

Jesus, Savior of Men, Save Them!

APOSTLESHIP OF THE CROSS Houston Center

July, 2002

Important Dates

July 25

James the Apostle

July 26

Sts. Joachim &
Anne

July 29

St. Martha

August 8

Transfiguration

August 15

Assumption

August 22

Queenship of Ma-
ry

August 23

Retreat

August 29

Martyrdom of
John the Baptist

September 14

Exultation of the
Cross

September 19

Information Night

RETREAT!

.The Houston Center's Spanish Retreat will be held earlier than usual this year. It will be on the weekend of Friday, August 23rd through Sunday, August 25th. The retreat will be at the Dickinson Retreat House. It begins with Mass at 7:30 on Friday evening, and it will end at approximately 3:00 Sunday afternoon.

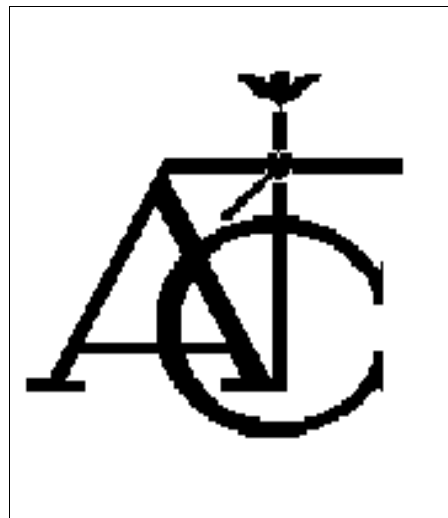
Father Edmundo de los Santos, M.Sp.S. from Monterrey, Mexico, will lead us in the retreat this year. The theme will be "How to live your Baptismal Priesthood."

If you wish to attend, please contact Myrla Vanegas (281-561-9730 or myr-
van@aol.com) or Miriam Vega (281-491-9109) **by August 1st**. The cost for the retreat is \$90. Also, don't forget to bring your Bible, morning and evening prayers, Liturgy of the Hours, and paper.

Thanks!

Many thanks to Pearl, Brenda, Nubia, and to all who helped with our Spring Bake Sale. It was the most successful bake sale ever for the Houston Center.

Special thanks also to Churrascos Restaurants for the generous donation of Tres Leches cakes for the bake sale. As usual, the cakes were a big hit and contributed enormously not only to our waistlines but to the success of the bake sale!



Council Members

Ana Quiros --

Coordinator

Frank Garcia

Carmen Martinez

Myrla Vanegas

PENTECOST ALL NIGHT VIGIL

Walking in the steps of Jesus from Emmaus to Pentecost

Our Mother of Perpetual Help Prayer Group (led by Lou Gomez and Lynne Miller and meets every Wed. 7 PM to 9 PM in the Chapel) joined the Apostleship of the Cross to give an all-night Pentecost vigil as a sacrifice for Priests. And it turned out to be a bigger sacrifice as the heater broke and it was very cold all night! The night opened at 11 PM with joyful music and singing by Lou and us with songs of Jesus. There were welcomes from Dottie, Ana and Lou at the start and prayers to the Holy Spirit, Our Mother of Perpetual Help and a reading of the beautiful Priesthood is Pain by Frank Garcia. Then all were invited up to the Altar to put one small grain of incense into a cup that would carry their prayers, intentions, petitions and promises to God later in the morning.

All went to the back of the Church and lit candles and were greeted by the risen Jesus (Frank Garcia) whom they did not recognize. He spoke to one of the disciples (Steven Luna) as in scripture. They all walked out of Church into the dark and at three stops Jesus quoted from scripture the things that had been prophesied that would happen to him. The first stop was at the Cross of the Apostolate and later in front of the Church. The fourth stop was to break the Bread that wasn't there -- which turned out NOT to be a mistake as it was very meaningful. While waiting for the Pita bread to be found, Lou was so filled with the Holy Spirit she sang a journey song. When Jesus came out and broke the Bread - everybody ate of it. As He was leaving, (out of sequence) the Disciple shouted, "Don't leave stay with us". This was profound to all of us after Brenda Luna shared with us that she wanted to run and hold Jesus and beg Him to come back. We all agreed with her and realized that that's what the disciples must have wanted to do. So many things were shared right after that in the cry room with hot coffee and snacks. We were all fed spiritually from each other and filled with the HOLY SPIRIT.

Groups were formed to consider the eventful works that happened between the Resurrection and the Ascension? What sacramental mysteries - what truths! All groups seemed to agree on most points as we all came together and discussed them.

Then there was about 30 minutes of singing and praising the Lord from all who wanted to sing. This was followed by a visit to the Chapel in quiet for 5 minutes and a guided meditation of the Ascension and another 5-minute reflection on it.

We all went to the back of the Church again and each carried a blue Iris or white nasturtium in procession singing Immaculate Mary led by Lou. We walked to the large statue and put them in a crystal vase brought by Brenda. We recited the Magnificat and a dedication prayer to our Mother. We quietly thanked her for remaining on earth longer and becoming our Mother.

Finally, many prostrated on the COLD Altar to be purified as the Incense was placed on the coals in front of the Living Cross (a wooden Cross with a large vine covering it). Dottie guided them through all forms of sins, forgotten and forgiven, from their present - back to their past. Even broken promises to God and others, and much more. All renewed their Baptismal vows in the ancient tradition. We all turned to the West and rejected Satan; then turned to the East and accepted and expressed our belief in Christ.

Just before Mass - there was a reading to ask the Holy Spirit to give all He had and not to settle for what they thought He would give. Msgr. Bill said a bilingual Mass with all of us participating and others came in for Mass. It was followed by breakfast and a little more sharing. We were all filled with the Holy Spirit!!!!!!!

It was a grace-filled evening that the Houston Center shared with Our Mother of Perpetual Help Prayer Group. Each group was spiritually fed by the other group, and the Prayer Group is now praying the Litany for Priests at their Wednesday prayer meetings. We look forward to additional opportunities in the future to share our faith with them.

A Retreat on the Spirituality of the Cross: Spiritual Nuggets in Paul

On the week-end of April 12th, Father Roberto Zaldivar, M.Sp.S. visited Houston to guide us through a retreat on the Spirituality of the Cross. The retreat commenced Friday evening as we all gathered in anticipation and concluded in the afternoon of Sunday, each of us renewed and invigorated.

As reflected in the title of this article, as theme for the retreat Father Roberto focused on the authentic letters of Saint Paul (Romans I and II, Corinthians, Galatians, Philipians, Philemon and I Thessalonians.) Through his letters, Paul gives the Christian communities "Spiritual Nuggets" to help them understand how the Cross of Christ is the only way to die to ourselves and put on Christ that we may glorify God, just as Christ offered himself to glorify his Father.

We begin to die to ourselves when we believe in God, in His word and then we blindly surrender ourselves to Him. This is faith: to believe and trust in Him with our mind and with all our heart. Faith brings us hope and love in Christ. These three virtues are essential in living the Spirituality of the Cross.

Saint Paul teaches us that through the gift of Christ and His death on the cross (the Christ of the Cross), man is cleansed from sin, therefore "justified" with God. However, it is through faith in the Cross of Christ that man is sanctified or made holy. The Cross of Christ is the Gospel, the word of God. God calls us as his children, and we must respond. In His own words: *"Whoever wishes to come after me must deny himself, take up his cross, and follow me. (Mt. 16,24;*

Jesus set the example of how we should live our lives once we were reconciled with God through His sacrifice on the Cross. We have a free will to choose whether or not to live our lives according to His word. Accepting to live our lives as Jesus did means to break free from our worldly chains. This implies suffering and dying to us. When we accept suffering in our lives with love and allow the Holy Spirit to work in us we open ourselves to grace. We transform into Christ and thus become a glorified being. *It is in this glorified state that we are able to sacrifice for others and exercise our priestly vocation, truly living the Spirituality of the Cross.*

The retreat began and ended with the Eucharist, the most perfect sacrifice to God. During those three days, Father Roberto inspired us with his profound reflections and invited us to silent meditation. On other occasions we were called to share. The silent reflections helped us to open our hearts to God in an intimate relationship with Him. Because we all have something to offer, our sharing moments were very enlightening.

Who can forget the delicious food so lovingly prepared by the sisters? And the recital of the Rosary with Carmen in a peaceful garden which reflects the majestic artistry of God in each blooming rose, in the soft morning breeze, in the sweet melodies song by birds and the warm kiss of the sun's rays. Oh Holy Spirit, who can say that your presence was not embracing us, filling our hearts with fire!

Thank you, Father Roberto, for stirring up in us a deeper love for the Spirituality of the Cross. God bless you and all of our Priests who dedicate their lives to God and His Kingdom.

Brenda Maymi-Luna

*Jesus,
Savior of
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A Reflection

In light of the painful events that transpired within the universal family of priests in our Catholic Church, we are called to profoundly reflect on how we have been living our baptismal priesthood, when once again the loving heart of Jesus is pierced by a lance, and to renew our baptismal commitment with true spiritual zeal and fire. But our commitment must be a commitment lived in union with the Incarnate Word, through which, with our love and faithfulness for Jesus' commandments, we sacrifice and pray for the holiness of our priests; share our lives with our priests practicing Christian charity; love them in the same Spirit with which Jesus so loved us; be the sons and daughters, mothers and fathers and friends that they sacrificed to follow Jesus and build His Kingdom on earth, and give comfort to them in times of disillusionment. In one word, become PRIESTS FOR OUR PRIESTS, as Jesus was the loving priest of all who walked with Him.

However, the root that begets pure and holy priests and sows fruit for Jesus, buds and blossoms within the marriage of two souls who love and respect each other and faithfully live in Jesus' loving presence, and with their personal experience, fostering holiness in the family. The family is the corner stone of society and consequently, of our universal Church. A marriage where spouses constantly disrespect each other, where there is infidelity, jealousy, drug and alcohol abuse, verbal and physical violence

from either or both spouses, lack of appreciation for one another, male chauvinism, extreme feminist ideas, failure to communicate and compromise, fear, humiliation, et cetera, cannot engender fruits filled with love of God that will walk in the world illuminating us with their Divine spiritual radiance spreading the Kingdom of God. For this reason, it is our obligation to create and form holy families.


But how do we create and form families that are holy? How can we contribute to the Crusade of Love in Favor of Families? By giving witness through example. The greatest example of a Holy Family was the family integrated by Joseph, Mary and Jesus. Theirs was a home where peace and harmony reigned; the peace and harmony that comes from living in the presence of God and from loving and serving our brothers and sisters in Christ.

In our homes, prayer is a Christian obligation. *A family that prays together stays together.* It is a phrase that we constantly hear. Yet, how many families make prayer part of their daily activities? Instead, how many vainglorious mothers and fathers, in order to be accepted into a shallow and unethical society, are only concerned with the physical development of their children; that the children strive for excellency in their studies or that they become the most outstanding athletes, or that they have all the material "tools" to make them successful in life, without teaching their children the importance of growing in

their spirituality, and how this is what will bring them the ultimate enduring happiness which souls always search for, because they (the parents) are too busy making money and pursuing a "reputable" position in society, because they are tired, because it consumes and takes time from daily activities or simply because they do not have the desire to engage in spiritual discussions with their children out of fear, because in the depth of their hearts, parents know that they have failed their own baptismal vows of growing spiritually and sowing and nurturing in their children love and respect for God, BUT MOST OF ALL COMMITMENT TO GOD; their obligation to attend Mass on Sunday, the practice of daily prayer, sharing of their time and talent with our brothers and sisters and in their Church, teaching to love and respect their Christian traditions by celebrating and observing the days of feasts in our Church, but above all teaching children a love for eternal life in the presence of God.

All of these teachings are cultivated in the heart of the family. Of course, it is not an easy task. But, whoever said that the road to heaven is easy? From a family that breathes and lives God, priests that are pure and holy are born. It is never too late to learn and teach. For this reason let us join the Crusade of Love in Favor of Families inspired by the emblem of the Cross of the Apostleship!

Brenda Maymi-Luna



*“We must be
Priests for our
Priests.”*

Priests. and especially Bishops. are called to be Jesus in

“The Priest who fulfills his mission will be another Me” Life 6, 345-346; CC25,259-265) :Identified with Me he is another Me, that is, he is then Myself when consecrating, in that mystery of love which is worked at the transubstantiation” (CC 49, 181).

In Jesus' Confidences to Conchita, we learn that our Lord has been preparing his Church for this moment of purification; it is a time of grace that takes us to the roots of our Priesthood. This moment of great growing in humility for our priests will bring sanctification to many souls. If only the priest would think back, reminiscing on the day of his consecration to God. How and what, Priest, did you sense and experience at that moment? What led you to ignore this personal and intimate experience of unsurpassed grace?

Jesus shares with Conchita:

“I need others on earth, forming only one Me in my Church by their unity of sights, of intentions and of ideals; forming only one mystical Body with Me, only one wish with the will of my Father; only one soul with the Holy Spirit; one unity in the Trinity out of duty, out of justice, out of love.” (CC 50, 102)
“And the goal of the Church in its intrinsic part is to form on earth only one Jesus, Savior of souls; only one Priest in the eternal Priest by their union, resemblance and identification with Him.” (CC 50,126)
“Thus, I in them and they in Me will glorify the Father in only one praise; and with souls, we would form that perfect unity in the Church, which must honor the Trinity.” (CC 50,253)
“The purpose of these confidences has been to unite all priests in the unity of the Trinity, but transformed in Me; they have the goal of making of all of them only one Jesus; I in them; not many Jesus, but one only.” (CC 50, 292)
“I want all my bishops and priests

absorbed in the unity of the Trinity so they may be fruitful in souls, so they may engender in the virgin Church souls for heaven.” (CC 50, 4)

“The Father is constantly engendering his Word in Himself and working the Mystery of the Trinity... and is eternally rejoicing in Himself in his unity of the Trinity, He wants to attract everything to the unity; for that He formed his only Church, where all souls must form unity in the Word, through the Holy Spirit, an the mission of the priest is to bring souls to that unity.” (CC 50,88)

Priests, we want you to know that many of us laymen and women hunger for Holiness, a gift and mission you have been entrusted to fulfill. Teach us how to live in communion with the blessed Trinity. But, in order to accomplish your mission, you, yourself, must live a holy life.

If we desire to have priests that live a holy life, I exhort you to form families that are holy. But this holiness must first be lived by us. A priest who has eternally consecrated his life to God, is the fruit of a family. Neither the priests nor their vows and formation are the direct causes for the serious problems confronted by our Church today. Those are only some of the issues, as having been ordained without fully taking into consideration their personal problems is another aspect. If we take a closer look at what is happening, we will understand to what extent we too are responsible. Yes, we need priests that are holy but for this to happen, we need to form families that are holy. Families with strong ties that are united by a love of God, in other words, a family invaded by the presence of God.

In her later years (1935), Conchita wrote that Jesus asked for the formation of a Chain of Souls who would sacrifice for the glory of the Father, following the spirit of the Apostleship of the Cross.

“It is a union of souls that are pure, who without any personal gain, are sacrificial victims in this world, fulfilling their responsibilities with love and zeal, sacrificing their lives, to give me glory”.

He asks that these souls form a Crusade for the Sanctification of Families and that their mission is to offer up their sacrifices in atonement for divorced couples, who violating God's law harm many souls, not only those who execute the divorce but of husbands and wives, children, society, etc. He tells her that divorce brings about many sins that no one remembers to atone for. That these sins need reparation and many special graces for those who commit them.

He addresses sins of adultery, of mothers who commit crimes, cold and indifferent mothers who set bad examples and neglect their responsibilities with their children. Jesus talked about these social problems in 1935. What would He say today with countless abortions being performed? Lives are truncated in wombs from the very beginning, as roots being cut from a tree. Violence grows every day and we wonder and still don't understand what is going on in our planet. Only priests are to blame? Let's take a closer look at families whose lives are not centered around God. I think we have a clear picture from what we read in the daily news and from what we observe around us.

I ask all of you that, united in one heart, in the image of the Holy Trinity, we offer ourselves as victims in unity with Jesus, for the santification of Families; therefore, for the sanctification of Priests.

Ana