially if the person is suffering from fear.

Scripture and a litany of the saints prepare for a prayer of commendation where the priest or another minister entrusts the soul of the dying to God and invokes his mercy. For some, it gives permission for them to let go and accept their death. It concludes with the Hail Holy Queen where we ask for Mary’s prayers to help the soul at the hour of death. This rite can be very helpful and should not be omitted if at all possible.

Once death has occurred, the same rite has a section of prayers after death. These consist of psalms and some ancient prayers for the dead. These prayers commend the soul to God and ask for forgiveness for his or her sins. In addition, we pray for the family and friends of the deceased. The body may be sprinkled with holy water as a final blessing.

Death is perhaps the most difficult moment in our lives. The Church provides the apostolic pardon and other rites to help us prepare for death and our particular judgment. They can give us a sense of peace and serenity. We can experience the hope given by Christ who has conquered death by his death and shares with us his eternal life.

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**Reserved for those
on their deathbed,
the Apostolic
Pardon is a true gift
of grace for the
dying.**

Why September is Dedicated to Our Lady of Sorrows—and How you Can Honor Her

Catholic 365

Fall is swiftly approaching as we now find ourselves in September: the [month of Our Lady of Sorrows](#). Mary knew the pain of loss, grief, and suffering more than anyone, and her sorrows mirror our own struggles today.

Whether you've never heard of the Seven Sorrows of Mary, want to start dedicating time to Our Lady, or are looking for ways to deepen your fervor, I invite you to take a few minutes to learn about this sacred, solemn devotion.

The Origins of the Devotion to Our Lady of Sorrows

Though Christians have meditated on Mary's sufferings since the earliest centuries, the formal devotion to Our Lady of Sorrows dates from the 12th century, when it began to spread under the influence of St. Anselm and St. Bernard.

The Cistercian and Servite Orders helped bring it to the wider Church until, in 1423, a council of Mainz established the Feast of the Sorrows of Mary.

By 1727, Benedict XIII added the feast to the Roman Calendar, ensuring that Catholics everywhere would honor Mary's deep union with her Son's Passion.

Why the Church Dedicates September to Mary's Sorrows

As with every devotion, there's a reason that September specifically is [dedicated to Our Lady of Sorrows](#).

The feast of Our Lady of Sorrows falls on September 15th. Numerous other Marian feasts fall in September: her Nativity, the Most Holy Name of Mary, Our Lady of Ransom, etc.

The Spiritual Power of Honoring Mary's Seven Sorrows

The devotion to Our Lady of Sorrows is essential and sacred. Saints have contemplated Mary's sufferings since early Church times.



... continued page 10

Fraternity of Fatherhood

... continued Why September is Dedicated to Our Lady of Sorrows—and How you Can Honor Her

The Seven Sorrows are:

1. St. Simeon's Prophecy
2. The Flight into Egypt
3. The Loss of Jesus in the Temple
4. The Meeting of Jesus and Mary on the Way of the Cross
5. The Crucifixion
6. Mary Receives the Body of Jesus taken down from the Cross
7. The Burial of Jesus

Meditating on Mary's sorrows helps us grow closer to her and awaken deeper contrition. In doing so, we atone for our sins and please both her and her Son.

Furthermore, Mary promised special graces to those who honor her sorrows. They teach us important lessons about suffering and resilience.

Practical Ways to Practice the Devotion This September

This September, I encourage you to pick at least one way to practice devotion to Our Lady of Sorrows.

- **Meditate on each Sorrow**-set aside time each day to reflect on one of the Sorrows, placing yourself beside Mary in her suffering.
- **Learn about the promised graces**-Mary offers [special favors](#) to those who practice devotion to her sorrows.
- **Read a spiritual book**-many saints and mystics have written about the Seven Sorrows. [Choose a book](#) and use it to guide your prayer this month.
- **Offer up your sufferings**-unite your daily struggles with Mary's sorrows, offering them to Jesus for the salvation of souls.
- **Recite prayers to Our Lady of Sorrows**-such as the [Novena to Our Lady of Sorrows](#) or the [Seven Sorrows Rosary](#).

A Final Encouragement: Walking with Mary in Her Sorrows

This month, Mary invites us to meditate on her sorrows--not to dwell on sadness, but to find hope, strength, and grace in uniting our sufferings to hers.

If you're looking for a way to deepen your relationship with Mother Mary, now is the time: honor her sorrows, and she will lead you closer to her Son. **Our Lady of Sorrows, pray for us.**

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 Dcn. Ray Emnace, Mike Allison, Stacey Hill or Brendan McVicker.

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Fraternity of Fatherhood

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



**St. Joseph ...Pray For Us.
Feast Day March 19th**



This Fraternity of Fatherhood Newsletter is published every 90 days. Next edition: Dec. 2025
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