

FOCUS

*The Parish Magazine
of
St. Joseph's Catholic Church, Wembley*



Autumn 2020



ST JOSEPH'S CATHOLIC CHURCH

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Website : <https://parish.rcdow.org.uk/wembley>

Parish Team: Fr Joseph Kaduthanam CMI and Fr Tebin Francis CMI

Times of Service during the Covid 19 restrictions

Monday	Mass: 9.30am (Live streaming only)
Tuesday	Mass: 6.30pm
Wednesday	Mass: 9.30am (Live streaming only)
Thursday	Mass: 6.30pm
Friday	Mass: 12.00noon (Live streaming only)
Saturday	Mass: 9.30am (Live streaming only) 6.30pm Vigil Mass of Sunday
Sunday	Mass: 9.30am, 11.00am (Live streaming only) and 12.30pm

All services are streamed live on ChurchServices

ChurchServices.tv/wembley1

Schools

ST JOSEPH'S INFANT SCHOOL, Waverley Avenue. Tel: 020 8903 6032

ST JOSEPH'S JUNIOR SCHOOL, Chatsworth Avenue. Tel: 020 8902 3438

Executive Head Teacher: Mrs Mandy Whelan

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Design, artwork and layout: Charles Dias

Tel: 02088611688

Printers: abacusprint
www.abacusprint.net
Director: Jonathan Luck

Mob: 07802884802

Autumn Reflections



My dear parishioners,

This is my first message as your Parish Priest and it does feel somewhat daunting to say this!

I am realising what a huge task the stewardship of a parish as large as St Joseph's is, and it only goes to show what a magnificent leader Fr John has been for all those years since we all took it for granted.

Nevertheless, I am reassured that by the grace of God and the help of so many willing volunteers, I will continue in the same vein to offer the service that you need and that I must endeavour to provide.

The Coronavirus has presented a truly challenging time for all of us but we must persevere and trust in the Lord at all times. Sadly, the services in the Church are strictly limited due to social distancing and so Live Streaming provides access to the Mass for many and will continue to do so for some time it would seem. The parish is expecting Fr Joseph Chacko CMI (another Joseph!) to join us in due course but, disappointingly, his arrival is delayed indefinitely due to travel and visa restrictions at present.

Fr John is now settling in to his retirement and will, no doubt, be asked to assist in the work of the CMI in Kerala, if only in an advisory capacity. I would like to express my grateful thanks to him for his legacy to St Joseph's and for his guidance to me personally ever since my arrival in 2011. The parish owes Fr John a large debt of gratitude for his service for all those years and wishes him a long, happy and blessed retirement.

May I ask for your help in maintaining the high standards the parish presently enjoys and the prayers of you and your families in the years to come.

May God bless you all.

Fr Joseph

Pope Francis: Rediscover the beauty of the rosary



"Realize the power in your hand with the ROSARY for in your hands you hold the power of God."

~ St. Louis de Montfort ~

Pope Francis invited Catholics to rediscover the beauty of the rosary prayer this month, encouraging people to carry a rosary with them in their pockets.

"I invite everyone to rediscover, especially during this month of October, the beauty of the prayer of the rosary, which has nourished the faith of the Christian people through the centuries," Pope Francis said. "I invite you to pray the rosary, and to carry it in your hands or in your pockets. The recitation of the rosary

is the most beautiful prayer we can offer to the Virgin Mary; it is a contemplation on the stages of the life of Jesus the Saviour with his Mother Mary and is a weapon that protects us from evils and temptations," he added in his message to Arabic-speaking pilgrims.

The pope said that the Blessed Virgin Mary has urged the recitation of the rosary in her apparitions, "especially in the face of the threats looming over the world."

"Even today, in this time of pandemic, it is necessary to hold the rosary in our hands, praying for us, for our loved ones and for all people," he added.

This week Pope Francis resumed a cycle of Wednesday catechesis on prayer, which he said had been interrupted by his decision to dedicate several weeks in August and September to Catholic social teaching in light of the coronavirus pandemic.

Prayer, the pope said, is "letting ourselves be carried by God," especially in moments of suffering or temptation.

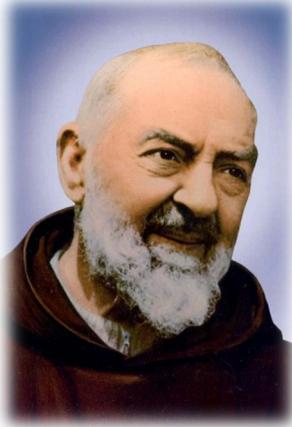
"In some evenings we can feel useless and lonely. It is then that prayer will come and knock on the door of our hearts," he said. "And even if we have done something wrong, or if we feel threatened and frightened, when we return before God with prayer, serenity and peace will return as if by miracle."

Prayers in a time of coronavirus

God of all,
we cry out to you for help.
In your mercy, hear our prayer.
Protect us, Lord, and be with us
especially those of us most vulnerable
during this coronavirus crisis.
Move us to reach out in love
to our neighbours near and far.
So that the humble may be exalted,
the hungry filled with good things.
Grant us the courage
not to rush back to our old ways,
but to rebuild our world together,
creating foundations of justice,
with equality and peace for all.
Amen.

Prayer: Catherine Gorman/CAFOD

Padre Pio – The Miracle Worker



St. Padre Pio was an Italian priest who was known for his piety and charity, as well as the gift of the stigmata, which has never been explained.

St. Padre Pio was born Francesco Forgione, on May 25, 1887, in Pietrelcina, Italy. His parents were peasant farmers. He had an older brother and three younger sisters, as well as two other siblings who died in infancy. As a child, he was very religious and by the age of five he reportedly made the decision to dedicate his life to God.

Fortunately, his parents were also very religious and they supported his Catholic development. His family attended daily Mass. Francesco served as an altar boy at his local parish. Francesco was known for taking on penances and his mother once scolded

him for sleeping on a stone floor.

Francesco's community was also supportive. Saint's days were popular celebrations and commonly celebrated in his town.

From his tender age, Francesco had a peculiar ability. He could see guardian angels, spoke with Jesus and the Virgin Mary. This was not something taught to him, but occurred so naturally that he assumed other people could see them too.

Although Francesco and his family was very religious, they were also very poor, which required that he work. He spent many years as a child tending to a small flock of sheep owned by his family. Unfortunately, the work meant he was unable to attend school regularly, so he quickly fell behind other kids his age.

Francesco was sickly as a child. He suffered an attack of gastroenteritis at age six and when he was ten, he had typhoid fever.

In 1897, after three years of schooling, Francesco expressed to his parents that he wanted to become a friar. His parents travelled to a nearby community of monks and asked if Francesco could join them. He was evaluated, despite his young age, and was told that he needed more education before he could join.

To prepare Francesco, his parents decided to hire a private tutor. To pay the cost of the tutor, Francesco's father travelled to America to find work, and sent the money home.

At the age of 15, Francesco was finally ready and he entered the novitiate of the Capuchin friars at Morcone. He took the name of "Pio" in honour of Pope Pius I, whose relic he often saw at his local chapel.

At the age of 17, Brother Pio became extremely ill and could only digest milk and cheese. He was sent to the mountain for better air, and when this did not work, he was sent home to his family. Amid all this, he continued to study for the priesthood.

On one occasion during prayer, a fellow monk astonishingly reported he saw Pio levitate during an episode of ecstasy.

Brother Pio became a priest in 1910, but was permitted to remain at home because of his poor health.

In 1915, with World War I afflicting the world, Padre Pio was summoned for military service. He was compelled to leave a tiny community of monks, with whom he was then housed, and drafted into medical service. However, he was so sickly that he was often sent home, only to then be recalled for service. In March 1916, he was finally dismissed because of his poor health.

On September 20, Padre Pio was hearing confessions when he felt pain in his hands and feet. He noticed the stigmata, the wounds of Christ, appearing on his hands and feet. The experience was painful. Bleeding occurred. The wounds smelled of roses, and although they continued to weep, they never became infected. Doctors who later examined the stigmata were amazed at their perfectly round shape.

By 1919, word began to spread about Padre Pio's stigmata and people came from far away to examine him.

Padre Pio became popular with the people he encountered and soon began to attribute supernatural occurrences to him. For example, he was said to levitate, and able to perform miracles.

His popularity became a source of concern for the Church and the Vatican began to restrict his activities to minimize public interaction. Padre Pio himself was uncomfortable with his newfound popularity and the attention he received because of his stigmata. A Church investigation into his stigmata concluded that his condition was not faked.

By 1934, the Vatican began to change its attitude towards Padre Pio and he was again allowed to perform public duties. He could preach, despite never being officially licensed by the Church to do so. Pope Pius XI encouraged people to visit him.

In 1947, Fr. Karol Wojtyla visited Padre Pio who prophetically told him he would rise to the highest post in the Church." Fr. Karol Wojtyla became Pope John Paul II in 1978.

Padre Pio used his newfound popularity to open a hospital in San Giovanni Rotondo. The facility opened in 1956.

Pope Paul VI reviewed the controversies surrounding Padre Pio and dismissed any concerns over his conduct and the authenticity of his stigmata. Padre Pio became internationally famous. He was known for his piety, charity and the quality of his preaching. He famously advised, "Pray, hope and don't worry."

He had other illnesses, as well, including cancer which was miraculously healed after just two treatments. Other problems, such as arthritis, which plagued him in his later years, never went away.

Padre Pio died on September 23, 1968. His funeral was attended by over 100,000 people.

Pope John Paul II recognized Padre Pio as a saint on June 16, 2002. His feast day is September 23.

He is the patron of civil defense volunteers, adolescents, and the village of Pietrelcina.

GOOD BYE (God be with you) to our dear Fr. John



It was with sadness that we finally learned of the departure of our dear Fr. John from St Joseph's Wembley, where he had spent the last 14 years guiding his flock with outstanding and valued stewardship. It was to be on Saturday 26th September that Fr. John would be returning to Kerala to enjoy a well-deserved retirement in the Mother House where he used to be a Friar years ago before coming to the UK.

A farewell Mass in honour of Fr. John was organised on Tuesday 22nd September, which was to be celebrated by His Excellency, Bishop John Sherrington and other fellow priests. With COVID restrictions in place, additional preparation to maintain social distancing, had to be undertaken. It was intended to have been a small celebration with the Bishop, priests and family members. However sadly, due to new tighter restrictions announced this could not be accomplished.

Finally, the day of the farewell arrived, the ushers took their positions and directed the esteemed guests and parish members, to ensure everything ran smoothly and as planned.

We were pleased to have Bishop John Sherrington (Auxiliary Bishop of Westminster), Fr. Stephen Willis, Fr. Joseph, Fr. Tebin, Fr. George (representing the CMLs in the UK) join us as well as other fellow priests.

We were also honoured to have The Mayor of Brent, Cllr Ernest Ezeajugi,

along with his wife, also join at the mass. Sadly,

this celebration was by invitation only, due to COVID restrictions.

However, the entire event was live streamed, to enable those not attending to witness the service.



The entrance hymn was sung whilst Bishop, Fr. John and his fellow priests walked to the altar. Fr. Tebin gave an introductory address welcoming the Bishop, the Mayor, fellow priests as well as the dignitaries and members of the Parish. He then gave thanks for the gift of Fr. John over the last 15 years and for his stewardship and dedication to the Parish. He ended his address with the words, "For all Fr. John has been – thanks to the Lord and for all that he will be in the future, yes to the Lord" and welcomed all those present, including those watching the Mass on livestream.



The Eucharistic celebration commenced with the Bishop echoing the words of Fr. Tebin in welcoming everyone, especially the Mayor of Brent, who represents the valued relationship between the Church and Brent and thanking those, who sadly could not be present but who showed their gratitude by attending through live streaming.

He then emphasised that the Mass was a thanksgiving in honour of Fr. John, to bid him farewell and acknowledged that, if it had not been the current COVID restrictions, the church would have been full in appreciation of Fr. John's valuable work over the last 14 years and God's grace working in him.

The readings for the Mass were taken from the feast of St. John Vianney, patron of Parish priests, as a reminder of the life and ministry of priests. The Bishop continued by emphasizing that we were present at the Eucharist to



give thanks to God for the life and ministry of Fr. John over the last 52 years, briefly mentioning that Fr. John had celebrated his Golden

Jubilee in 2018 at St Joseph's.

He then went on to say that Fr. John was moving to the next phase of his ministry, returning to the Mother House, the foundation and source of his

early understanding of priesthood and his life with the Carmelites of Mary Immaculate.

Jesus, in the Gospels, told his disciples to go out and like Him preach the Good News to the kingdom, to cure all kinds of diseases, to free people from all that binds them. The people that Jesus saw were like sheep without a Shepherd. These past 6 months, during the pandemic lockdown, have made many people more fragile and vulnerable, suddenly we had to confront much adversity as COVID 19 has been a mystery illness that we are just learning about. Many people had confronted death for the first time and had lost their bearings. Like lost sheep they needed to find new and deeper values and those are only to be found in Jesus.

He lastly spoke about life with the sacraments and the life of the Church, ending his homily by thanking God for the gift of Fr. John and his stewardship of God's mysteries to us and our families during baptisms, weddings and particularly at times of crisis, sickness and death.

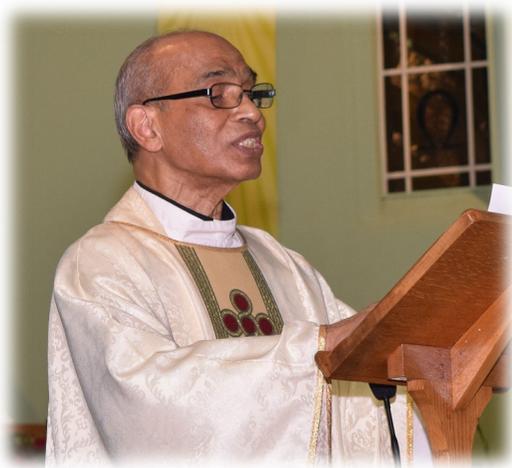
The Mass concluded with the final blessing from the Bishop.



Following the Mass, Fr. Tebin invited a small number of people to say a few words. Firstly Fr. Stephen Willis wished GOOD BYE to Fr. John and went on to say that Good Bye doesn't mean "Ta Ta" but God Be With You. He was followed by Charles who, with gratitude, related the story of his first encounter with Fr. John and finally Victor who offered words of thanks and reflected on Fr John, the person.



Following a beautiful 'thank you' song for Fr. John, Fr. Tebin invited Ann Turner, our ex-Secretary, to present a small gift to Fr. John as a token of



appreciation. It was then that Fr. John, being filled with mixed emotions, ascended to the pulpit with a broad smile.

He began his address by thanking the Bishop, the Mayor, Fr. Joseph, Fr. Tebin and parish members; those present in the church and those watching live. He explained how nervous he was, all those years ago, of joining a successful and well established parish to succeed, the then existing parish priest, John Gray.

He spoke about his initial experience of joining St. Joseph's and the valued assistance given by Fr Joseph Kuzhichalil in their primary focus, the provision of the spiritual needs of the parish. Pastoral care was important for the parishioners, especially the sick and housebound and soon everything began to fall into place. He then thanked all the many volunteers from the Parish, particularly those who assisted with the weekend and weekday Masses and the administration of the sacraments.

He followed this by speaking of his first challenge, which was the opening of the Pastoral Centre in August 2006. This project was started by Fr. John Gray two years earlier admitting that the organisation was new and complicated to him. He also spoke of Fr. Joseph's Silver Jubilee celebrations in May 2006. Fr. Joseph continued to work at St Joseph's until his transfer to New York later that year. Later Fr. Matthew, and Fr. George successively joined the parish. Fr. Joseph then followed in 2011 and Fr. Tebin in 2013.

Speaking of the various parish activities he had initiated in the parish, including Parish retreats, the joys of the Golden Jubilee of the rebuilt church in 2007 and especially the canonisation of St Kuriakose Elias Chavara the Founder of the CMI order in November 2014, celebrated by Cardinal Vincent Nichols.

He then went on to say how he was especially privileged not only to celebrate his 40 years of ordination while at St Josephs but also his Golden Jubilee of priesthood.

In thanking Fr. Joseph and Fr. Tebin, he went on to thank the music groups, the Eucharistic ministers, lectors, the altar servers for helping the worshipping aspect of the community and also all those engaged in supporting activities that enabled the parish to function smoothly, particularly at this time.

He offered special thanks to the Diocese of Westminster, the Cardinals, the Bishops that he had the privilege of working for, as well as the Diocesan Curia, including Finance, IT, HR without whose collective help it would not have been possible to do what we had done for our growing parish. This included the many civil engineering projects of to extend our facilities at St Josephs that have benefitted so many.

In conclusion he was sad at having to leave but accepted that it must be so. He assured us that St Joseph's is in safe hands with Fr. Joseph who has been Parish Priest since March 2020. He requested the congregation to provide the same level of support to Fr. Joseph that he himself had received for the last 14 years. Thanking everyone who helped him to be fulfilled in his role and for the gifts that would remind him of St Joseph's he asked the Lord to bless us and preserve us all.

There was a huge round of applause from those present.

Fr. Tebin reiterated on behalf of all, our love for Fr. John, mentioning again that he will be returning to the Mother House where he would be saying Mass, hearing confession and more importantly he would have more time on hand to pursue his passion of gardening.

Fr. Joseph, our new Parish Priest, followed with a vote of thanks.



The entire celebration concluded around 8:30pm with a group photograph of Fr. John with Bishop John Sherrington and fellow priests. The parish members were then directed by the ushers, starting with the Mayor and his wife, to receive a souvenir prayer card in remembrance of this great evening along with some snacks replacing the buffet originally planned.

Vanita Mendonça

Kids Corner

Riddles

Q: Why isn't your nose 12 inches long?

A: *Because then it would be a foot!*

Q: What is the center of gravity?

A: *The letter V.*

Q: Why are teddy bears never hungry?

A: *Because they are always stuffed.*

Q: What is easy to get into, but hard to get out of?

A: *Trouble!*

Q: What people bury when it's alive, but dig up when it's dead?

A: *A plant.*

Q: What type of clothes does a house wear?

A: *Address. (A Dress)*

Bible Word Search: Jesus Loves the Children

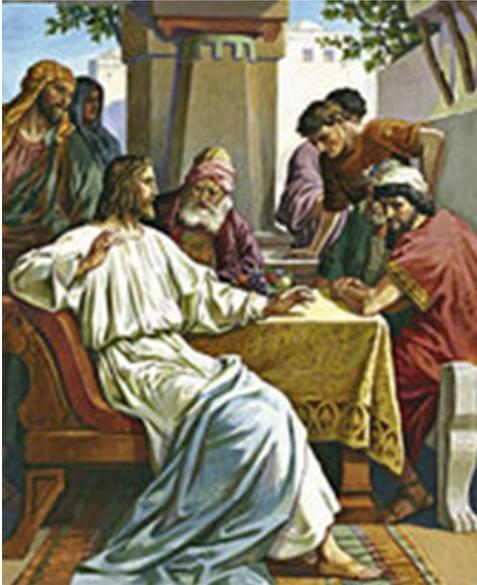
Arms	E	L	P	I	C	S	I	D	Little
Brought	K	B	B	L	H	E	E	M	Mark
Children	I	R	E	S	I	W	L	A	Matthew
Disciple	N	O	Y	S	L	S	T	T	Pray
Hands	G	U	E	A	D	A	T	T	Wise
Kingdom	D	G	M	A	R	K	I	H	
	O	H	D	M	E	P	L	E	
	M	T	S	D	N	A	H	W	

Bible Story

The Rewards of Modesty and Unselfishness



Once Jesus went into the house of a leading Pharisee to dine. When he saw



how the guests chose the best places, he gave them this advice: "When any one invites you to a marriage feast, do not sit down in the best place, for perhaps the host has invited some one of higher rank than yourself. Then the host will come to you and say, 'Make room for this man,' and with shame you will take the lowest place.

"Instead, when you are invited, go and sit down in the lowest place, so that when your host comes he may say to you, 'Friend, come up higher.' Then you will be honoured in the sight of all your fellow guests. For every one who puts himself forward will be humbled, but he who does not put himself forward will be honoured."

Then Jesus said to his host, "When you give a dinner or a supper, do not invite your friends or brothers or relatives or rich neighbours, for they will invite you in return and you be repaid. But when you give a feast, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame and the blind. Then you will be blessed. For they have no way of repaying you, and you will be rewarded when the upright rise from the dead."

Peter said to him, "But we have left everything and have followed you." Jesus answered, "I tell you, there is no one who has left home or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or lands for my sake and for the good cause, who does not receive a hundredfold as much at this present time: houses, brothers, sisters, mothers, children, and lands, along with persecution, and in the time to come eternal life. But many who are first now will be last, and the last will be first."

Child's Prayer for Protection

Angel of God, my Guardian dear,
To whom God's love commits me here;
Ever this day, be at my side
To light and guard
To rule and guide. Amen.

St Edward the Confessor

Patron saint of the Diocese, Westminster and England



Edward the Confessor lived from 1003 to 1066, son of Ethelred the Unready and Emma of Normandy, was one of the last Anglo-Saxon kings of England and is usually regarded as the last king of the House of Wessex, ruling from 1042 to 1066. He has traditionally been seen as unworldly and pious, and his reign as marking the continuing disintegration of royal power in England and the advancement in power of the earls. However, modern historians regard him as a successful king, who was energetic, resourceful and sometimes ruthless, but whose reputation has been unfairly tarnished by the Norman conquest shortly after his death.

Edward was canonized in 1161 by Pope Alexander III, and is commemorated on 13 October by the Roman Catholic Church, the

Church of England and other Anglican Churches. He is regarded as the patron saint of kings, difficult marriages, and separated spouses. He is also the co-patron (with St Edmund of Bury and St George) of England. From the reign of Henry II of England to 1348, he was considered the patron saint of England. During the reign of Edward III of England he was replaced in this role by Saint George, though Edward has remained the patron saint of the British Royal Family.

In 1163, the newly sainted king's remains were enshrined in Westminster Abbey with solemnities presided over by Thomas Becket, Archbishop of Canterbury. At the time of Edward's canonisation, saints were broadly categorised as either martyrs or confessors. Martyrs were people who had been killed for their faith, while confessors were saints who had died natural deaths. Edward was accordingly styled Edward the Confessor, partly to distinguish him from his predecessor Edward the Martyr.

The shrine of Saint Edward the Confessor remains where it was after the final relocation of his body in the 13th century, by Henry III – at the heart of Westminster Abbey, where the date of his translation, 13 October, is observed as a major feast. Our Parish joins with the Abbey community and parish to commemorate the feast of St Edward on the 13th October every year.

In the Roman Catholic Church, the feast day of Edward the Confessor is 13 October, the anniversary of a translation of his relics, at which it had been placed in 1679, when first inserted into the Roman Catholic calendar of saints.

"You will know the truth, and the truth will set you free" John 8 v 32

Q's and A's on the Guardian Angels



Tobias and the Angel Raphael, by Andrea del Verrocchio (or perhaps by his young student, Leonardo da Vinci)

Does every human being have a guardian angel?

Yes, every human being, whoever was, is, or will be, has a guardian angel. The existence of angels is a dogma of Faith, and the existence of guardian angels is clear from holy scripture and tradition; but whether or not every human being is given a guardian angel is a question that lies in the realm of opinion. Almost all the saints and doctors affirmed it, but a few of the early fathers believed that only the baptized are given a guardian angel. Saint Thomas affirmed that every man receives a guardian angel in his *Summa*

Theologica (First Part, Question 113) and he provides irrefutable arguments why this must be so. It was the common teaching in his time and no doctor every questioned it since the thirteenth century. Therefore, if we look to the ordinary teaching of the Church, it would be rash and certainly offensive to pious ears to deny it.

Why is every man given a guardian angel?

Because God wills the salvation of all men. And all men need and receive sufficient grace to be saved. The guardian angel cannot force his trust to cooperate with grace, otherwise the will would not be free, but he acts as a channel of actual grace, working with God's providential designs, to bring the person he is guarding in contact with outside occasions of grace: good Catholics, religious and lay, good books, a good teacher, good words and examples. The more a man cooperates with grace the more graces he will receive.

Guardian angels also have the power to help our imagination in meditation. Since the imagination is one of our inner senses the angel can actually place holy images in the mind, especially if we ask their assistance. If demons can place impure images in someone's imagination, in their attempts to lure one into willful consent, then good angels can place holy images in the mind to move one to acts of love and virtue. Likewise, good angels can prevent

demons from assaulting our imagination by guarding our minds. “Ever this night (and day) be at my side to light and guard, to rule and guide.”

The conversion of a sinner gives great joy to their guardian angel, indeed to all the angels. Remember Our Lord’s parable about the woman who lost one of her ten coins, and how she swept her house in order to find it. When she found it, how great was her joy! Our Lord then gives the meaning of the parable, equating the lost coin to a sinner, whose “finding” is a conversion, and the joy of the woman is that of the angels: “There shall be more joy before the angels of God upon one sinner doing penance” (Luke 15:10).

What does the guardian angel do after his charge has died?

After death the guardian angel’s work of guarding is over. However, they do still have intercessory “work” to do if their charge is in purgatory. They carry the prayers of the suffering souls to heaven and continue to act as an advocate. They give comfort and solace to the souls in purgatory. Remember, too, that their work as advocate is most intense at the hour of death. The guardian angels of those who die in grace work to procure a peaceful death and ward off the demons from any final assault. Or, if God permits a final temptation, to increase the merit of the just, the guardian angels assist in the battle. Of those who face the last hour in sin, the guardian angels work by infusing holy images or providing a last occasion of grace by the exhortations of a good friend, or relative, nurse, or chaplain. It is only after the soul that was entrusted to them is in eternal beatitude that the “work” of the angel guardian is over. After this, the guardian angel rests for all eternity in the joy of the Lord. And they also have a special accidental joy if the soul they guarded is in heaven with them. If we are saved, our guardian angels will always thank God for our salvation.

The guardian angel never loses the beatific vision of God even while on their earthly assignment. They are always “in heaven” as far as the state of eternal bliss, even when they are not in the “place” of heaven. Don’t forget that heaven is also a place, the physical beauty of which is beyond our imagination.

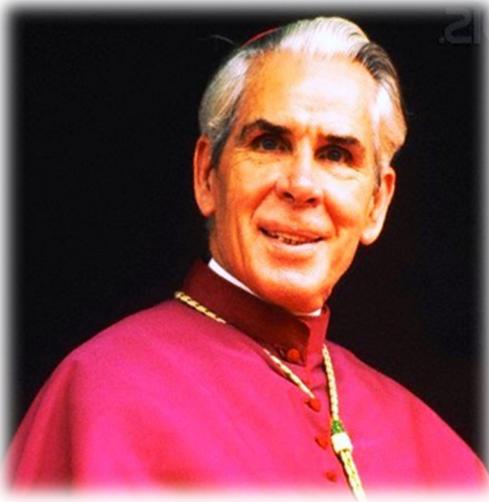
What about the guardian angels of the damned?

These angels do not lose any of the joy they have in beatitude. Remember, too, that they are spirits, and they have no sense of emotion. Even if their trust is lost they rejoice in the justice of God. They feel no sorrow and certainly no shame for the final fall of their charge. No guardian angel “fails”; they all do a good job.

Can a guardian angel be assigned to be another human’s guardian?

They could be; but they are not. Your guardian angel is yours alone. There are plenty of guardian angels for the employ of each and every man. Some saints held that every angel of this lowest of the nine choirs will receive a trust to guard. When the last guardian angel is sent by God, that will be to protect the last man created by God.

Archbishop Sheen Quotes



What a great man Archbishop Sheen was. He was probably the most visible Catholic to many Americans in the 1950's. He helped reduce the amount of prejudice toward Catholics by combining a great sense of humour, religion, and philosophy into a great 30 minute TV episode, called "Life Is Worth Living". He was a virulent anti-Communist, and was also a great American. Born May 8, 1895 in El Paso, Illinois, he went on to become the biggest single Catholic presence on radio and TV in the 20th century, at least until Mother Angelica and EWTN arrived on the scene in the

1980's. He was ordained as a priest in Peoria, Illinois in 1919. In 1930 he began his broadcast career, hosting the Sunday evening Catholic Hour program on NBC Radio. The rest is history. Radio, books, TV, and numerous speaking engagements around the world made Archbishop Sheen a one-man catechism, for Catholics and non-Catholics alike. He was placed on TV in a 'death' slot, opposite Milton Berle, one of the highest rated comics of the 1950's. He went on to get 20 million viewers on 123 TV stations, receiving the Emmy Award for "Most Outstanding TV Personality". Today, he even has his own website where you can purchase his shows and recordings. He died in 1979, after being told by Pope John Paul II that he had been a loyal son of the Church, and that he had spoken well. His case for sainthood is now being considered.

Below are a few of his most famous quotes:

"The Rosary is the best therapy for these distraught, unhappy, fearful, and frustrated souls, precisely because it involves the simultaneous use of three powers: the physical, the vocal, and the spiritual, and in that order."

"The Soviet Union is like the Cross without Christ, while American culture is like Christ without the Cross."

"Baloney is flattery laid on so thick it cannot be true, and blarney is flattery so thin we love it."

"Fasting detaches you from this world. Prayer reattaches you to the next world."

"Hearing nuns' confessions is like being stoned to death with popcorn. "

"I feel it is time that I also pay tribute to my four writers, Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. "

"Jealousy is the tribute mediocrity pays to genius. "

"Life is like a cash register, in that every account, every thought, every deed, like every sale, is registered and recorded. "

"Love is a mutual self-giving which ends in self-recovery. "

"Pride is an admission of weakness; it secretly fears all competition and dreads all rivals."

"The Church is like Noah's ark that was full of both clean and unclean animals. It must have had an unholy smell, and yet it was carrying eight persons to salvation. The world today is tearing up the photographs of a good society, a good family, a happy, individual personal life. But the Church is keeping the negatives. And when the moment comes when the world wants a reprint, we will have them."

"Show me your hands. Do they have scars from giving? Show me your feet. Are they wounded in service? Show me your heart. Have you left a place for divine love? "

"The only way to win audiences is to tell people about the life and death of Christ. Every other approach is a waste."

"The big print giveth, and the fine print taketh away. "

"The proud man counts his newspaper clippings, the humble man his blessings."

"The simple shepherds heard the voice of an angel and found their Lamb; the wise men saw the light of a star and found their Wisdom."

"An atheist is a man who has no invisible means of support."

"Jealousy is the tribute mediocrity pays to genius."

"There are 200 million poor in the world who would gladly take the vow of poverty if they could eat, dress and have a home like I do"

"Leisure is a form of silence, not noiselessness. It is the silence of contemplation such as occurs when we let our minds rest on a rosebud, a child at play, a Divine mystery, or a waterfall."

"Pride is an admission of weakness; it secretly fears all competition and dreads all rivals."

"Love is a mutual self-giving which ends in self-recovery."

"Joy is not the same as pleasure or happiness. A wicked and evil man may have pleasure, while any ordinary mortal is capable of being happy. Pleasure generally comes from things, and always through the senses; happiness comes from humans through fellowship. Joy comes from loving God and neighbour. Pleasure is quick and violent, like a flash of lightning. Joy is steady and abiding, like a fixed star. Pleasure depends on external circumstances, such as money, food, travel, etc. Joy is independent of them, for it comes from a good conscience and love of God."

"There are not more than 100 people in the world who truly hate the Catholic Church, but there are millions who hate what they perceive to be the Catholic Church. As a matter of fact, if we Catholics believed all of the untruths and lies which were said against the Church, we probably would hate the Church a thousand times more than they do."

"This brings us to our second point: namely, why the Blessed Mother, in the 20th century, should have revealed herself in the significant little village of Fatima, so that to all future generations she would be known as Our Lady of Fatima. Since nothing ever happens out of Heaven except with a finesse of all details, I believe that the Blessed Virgin chose to be known as Our Lady of Fatima as a pledge and a sign of hope to the Moslem people, and as an assurance that they, who show her so much respect, will one day accept her divine Son too. Evidence to support these views is found in the historical fact that the Moslems occupied Portugal for centuries. At the time when they were finally driven out, the last Moslem chief had a beautiful daughter by the name of Fatima. A Catholic boy fell in love with her, and for him she not only stayed behind when the Moslems left, but even embraced the Faith. The young husband was so much in love with her that he changed the name of the town where he live to Fatima. Thus, the very place where our Lady appeared in 1917 bears a historical connection to Fatima, the daughter of Mohammed."

"Truth must be sought at all costs, but separate isolated truths will not do. Truth is like life; it has to be taken on its entirety or not at all. We must welcome truth even if it reproaches and inconveniences us -- even if it appears in the place where we thought it could not be found."

"Nothing is more harmful to a man than his resistance to Grace."

"Those who hate Truth and fear Goodness are not far from the kingdom of God. They are fighting against it, and yet they know theirs is a losing battle. The more violently men hate truth, the more they think about it; the more they fear the goodness that demands perfection, the more they know it is what they really seek."

Thomas Madden — former Chair of the History Department at Saint Louis University and Director of the Centre for Medieval and Renaissance Studies — wrote this article in 2002 presenting the most recent scholarship on the Crusades — scholarship that completely contradicts the popular image of these wars that permeates much of Hollywood and the writings of amateurs such as [Karen Armstrong](#).



Misconceptions about the Crusades are all too common. The Crusades are generally portrayed as a series of holy wars against Islam led by power-mad popes and fought by religious fanatics. They are supposed to have been the epitome of self-righteousness and intolerance, a black stain on the history of the Catholic Church in particular and Western civilization in general. A breed of proto-imperialists, the Crusaders introduced Western aggression to the peaceful Middle East and then deformed the enlightened Muslim culture, leaving it in ruins. For variations on this theme, one need not look far. See, for example, Steven Runciman's famous three-volume epic, *History of the Crusades*, or the BBC/A&E documentary, *The Crusades*, hosted by Terry Jones. Both are terrible history yet wonderfully entertaining.

So what is the truth about the Crusades? Scholars are still working some of that out. But much can already be said with certainty. For starters, the Crusades to the East were in every way defensive wars. They were a direct response to Muslim aggression—an attempt to turn back or defend against Muslim conquests of Christian lands.

Christians in the eleventh century were not paranoid fanatics. Muslims really were gunning for them. While Muslims can be peaceful, Islam was born in war and grew the same way. From the time of Mohammed, the means of Muslim

expansion was always the sword. Muslim thought divides the world into two spheres, the Abode of Islam and the Abode of War. Christianity—and for that matter any other non-Muslim religion—has no abode. Christians and Jews can be tolerated within a Muslim state under Muslim rule. But, in traditional Islam, Christian and Jewish states must be destroyed and their lands conquered. When Mohammed was waging war against Mecca in the seventh century, Christianity was the dominant religion of power and wealth. As the faith of the Roman Empire, it spanned the entire Mediterranean, including the Middle East, where it was born. The Christian world, therefore, was a prime target for the earliest caliphs, and it would remain so for Muslim leaders for the next thousand years.

With enormous energy, the warriors of Islam struck out against the Christians shortly after Mohammed's death. They were extremely successful. Palestine, Syria, and Egypt—once the most heavily Christian areas in the world—quickly succumbed. By the eighth century, Muslim armies had conquered all of Christian North Africa and Spain. In the eleventh century, the Seljuk Turks conquered Asia Minor (modern Turkey), which had been Christian since the time of St. Paul. The old Roman Empire, known to modern historians as the Byzantine Empire, was reduced to little more than Greece. In desperation, the emperor in Constantinople sent word to the Christians of western Europe asking them to aid their brothers and sisters in the East.

That is what gave birth to the Crusades. They were not the brainchild of an ambitious pope or rapacious knights but a response to more than four centuries of conquests in which Muslims had already captured two-thirds of the old Christian world. At some point, Christianity as a faith and a culture had to defend itself or be subsumed by Islam. The Crusades were that defence.

Pope Urban II called upon the knights of Christendom to push back the conquests of Islam at the Council of Clermont in 1095. The response was tremendous. Many thousands of warriors took the vow of the cross and prepared for war. Why did they do it? The answer to that question has been badly misunderstood. In the wake of the Enlightenment, it was usually asserted that Crusaders were merely lacklands and ne'er-do-wells who took advantage of an opportunity to rob and pillage in a faraway land. The Crusaders' expressed sentiments of piety, self-sacrifice, and love for God were obviously not to be taken seriously. They were only a front for darker designs. During the past two decades, computer-assisted charter studies have demolished that contrivance. Scholars have discovered that crusading knights were generally wealthy men with plenty of their own land in Europe. Nevertheless, they willingly gave up everything to undertake the holy mission.

Crusading was not cheap. Even wealthy lords could easily impoverish themselves and their families by joining a Crusade. They did so not because they expected material wealth (which many of them had already) but because they hoped to store up treasure where rust and moth could not corrupt. They were keenly aware of their sinfulness and eager to undertake the hardships of the Crusade as a penitential act of charity and love. Europe is littered with thousands of medieval charters attesting to these sentiments, charters in which these men still speak to us today if we will listen. Of course, they were not opposed to capturing booty if it could be had. But the truth is that the Crusades were notoriously bad for plunder. A few people got rich, but the vast majority returned with nothing.

Urban II gave the Crusaders two goals, both of which would remain central to the eastern Crusades for centuries. The first was to rescue the Christians of the East. As his successor, Pope Innocent III, later wrote:

How does a man love according to divine precept his neighbour as himself when, knowing that his Christian brothers in faith and in name are held by the perfidious Muslims in strict confinement and weighed down by the yoke of heaviest servitude, he does not devote himself to the task of freeing them? ...Is it by chance that you do not know that many thousands of Christians are bound in slavery and imprisoned by the Muslims, tortured with innumerable torments?

“Crusading,” Professor Jonathan Riley-Smith has rightly argued, was understood as an “an act of love”—in this case, the love of one’s neighbour. The Crusade was seen as an errand of mercy to right a terrible wrong. As Pope Innocent III wrote to the Knights Templar, “You carry out in deeds the words of the Gospel, ‘Greater love than this hath no man, that he lay down his life for his friends.’”

The second goal was the liberation of Jerusalem and the other places made holy by the life of Christ. [...]

It is often assumed that the central goal of the Crusades was forced conversion of the Muslim world. Nothing could be further from the truth. From the perspective of medieval Christians, Muslims were the enemies of Christ and His Church. It was the Crusaders’ task to defeat and defend against them. That was all. Muslims who lived in Crusader-won territories were generally allowed to retain their property and livelihood, and always their religion. Indeed, throughout the history of the Crusader Kingdom of Jerusalem, Muslim inhabitants far outnumbered the Catholics. It was not until the 13th century that the Franciscans began conversion efforts among Muslims. But these were

mostly unsuccessful and finally abandoned. In any case, such efforts were by peaceful persuasion, not the threat of violence.

The Crusades were wars, so it would be a mistake to characterise them as nothing but piety and good intentions. Like all warfare, the violence was brutal (although not as brutal as modern wars). There were mishaps, blunders, and crimes. These are usually well-remembered today. During the early days of the First Crusade in 1095, a ragtag band of Crusaders led by Count Emicho of Leiningen made its way down the Rhine, robbing and murdering all the Jews they could find. Without success, the local bishops attempted to stop the carnage. In the eyes of these warriors, the Jews, like the Muslims, were the enemies of Christ. Plundering and killing them, then, was no vice. Indeed, they believed it was a righteous deed, since the Jews' money could be used to fund the Crusade to Jerusalem. But they were wrong, and the Church strongly condemned the anti-Jewish attacks.

Fifty years later, when the Second Crusade was gearing up, St. Bernard frequently preached that the Jews were not to be persecuted:

Ask anyone who knows the Sacred Scriptures what he finds foretold of the Jews in the Psalm. "Not for their destruction do I pray," it says. The Jews are for us the living words of Scripture, for they remind us always of what our Lord suffered.... Under Christian princes they endure a hard captivity, but "they only wait for the time of their deliverance."

When we think about the Middle Ages, it is easy to view Europe in light of what it became rather than what it was. The colossus of the medieval world was Islam, not Christendom. The Crusades are interesting largely because they were an attempt to counter that trend. But in five centuries of crusading, it was only the First Crusade that significantly rolled back the military progress of Islam. It was downhill from there.

From the safe distance of many centuries, it is easy enough to scowl in disgust at the Crusades. Religion, after all, is nothing to fight wars over. But we should be mindful that our medieval ancestors would have been equally disgusted by our infinitely more destructive wars fought in the name of political ideologies. And yet, both the medieval and the modern soldier fight ultimately for their own world and all that makes it up. Both are willing to suffer enormous sacrifice, provided that it is in the service of something they hold dear, something greater than themselves. Whether we admire the Crusaders or not, it is a fact that the world we know today would not exist without their efforts. The ancient faith of Christianity, with its respect for women and antipathy toward slavery, not only survived but flourished. Without the Crusades, it might well have followed Zoroastrianism, another of Islam's rivals, into extinction.

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