

LOGOSOPHIA

A Pilgrim's Journal
of Life, Love & Literature



Issue #6
Spring 2021



Acts of Charity: Spiritual Works of Mercy



Greetings, fellow pilgrims!

Welcome to our sixth issue of LogoSophia Magazine! This issue is based on the Spiritual Works of Mercy (a list of the Works may be found on page 4). Within these pages we have a story of betrayal and forgiveness, advice on how to correct sinners, a look at the Imprecatory Psalms, our new Author Interview column, and much more! Please enjoy, and let us know what you think!

Sarah Levesque

Editor in Chief

WANTED

- Readers & listeners of any faith to interact respectfully with writers and other readers through book/media suggestions and letters to the editor, as well as comments on LogoSophiaMag.com and social media
- Writers of Christian faith to augment the works of our Staff
- Artists to help us beautify our issues and blog
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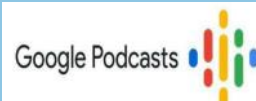
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*Happy
Spring!*



Letters to the Editor & Others

This is where we will be putting anything you send in - letters to the editor, notes to authors, questions, agreements and disagreements... we can't wait to see what you have to say! Just be sure to tell us what article you're responding to!

To contact us, email
Editors.LogoSophia@gmail.com

OR

Fill out the contact form at
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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 -

A Prayer

by Cardinal John Henry Newman;
a favorite of Mother Teresa

Dear Jesus, help us to spread Your fragrance everywhere we go.
Flood our souls with Your Spirit and Life.
Penetrate and possess our whole being so utterly that our lives may
only be a radiance of Yours.
Shine through us and be so in us that every soul we come in contact with
may feel Your presence in our souls.
Let them look up, and see no longer us, but only Jesus!
Stay with us and then we shall begin to shine as You shine,
so to shine as to be a light to others.
The light, O Jesus, will be all from You; none of it will be ours.
It will be You, shining on others through us.
Let us thus praise You in the way You love best,
by shining on those around us.
Let us preach You without preaching, not by words but by example,
by the catching force, the sympathetic influence of what we do,
the evident fullness of the love our hearts bear for You.
Amen.

Princess Lillian and Grandpa's Goodbye

By Jenny Ann Fulton
[Capture Books]

Can two worlds exist at the same time? Little Princess Lillian learns that the spiritual interacts with the physical. Navajo heritage mingles poetically with Caucasian; the imaginary is used to explain a reality, how heaven reaches down to earth, as a young girl observes her grandpa anticipating his entrance into his eternal home.

bit.ly/PLandGG



moonlightandwolfire

Where the wild tales are

loremasterofthexfi.wixsite.com/moonlightandwolfire

1. "For whenever anyone bears the pain of unjust suffering because of consciousness of God, that is a grace."
2. "Be on your guard! If your brother sins, rebuke him; and if he repents, forgive him."
3. "Come to me, all you who labor and are burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am meek and humble of heart; and you will find rest for yourselves."
4. "...proclaim the word; be persistent whether it is convenient or inconvenient; convince, reprimand, encourage through all patience and teaching."

Scripture Search

- A. Luke 17:3
- B. 1 Peter 2:19
- C. Matthew 11:28-29
- D. 2 Timothy 4:2

THUS ALWAYS TO

TYRANTS

By Rose Therese

Maegan Meridian looked at her father, Aelius, stoically making his way through New York City traffic. The car was silent but for the engine noise and the barely-audible prayer of their passenger. Maegan turned slightly in her seat to observe Fionn Clanless, the boy she called brother, praying his rosary. Silky strands of long, towhead blonde hair obscured his handsome face and contrasted starkly with his black Goth-style clothing, a bit more conservative than what he usually had on.

Maegan watched his fingers slide over the beads, counting with him, knowing the prayers almost as well as Fionn, though she was Anglican and didn't use that type of rosary. The car turned the last corner as the walls of Metropolitan Correctional Center came into view, drab brown and imposing. Maegan couldn't help but think of Barad-Dur, the tower of Sauron from *The Lord of the Rings*, especially as she considered the evil held within it. The car came to a stop.

"Fionn," she said quietly. He looked up. "We're here."

Fionn sighed and set his beads aside. He emptied his pockets of his cell phone and anything else he thought might be a problem.

"Are you ready?"

"No," he said. His voice held a bit of an Irish burr.

"We'll be right here waiting when you come out," she assured him.

Fionn nodded. As he exited the car, Maegan rolled down her window and grabbed his hand. "We're right here."

Not much good it would do inside that place.

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Fionn Clanless thought about the errand that brought him to this place. His father, Oran Clanless, had requested to see him. Oran was here on charges of racketeering, money laundering, drug smuggling... and murder. He had been the head of an Irish mob family before he was put away here, a family he expected Fionn to take over. Fionn refused, and for that he was punished; his body and spirit broken, and his mother murdered. He truly was clanless now, if not for the Meridians and the Strandsburys. He smiled, thinking of his girlfriend Seraphina Strandsbury, and her brother Fred, orphans like himself. He was carrying one of Seraphina's handkerchiefs against his heart, folded between the wrap-around top and the tank he was wearing.

In the seven years that had passed since the day he refused his father's demands, he had

grown strong in body and mind, taking up martial arts and getting counseling from his priest. His classmates in his martial arts school all supported him as well, though they did love to make jokes about his hair, calling him "Legolas" and "Witcher". It was all in good fun; his classmates had cheered him on at his last tournament by singing "Toss a Coin to your Witcher" from the sidelines. Fionn had never seen the show, it was far too... well, much for him, but he appreciated the spirit of his friends.

Fionn passed the door and metal detector. His heart pounded like it was trying to escape from his ribs, his hands started shaking. He approached the officer on duty.

"Fionn Clanless to see Oran Clanless."

The guard nodded and gestured for Fionn to follow him. He was taken to a room to be searched, answering every question with a polite "Yes, sir" or "No, sir."

He opened his shirt and surrendered the handkerchief. "Belong to someone special?" asked the officer.

"Yes, my girlfriend."

The officer smiled. It was rare to see such an old fashioned gentleman. Then he noticed the leather cross and an image of St. Michael the Archangel sewn inside the wide hem of his shirt. After checking to see if there was anything behind them he asked. "If I may, where did you get the tags?"

"A friend makes them. I'll get you a business card, if you would like."

"I would, thank you, Mr. Clanless."

Fionn opened his wallet and handed the officer the card. Then he followed the officer to the visiting area. It was empty, except for the guards. For that Fionn was thankful. He heard the clang of metal doors beyond the plexiglass partition and saw two guards leading his father, Oran Clanless, to the booth, shackled hand and foot. He hadn't changed a bit in the seven years since the trial that had placed him here. He, like Fionn, was of a thin build, his cheekbones sticking out razor-like from his face. He tried to give Fionn a friendly smile, but he came across more like a wolf.

Oran sat down and picked up the telephone. Fionn sat down in the chair on his side of the partition and picked up the phone on his end.

"Fionn."

"Father."

They stared at each other for a moment. Oran's keen eye noted Fionn's muscular frame and long hair. The boy had always favored long hair.

"You've grown."

"It's been seven years, Father." Fionn's voice was quiet. "Of course I've changed."

"Fair enough. And your... hair. It's grown quite long. Just like the heroes in those books you used to like to read."

"The men in books were better than the ones I was surrounded with." Fionn raised his head. "I told you I didn't want to see you again."

"And yet, here you are."

"I told you I hated you."

"You did."

Fionn leaned closer. "We are not men to mix words, Father. Why did you call me here?"

"Why did you come?" Oran asked.

Fionn took a deep breath. "Closure. I no longer hate you, Father. I've been speaking with my priest."

Oran nodded. He believed that religion was useful, to a point. "And what about the others? The rest of your family?"

"I have forgiven them. But I will not go back."

"Fionn, they're your family, your blood," Oran insisted. "And they need someone to lead them-"

"I told you when I was eighteen I didn't want to be in charge of the family, and I haven't changed my mind about that."

"You're my son!" Oran barked.

"You killed my mother!" Fionn sat back away from the window, all the old feelings of anger and grief and hopelessness welled up in his chest. "You had her shot and left her to die outside a church."

Oran sat expressionless, watching as Fionn fought back tears. "It was necessary."

"Necessary?" Fionn rasped. "It was necessary to kill your wife, the mother of your child? What purpose did it serve? You were already going to prison for life."

Oran leaned close to the glass. "I loved your mother. I loved you."

"You had an odd way of showing it, letting my cousins torment me and screaming at Mother."

"It was to make you strong; you were never going to survive if you just sat there and kept to your books."

"Look at me, Father. You were wrong."

Oran was not a man used to being told "no" or "you're wrong." His body language shifted, becoming more hostile. This was something Fionn recognised. The man behind the glass drew himself up, trying to intimidate, a sure sign he was trying to justify whatever he was going to say.

"I loved your mother. You don't know how difficult it was to order her death."

"You don't know what love means." Fionn looked at his father. "You sound so cold. Like she was never real."

"Five minutes," said a guard.

Oran nodded. Fionn felt relief; this would end soon.

"I'm dying, Fionn." Oran said matter-of-factly. Fionn looked up sharply. "Brain tumor. There's nothing that can be done."

"So that's it." Fionn sighed. "What do you want from me? Absolution? Only God can do that. Pity? You've had that for years."

"To make sure you took your proper place. Someone has to take charge of the family or it will die."

"Let it die, then, I swear to you I will never go back." Fionn turned his father's body language back on him. Oran seemed to sense Fionn's determination. "There is one last thing I want to say." Oran raised an eyebrow. "I forgive you." Fionn hung up the phone and turned to the guard. "I'm finished, sir."

Oran stared after his son. "You forgive me?" he shouted. "You are your mother's son! You're no blood of mine! You're soft and weak!"

Fionn squared his shoulders and lifted his head. His burden was gone.

Fionn returned to the car to find Aelius and Maegan waiting for him outside it. Maegan held her arms out for him, he accepted her embrace then went to the backseat of the car and got in.

"Do you want to talk about it, son?" asked Aelius.

"No. Not now." Fionn leaned against his seat like a broken puppet.

"We'll take you home, then."

The car ride ended at a restored Victorian home, the boarding house Fionn called home. He came into the house with Aelius and Maegan and breathed in the comforting smell of his home. He looked expectantly into the parlor and saw Seraphina sitting on the sofa. She had her black hair up in little buns and wore black leggings, a baggy black top with a sprinkling of metallic purple and pink stars across it, and a choker with a silver heart pendant. Hanging lower on her neck was a silver medal of Raphael the Archangel, a gift from Fionn. She rushed over to him and hugged him tight.

"Are you okay?" she asked. He shook his head. "What did he do to you?"

"He gave me what I asked for."

"You get cleaned up. Hey, Fred!" Seraphina called.
"Heyo!" came Fred's breezy answer.
"Put some tea on, will you?"
"You got it!"

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Fionn made his way up the stairs and to his room. Seraphina took Maegan's hand and pulled her into the parlor.

"Mae, he'll tell you things he won't tell me. What happened there?"

"Your guess is as good as mine," Maegan sighed. "He was so quiet I thought he fell asleep in the car."

Fred came out with the tea service and set it down. No pair of siblings looked more different. Fred liked to dress in an almost-garish assortment of bright colors, as opposed to Seraphina's Goth style. "Is there anything I can do, Mae?"

"Perhaps, if you have any of those cookies he likes?"

"Mae's right, he won't want to eat unless we offer him something he can't resist," Seraphina added.

"I'll get the potato soup started and I'll text Miss Lucy to bring back some crusty bread."

"Good idea," nodded Seraphina. She looked up hearing someone on the stairs. "Oop, quiet, here he comes."

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Fionn had changed his clothes and was now wearing something more expected for him, a black poet shirt, black canvas pants, and black leather slippers. Maegan waved him inside.

"We've made tea. Would you like some?"

Fionn nodded and sat down next to Seraphina and accepted a cup of tea. He swallowed the hot liquid with a sigh. It relaxed him a bit, but he still felt stressed to the max. Seraphina put a hand on his arm, distracting him from the turmoil roiling in his chest.

"Talk to us, Fionn," she pleaded.

He looked first at Maegan, then at Seraphina. "He's dying. That's why he wanted to see me."

"Oh, Fionn!" gasped Maegan.

"Don't tell me he wanted a kidney or something," Seraphina said darkly.

"No, it's a brain tumor. There's nothing that can be done. He wanted to convince me to go back to the family."

"You didn't agree, did you?"

"No, Maegan. I would never go back to them, not even if I needed a kidney myself." Fionn took a few more strengthening sips of tea before he continued. "I told him I forgave him."

"Good for you, Fionn!" Seraphina cheered.

"I knew you had it in you," Maegan nodded her approval.

Fionn finished his tea and set down his cup. "He was less than gracious. He's disowned me once and for all, I fear. I'll likely never see him again." Fionn took a hard grip on each chair arm. "For all that, he is my father. I shouldn't want his approval anymore, not after what he did."

"You don't want his approval," said Maegan. "You want his love."

"All children want their parents to love them, that want never goes away. Not even when you're grown." Seraphina remarked as she swept Fionn's hair out of the way so she could see his face. Then she placed a hand over Fionn's; he was shaking badly. He released his arm and meshed his fingers with Seraphina's, a gesture that was second nature to him.

"Why don't I pop to the kitchen and see if I can find any cookies or something?" offered Maegan. It was simply an excuse to leave Fionn and Seraphina alone for a while, and when

no one objected, she made her exit.

Seraphina put her free arm around Fionn's shoulders. He released her hand and pivoted to hug her properly.

"I'm so thankful for you and Fred and Miss Lucy taking me in," he murmured. "I don't know what I would have done otherwise."

"You're a smart guy, Fionn. You would've done something."

"Something foolish." He knew in his heart of hearts he would have tried to go after Oran for revenge. Finding the Strandsburys was the one way he stopped himself. They showed him a better way than revenge, the Law of Love his mother had taught him. "My Angel, I would have been very stupid."

Seraphina hugged him tighter. "Yeah, that's probably true."

"Such confidence in me," Fionn teased.

"You then? No, zero confidence. You now? Every confidence."

Fionn bent down to kiss her forehead, but froze.

"Oh, dear," came Maegan's voice. "I think I've come at a bad time."

Fionn let go of Seraphina and looked at the floor, embarrassed. Seraphina shuffled her feet and blushed.

"Should I go back out for a moment, or—"

"No, you're fine," Seraphina grinned sheepishly. "You look a bit pale, Fionn. Maybe you should eat something."

Fionn looked like he was going to refuse until he noticed Maegan offering a tin of oatmeal scotchies. He smirked.

"You two spoil me," he said, taking a cookie.

"Of course we do," Maegan poured Fionn another cup of tea. She raised her cup. "In your forgiveness, you brought an end to Oran's hold on you. This is a day for celebration."

Seraphina lifted her cup. "Absolutely. You're free, Fionn! You're done with Oran and his ilk."

Fionn picked up his cup. "Now we are all free."

The three tapped their cups in a toast. "To freedom!"

Writers & Artists Wanted!

**LogoSophia Magazine is looking for
more contributors for**

- the blog - magazine articles & artwork -**
- Controversy Corner - graphic design**

Email us at Editors.LogoSophia@gmail.com

No one knows the load you bear
As you feed the Master's sheep,
Gently leading them with care,
Weeping oft with those who weep

No one sees the sleepless nights
Spent keeping the wolves away.
Who is there to count the fights,
Or hear the battle cries you pray?

No one feels your inner strife;
Doubts, temptations, trials sore,
That as you strive to save a life,
Yours needs saving all the more.

No mortal eyes may see, it's true,
The many wounds you help to mend
But the Lamb who shepherds you
Will reward you in the end.



Dear Pastor

By Stephen Kuehne

CONTROVERSY CORNER

What does your denomination think about abortion & contraceptives?

What is Controversy Corner?

Controversy Corner is the section of LogoSophia Magazine where people of different faith traditions discuss controversial topics in a succinct manner.

If you would like to submit a topic for discussion, please let us know!

Don't see your denomination represented? Help us fix that! We're always looking for new writers!

Disagree with the representative of your denomination? Write in and tell us why in a respectful manner, and we'll publish it in our next magazine under "Letters to the Editor & Comments"!

For these and any other questions, comments or suggestions, email us at Editors.LogoSophia@gmail.com.

Confessional Lutheran: J.C. Ellis

All Confessional Lutherans agree that abortion is murder and that life starts at conception but we disagree on contraceptives. Many believe that use of any contraceptives is wrong and many believe the use of any contraceptives that don't have the possibility of abortion are fine and good to use (e.g. nearly everyone believes that birth control pills are wrong to use because there is a possibility that they may abort a fertilized egg). To my knowledge no Confessional Lutheran Synod has any official stance on contraceptives and individuals are free to have their own opinions.

CONTROVERSY CORNER

What does your denomination think about abortion & contraceptives?

Presbyterian Church in America: Joshua David Ling

While there have been people within the PCA who have downplayed the significance of abortion relative to other sins, (Tim Keller comes to mind) it is almost universally treated as murder. Contraception however is generally considered up to one's conscience. Then things begin to break down into ignorance when you begin to speak of abortifacient contraception vs. prophylactic. Unfortunately, I do not believe most counselors or pastors are prepared to deal with those questions on such a detailed level.

The PCA has also been a large part of the legal fight against abortion in the United States from the Protestant side, especially in supporting pregnancy help centers.

Roman Catholic: Sarah Levesque

From the first century, the Catholic Church has taught that killing the unborn is a mortal sin. Today, the Catholic Church continues to affirm this stance, upholding the scientific fact that life begins at conception (also known as fertilization) and thus the rights of each person also begin at conception, including the right to life. She understands that many women are pressured to abort their children for many reasons, and she works (both directly and indirectly) to free women from the bondage of situations where killing their children seems to be their only viable option, as she knows that mothers are as much victims of abortion as their deceased children.

Contraceptives are also condemned by the Catholic Church, as they disorder the marital act, which should be a giving of one's whole self - including one's fertility - to one's spouse, ordered to the good of each other and the procreation and education of children.

For more information, read the Catechism of the Catholic Church section 2271 and following for abortion and/or 2366 and following for contraception.

Author Interview With...

ANGELA R. WATTS



Hello! Tell us a little about yourself?

Hey there! I'm Angela R. Watts, the bestselling author of The Infidel Books. I'm a freelance editor who loves working with her epic clients. When I'm not working, I'm raising animals, babysitting, or watching TV with my brother.

What is your latest book about?

Four unlikely companions must band together to escape the Realm of Bones and save their kingdom from a reign of darkness. That's the hook for GOLGOTHA, my debut fantasy from Blade of Truth Publishing.

When did you start writing, and why?

I started telling stories when I was super small. I couldn't write, but I insisted my mom write my narration down, and I illustrated my first book at age five or six. I never looked back or wondered why I wanted to write. It has always been a part of me.

How did you come up with the idea for this book specifically?

A combination of things: previous story ideas, inspiration from a favorite Biblical fiction series, a brief collab, and most of all... Jesus. Not everything I was "inspired" by made it into the story. It changed so much. So I'd say God helped me come up with the final ideas for this novel, ha!

What was it like writing your first book? How was this book different than any of your others?

I "wrote" my first book at a young age, as mentioned, and I wrote my first completed novella at age twelve....



Author Interview With...

ANGELA R. WATTS



It was fun and there was no pressure because only a few people read it as it was serialized on my blog.

It was different in every way, I think, since I didn't plot it, didn't outline, didn't have any idea of what I wanted, didn't have any themes in mind... It was all for fun. I challenged myself to have a certain amount posted each month, though. So I've always liked deadlines, ha!

How did you go about publishing your books?
Would you do it that way again? Why or why not?

I knew a few people who had self-published

and followed their lead. While I do not regret publishing a novella at sixteen, I would have done a lot differently if I had known better. The people I followed did their own covers and the editor that was popular in the circle missed a lot. But I am still happy I published then, I've just learned more about the craft and industry now.

What are you working on now? / Are you planning on writing more? / When is your next book going to be coming out?

I'm currently writing book two in the Remnant Trilogy. I'm a third of the way finished, so if all goes well, readers can expect the continuation of GOLGOTHA shortly...

I'm also publishing The Mercenary's Deception, The Infidel Books 3, this summer!

Finding God in Anime: A Devotional for Otakus releases this spring and I have a few devos in this collaboration (and was one of the editors for it).

I have a few more things brewing, but you will have to follow along to see what else is coming...

Can you tell us about your other books?

The Infidel Books is a bestselling post-apocalyptic thriller series.



Author Interview With...

ANGELA R. WATTS



THE DIVIDED NATION is endorsed by NYT and USA Today bestseller Lt Col Rip Rawlings and The Real Book Spy. The series follows civilians and gangsters as they try to survive the Second Civil War... and end it.

Why do you write?

Because I have to.
Seriously.

Writing is my ministry. It helps me reach people, challenge them, brighten their day, and so much more.

What helps you to write? Music, pets, reading, specific pen, etc.?

I live in a bigger household and on a farm. I can't be choosy, haha! As long as I have my music playlists, I can write about anywhere.

What has writing taught you?

It has taught me more than I can ever say. It has taught me to forgive and heal. It has taught me to let go. It has taught me to be bold.

Each novel of mine contains themes or lessons that pained me to write. A piece (or two) of my heart is in every novel I publish. If I can't learn something from a story, if writing a story doesn't scare me... I don't do it.

Who are you inspired by in your writing?

Growing up, I adored Frank Peretti, Ted Dekker, and Francine Rivers. These three authors inspired me to write what God told me to and dream big. Nowadays, I also respect and admire Robert Liparulo, Vince Flynn, and a few Indie authors.

What is your advice for writers?

Write without caring what other people say.



Author Interview With...

ANGELA R. WATTS



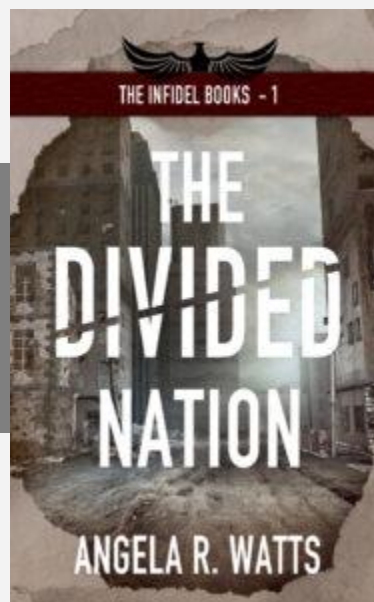
The only person you should listen to with your whole heart while working on a project is the Lord.

So, sit down, pray, and write. Don't allow distractions to take you away from the story God has placed in your heart!

Is there anything else you want to add?

Thanks so much for having me!

Like what you see? Find Angela's books, her social media information and more on her website, angelarwatts.com. Check out the covers of her books below!





correcting **THE SINNER** *By Sarah Levesque*

Many of the Spiritual Works of Mercy are things we do without thinking of their spiritual significance. Instructing the ignorant is relatively simple (in theory), whether it's children or coworkers or people who will ignore us on the internet; counselling the doubtful often comes in the form of late night texts for me; being patient with those around us is an every-day affair... These are all things many of us do on a regular basis. Forgiving offenses and praying for the living and the dead are also fairly typical of the practicing Christian. But the first Work on the list is more difficult than all the others put together, or at least it can seem that way.

How do we tell a cohabiting couple that they are living in sin? Or condemn the abortion someone had years ago without condemning the person they are now? How do we point out the faults of a person who refuses to hear us? And how do we reconcile this Work with Matthew 7:1-5, which reads,

“Do not judge, so that you may not be judged. For with the judgement you make you will be judged, and the measure you give will be the measure you get. Why do you see the speck in your neighbor's eye, but do not notice the log in your own eye? Or how can you say to your neighbor, “Let me take the speck out of your eye” while the log is in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your neighbor's eye” (NRSV)?

Well, first let's look at sinners and sin. What is a sin? When my high school students ask that, I tell them, “It's when you don't choose God and what He wants.” We have a choice every minute of every day: God or not-God, what He wants or what He does not want. One of my students asked, “Well, how do we know what He wants? It's not like He wrote it down.” Having a Bible at hand, I picked it up and waved it around, saying “Oh yes, He did!”

I would hope that we're all pretty familiar with the Ten Commandments, and while these are definitely of immense importance, they are not the only rules in the Bible. If we take the time to go through Deuteronomy (literally “The Second Law” or “The Second Telling of the Law”) and Leviticus, we find a multitude of other laws. Now, most of these are directed at the Jewish people to teach them about justice (as opposed to the might-makes-right mindset they had before receiving the law) or to help them stay separate from their idol-worshipping neighbors. These were nullified when Jesus made the New Covenant of mercy with the whole world. But there's a third category of laws in these Old Testament books – moral laws. And as God is unchanging, these likewise remain the same, as true today as they were thousands of years ago. The vast majority of these include worshipping idols, incorrectly worshipping God, or sexual sins, while pride, deceitfulness, hate, causing harm, and apathy to the needy are also mentioned. All these things are so offensive to the Lord that the word “abominable” or “forbidden” is used. That's a pretty hard line right there.

There is also a hierarchy of priorities that we are supposed to live by. Obviously, God is supposed to come first. We know this in our heads, but we often don't live it out. How often do we sit in church, or in prayer, and let our minds run wild? I'm certainly guilty of that. Or how often do we decide prayer could come later, and when 'later' never comes we shrug and say "tomorrow"? This is certainly choosing not-God.

Our next priority ought to be our families. The needy are also important – see the Corporal Works of Mercy for more on that. To choose to do something else when there is something of a higher priority waiting would be a not-God choice. We make these choices all the time. I actually paused writing this article to prioritize the dirty dishes, not once but twice, for while God gave me this magazine, He wants me to prioritize my family's needs first. I often need reminding of that; it is just so easy to think 'this chore can wait but I need to be at work or at this appointment by this specific time...' but that is not the mindset we ought to have.

How many times do we put ourselves first? How often do we decide to scroll social media, watch YouTube or TikTok or TV instead of doing what we ought to do, or instead of interacting with the people around us? While it's not a sin to utilize social media or watch videos or TV, we need to ask ourselves if this has become a habitual priority, instead of prioritizing those around us, for these things should be the last on the list.

Our priorities should be as follows:

God
Family
Work/Education/Other People (friends, coworkers, the needy, etc)
Self

Now of course, this list is a bit nebulous. Sometimes we must put our jobs before other things temporarily (though work should never come before God), for these are providing for our families. And if someone is in school, that also should come before many things, with the same caveat. The needy should always be helped whenever possible, but they generally should not be prioritized over family (though it could be argued that helping them is helping God). And of course, introverted people might have to prioritize their recharge time. But this is a start.

Once we recognize that we have also chosen not-God and things He would not have us do, that we are also sinners, we need to do something about it. This is why the Catholic Church has the Sacrament of Confession, also called Reconciliation, or Penance. Each name reflects a different aspect of the Sacrament, in which a person confesses their sins to a priest who, as God's instrument, then absolves the penitent of his sins in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, and gives him a penance – that is, a prayer or action to perform to atone for his sins. Not that anyone can fully atone for his own sins, but through Jesus' Passion, Death and Resurrection, He has atoned for the sins of all. Which you probably already know.

With our sins confessed and absolved, and striving prayerfully to follow the practical advice of our priest confessors to help us sin no more, can we now admonish sinners?

Perhaps.

First, we must consider *why* we want to admonish the sinner in question. Is it out of a spirit of judgement, of pride, or of resentment? If so, back to confession. However, if we wish to help the sinner out of love for him – that is, we will the highest good for him – or if we're honestly concerned for the wellbeing of his soul and his relationship with God, then we're on the right track. But we need to remember to love the sinner, hate the sin. This old phrase means we need to separate the sinner from his sin in our minds. He is not his sin and his sin is not him, merely an action or set of actions he has chosen. We need to forgive the sinner without dismissing the sin, and avoid harboring a grudge without giving a free pass or making the sin seem permissible.

Finally, it might be helpful to evaluate why the person is sinning, if possible. Is it out of ignorance (he doesn't know it is a sin)? Is it out of habit? Is it out of defiance? Each needs a different approach. Ignorance necessitates gentle instruction. Habit tends to require accountability. Defiance is best left to prayer, positive reinforcement of good habits, and strong role modeling, I think. Prayer is vital before and after correcting a

a sinner of any sort. Without prayer or without love, any effort will likely be futile. Even with both, we might not see the fruits of our effort, but even planting seeds is important.

Of course, the question we all want to know is “how the heck do I approach this dicey subject?” But there is no one-size-fits-all answer. It depends on the relationship we have with the person in question, it depends on his background and ours, it depends on why he’s sinning as mentioned earlier, and there are many other variables. Sometimes there might be a ‘right moment’ when the sinner is honestly seeking advice or truth. Sometimes there is no ‘right moment’. Sometimes it’s not our place. But when it is, we need to send up a prayer to the Holy Spirit for the right words, keep it clear that we are not judging him and that we are not equating him with his sin, and do our best to show him that we will his good. Sometimes explanation is necessary to show why something is sinful, so be ready to answer questions. Be ready to be ignored, scoffed at or rejected. But don’t let that scare you away. We are called to correct sinners; may we do it with the humble but powerful love of Christ.





Pursuer

By Michala Hampton

You're a wanderer who has traveled
far

Away from where you came
Your heart grows heavier with each
weary step

And you fear you'll never be the
same

You've been running for too long
I know every place you've been
There is nothing you can hide from
Me

Including all your sins

I know the sorrows that plague you
I see the tears you cry
But the last time that we met
Was not the last goodbye

Don't you know, My darling
That I hear your desperate screams
Don't pull away, draw close to Me
For I am the One who will redeem


I am right here where you left Me
And I won't let you walk alone
I see the tender hurts you carry
Your name is not unknown

I knew you would be the one
Who would stray far from the
ninety-nine

But I am determined to bring you
back
Because I have called you to be Mine

Keep running if you will
But I hear your agonizing pleas
My grace will wash over your
brokenness
And bring you to your knees

I loved you at your darkest
Even when you didn't love Me back
I am overflowing with mercy and
compassion
In these I will never lack



I cross rivers and climb mountains
In pursuit of you whom I love
For though you doubt your worth and
value
You alone are more than enough

I am the God of second chances
I bring back the wayward souls
You come to Me with your shattered
pieces
And I will make you whole

Oh, prodigal child of Mine
You haven't seen what I can do
Come running back to where you
belong
And watch Me work a miracle in you

I know you are bound by heavy chains
That only I can break to set you free
But in your crippling shame and guilt
You are afraid to return to Me

I will always take you back
No matter what you've done wrong
I will be the strong foundation
That your feet will firmly stand upon

You're not too far out of My reach
Steadfast love will find a way
I will restore what you have lost
And you will be forever changed

Do not listen to the voices of the
world
Do not fear what I will say or do
I am lowly in heart, beloved
I am not angry with you

This chapter is not your forever
The valley of death will not
overcome you
You will rise from the darkness into
the light
And you will be made new

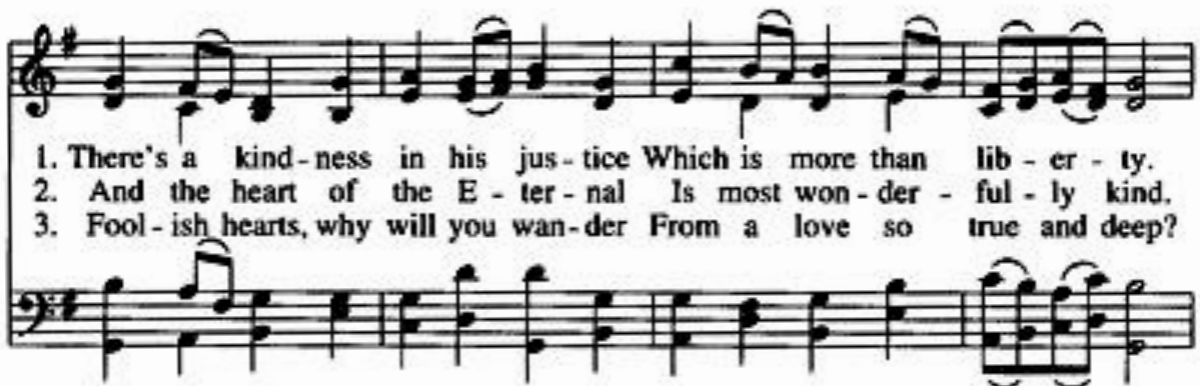
I am waiting here with open arms
And following close as you aimlessly
roam
I won't stop pursuing you, My child
For I, your Father, will bring you
home

There's A Wideness In God's Mercy

By Frederick William Faber (1862)



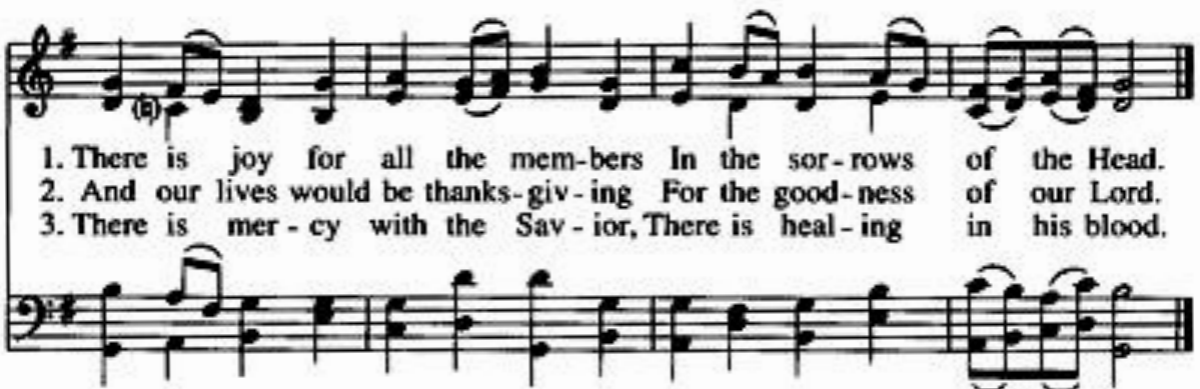
1. There's a wide-ness in God's mer-cy Like the wide-ness of the sea;
2. For the love of God is broad-er Than the meas-ures of our mind,
3. Trou-bled souls, why will you scat-ter Like a crowd of fright-ened sheep?



1. There's a kind-ness in his jus-tice Which is more than lib - er - ty.
2. And the heart of the E - ter - nal Is most won - der - ful - ly kind,
3. Fool - ish hearts, why will you wan-der From a love so true and deep?



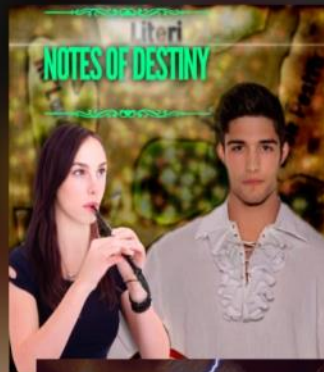
1. There is plen - ti - ful re-demp-tion In the blood that has been shed;
2. If our love were but more sim-ple We should take him at his word,
3. There is wel-come for the sin-ner And more grac-es for the good;



1. There is joy for all the mem-bers In the sor-rows of the Head.
2. And our lives would be thanks-giv-ing For the good-ness of our Lord.
3. There is mer-cy with the Sav-ior, There is heal-ing in his blood.

4. For the love of God is broader than the measures of the mind,
and the heart of the Eternal is most wonderfully kind.
If our love were but more simple, we should rest upon God's word,
and our lives would be illumined by the presence of our Lord.

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The Power of Prayer

By Amanda Pizzolatto

A lot can be said about the Seven Spiritual Works of Mercy. For those who aren't familiar with the list, they are as follows: instructing the ignorant, counseling the doubtful, admonishing the sinners, bearing wrongs patiently, forgiving offences willingly, comforting the afflicted, and praying for the living and the dead. Much can be said about each one, and much has been said about each one already, but for this article, I will focus more on praying for the living and the dead.

Praying... a lot can be said about this just in general. Some will argue that prayer does nothing as it actually doesn't do anything to alleviate someone else's pain or grief. That argument also pops up when it comes to injustice. But prayer is so much more than that. It is handing over the reins to God, asking Him to do for others what you yourself cannot. It's why many people who cannot do things for others because of time or distance turn to prayer. For, after all, words can only go so far as well, even though we do place a lot of value on them. Prayer is but a form of communication with God. We pray to ask, to beg forgiveness, to offer thanksgiving, to say "I love you". We also pray for others. And sometimes, when we ask God for something, the answer can be a no, whether because it isn't time, or something better is coming, or it's simply not good for you or the person you're praying for. Many saints are known for their lives of prayer, but a select few come to mind when talking about praying for the living and the dead.



Saint Monica is a particularly well-known saint when it comes to praying for the souls of the living, her son Augustine most especially. Yes, it took years and years of constant praying, but it paid off. Not only did her son convert, but he was baptized together with his own son and went on to become a great Doctor of the Church. In this case, St. Monica had to wait for what she prayed for, but she did eventually get it.

rules of the day, Rita's two boys were expected to avenge their father. Rita, however, did not want her boys to kill anyone, so she begged the Lord to take her sons. He did take them, she forgave her husband's murderers, and was finally able to become what she had always wanted to be, a nun. So while yes, she had to wait before becoming a nun, her requests for her sons were answered in a more prompt manner to prevent them from continuing the bloodshed.

Saint Rita of Cascia, on the other hand, got her prayers answered a little more quickly, but time was of the essence. She did have to pray a long time before her husband finally converted and became a better man, but by then he had made many enemies and they wanted him dead. One day they got their chance and murdered her husband. As per the



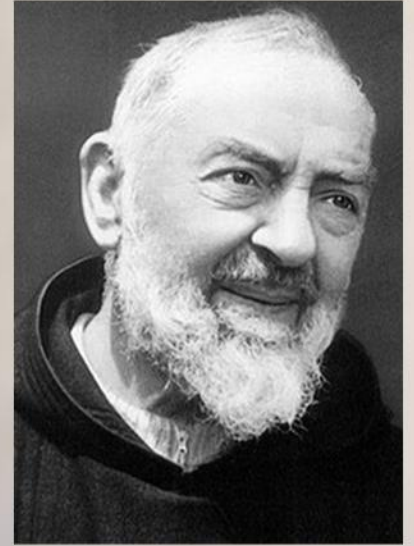


Saint Gertrude the Great gave us one of the best-known, or at the very least, one of the most used prayers, for the souls in Purgatory. When Jesus gave her the prayer, he told her that when it was said well a thousand souls would be released from Purgatory. Just imagine, a thousand souls each time this prayer is uttered lovingly and faithfully. Oh how many souls must still linger then in Purgatory? How many times was it not said well? We must continue to pray for them, that they may enter into the presence of God all the more quickly.

St. Padre Pio was allowed to interact with a few souls from Purgatory. They all asked for prayers to help them get into Heaven faster. Some got in fairly quickly, others had to wait a little longer to cross that line into Heaven. But St. Padre Pio continued to pray for the souls in Purgatory, regardless

of if he knew them or not, because he firmly believed that they really needed our help, and by golly he was going to give it to them.

These are just a few of the examples of saints praying for the living and the dead. As one can tell, their prayers were answered. For some it took time and patience as well as prayer, others got their prayers answered right away. Noted, these were all examples of praying for others, not praying for one's own material gain, safety, or health. When it comes to those things, it is a matter of what God knows to be best. But for souls, it usually is a yes, there's just time involved because, as you would wash a dirty dish, sometimes you have to put in the time to get that soul fully clean. As in, you have to pray hard to help that soul get ready for a good cleaning. Change takes time, and God is very, very patient. Isn't it wonderful to have such an understanding, patient, and merciful Lord? So don't give up hope on that loved one who has left the Faith or who might have gone into Purgatory. Pray for them, pray as well as you can, pray whenever you think of them. Every little bit helps, and maybe you'll be able to see each other in Paradise.



The Prayer of St. Gertrude

Eternal Father,
I offer Thee the Most Precious Blood of Thy Divine Son, Jesus,
in union with the masses said throughout the world today,
for all the holy souls in purgatory,
for sinners everywhere,
for sinners in the universal church,
those in my own home and within my family.
Amen.

Book & Media Recommendations

Dear Wormwood by The Oh Hellos. This album takes a look at the nature of love and it's dark opposite: not hate, but rather using the beloved. Inspired by the works of C.S. Lewis, (keen fans can find references to Narnia, The Screwtape Letters, and Till We Have Faces, among others) this album will make you want to sing, dance, and cry. -TK

Remington Steele (1982 TV Series) This TV series stars Pierce Brosnan and Stephanie Zimbalist as a con artist who uses a young woman's detective agency to turn over a new leaf. One of my favorite 80s shows, viewers will want to find out more about the mysterious Remington (Brosnan) and wonder how Laura (Zimbalist) will get herself out of the latest jam. -TK

The Ten Commandments (1956, dir. Cecil B. DeMille) is the Bible motion picture epic that all other Bible motion picture epics aspire to be. Charlton Heston delivers a memorable, powerful, and charismatic performance as Moses, the best-loved prince of Egypt turned reluctant deliverer of the Hebrew slaves, and is supported by a who's-who of Golden Age Hollywood royalty. Beautifully directed—as well as narrated—by Cecil B. DeMille, the film seeks to answer the question posed by the director in his introduction: Are men the property of the state or are they free souls under God?

-Monica

Laddie by Gene Stratton-Porter - this lovely book is set in rural Indiana in the late 1800s. Told by the youngest child of eleven, the tale relates the story of the younger children of the Stanton family as the youngest goes to school for the first time and her favorite older brother falls in love, with other children in between providing excitement and amusement and rounding out the family nicely. Very well written, as are all the Stratton-Porter books I've read. -Sarah

Thunderbirds Are Go (Amazon Prime show, 2016-2018) is a CGI remake of the British marionette show *The Thunderbirds* from the 1960s. It's about a family of young men who use the best and fastest technology to save people around the world, and fight off a few villains along the way.

-Amanda

more

Book & Media Recommendations

Enchanted (Disney movie, 2007). Sometimes you need to kick back and take your mind off the world with a lighthearted movie. Enchanted follows Giselle, a sheltered fairy tale girl who lives in the woods with her animal friends to clean for her, as she faces New York City by singing, dancing, and generally being oblivious to the real world while her devoted Prince Charming does everything in his power to find her. Great music and lots of laughs. - Sarah

What do YOU
want to
suggest?

Let us know at Editors.
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Seeking Persephone by Sarah M. Eden is the first book in the Lancaster Family series, set in the Regency era. The Lancasters are named after figures in Greek myths and their romances have some similarities with the myths, just, of course, in the flowery Jane Austen style.
-Amanda

Endeavour (TV series, 2012-2020) is the prequel to the classic series *Inspector Morse* (followed by its sequel, *Lewis*) based on the novels by Colin Dexter. *Endeavour* follows Morse as a young man through Oxford and the shifting culture of the 1960s and '70s as he solves crime, listens to opera, and becomes the crotchety old man detective that we vaguely remember our parents watching on PBS. -Monica

**The Well at the
World's End** by
William Morris
-Ian

The Emperor's New Groove (Disney film, 2000) A fun, lighthearted movie that finds Pacha, an honest peasant, leading the young Emperor-turned-llama Kuzco back to the palace, teaching him along the way how to be a good person by being a good example and forgiving Kuzco again and again. A good movie for adults and children alike.

THE WRATH OF GOD

A MEDITATION ON THE IMPRECATORY PSALMS

BY IAN WILSON

Among the most controversial passages in Scripture are the imprecatory Psalms. "Imprecatory" isn't a word we use much these days; it means to curse someone or something. The Psalmists who wrote these seem to be extremely angry at the unjust persons in their lives. This sort of hatred seems to be at odds with Christ's command to love one's enemies. Psalms 69 and 109, for example, may be problematic for many believers today. So how are Christians supposed to take these verses? Do these Psalmists get a pass? There are several possible meanings one can glean in the light of the Gospel.

1) THEIR HEARTS WERE HARD

One of the interpretations I have read is that God allowed the psalmists to write these angry Psalms because their hearts were hard. The command to love one's enemies had not come yet, and God had not yet poured His Spirit on all people, giving them the ability to love their enemies.

This particular explanation, while it makes a modicum of sense, does not fit well with the character of God in my mind. If God is eternal and never changing, and all Scripture is God-breathed, how could he allow such sentiments to be harbored?

2) SPIRITUAL WARFARE

In Church Tradition, the imprecatory psalms are used for spiritual warfare. The curses are employed in the battle against the demonic powers alive in our world. Make no mistake; demons are abroad in this world, and our most powerful weapon is the Word of God.

3) PROPHECY

Another line of thought is that the curses are not to be taken at mere face value, but are in fact prophecies of what will befall those who persecute the righteous and transgress God's command. Along this line of thought, many of these prophecies have already been fulfilled, or will be fulfilled in the final judgement. This is most certainly the case in Psalm 11:6.

4) A CALL TO REPENTANCE

Along with prophecy, these Psalms may serve as a warning to sinners that their days are numbered, and to draw them to repentance. Scripture is replete with prophetic warnings and calls to radical repentance. It is also a reminder that sometimes divine punishment is the only thing that will bring people back to God. As Archbishop Fulton Sheen said: "Sometimes the only way the Good Lord can get into some hearts is to break them." Indeed, the Apostle Paul commanded the church in Corinth to "hand this man over to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, so that his spirit may be saved on the day of the Lord" (1 Cor 5:5).

Our role here is clear; if we are to pray these Psalms in the right way, we must keep in mind that they must only be used under certain circumstances. We cannot harbor bitterness and anger toward our earthly enemies; rather, we must pray these prayers that through the Lord's discipline, they may repent, and be reconciled. But with the spiritual powers of this world we must never be reconciled.

A Song of Emrys



Ian Wilson

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Saint Joseph

And The Spiritual Works Of Mercy

By Sarah Levesque

Saint Joseph must have been a pretty stellar guy. After all, God chose to perfect a woman for Jesus' mother; surely he would choose someone holy to be her husband and the foster father of His son. But the Bible tells us little more than the fact that he was a righteous man who heard and obeyed God's voice.

In theory, being a righteous man, Joseph probably did spiritual works of mercy on a regular basis. Many of us have difficulty doing these seven acts, but Joseph's difficulties were quite different from ours. Most people have opportunities to practice them regularly in their home lives, but Joseph lived with his sinless wife and her perfect, sinless son. No opportunity to admonish sinners there, nor bear wrongs patiently or forgive offenses. It was also dubious that Mary and Jesus were doubtful, which would leave Joseph unable to council them in their doubt. He probably did get to instruct the ignorant by teaching young Jesus how to be a carpenter, and it is likely he comforted Mary when her parents died. It is also reasonable to think that he may have prayed for Mary and Jesus, though they were both already perfect.

Of course, this is not to say that Joseph did not practice the spiritual works of mercy outside the home. He most likely used them when he interacted with other people in his worship, in the marketplace, in the synagogue, and on their various journeys.

Part of me thinks living with the two holiest people in history would make Joseph's home life pretty easy. However, it may have been difficult if Joseph realized that anything that went wrong was almost definitely his fault (the other option being a fault of someone outside the home). But, sadly, all we have on this is conjecture and inference. But maybe, someday, if we get to Heaven, we can ask Saint Joseph himself.



Monica Murray Derr

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Bible Trivia!

Answers on the following page

- 1) How many children did Abraham have?
 - A. 1
 - B. 2
 - C. 3
 - D. 8
- 2) Who were the Judges in the Book of Judges?
 - A. People who judged criminals
 - B. People who ruled Israel
 - C. People who saved Israel from their enemies
 - D. People who were very holy
- 3) Which of the following did God call abominations detestable or loathsome in the Old Testament?
 - A. Witchcraft
 - B. Idolatry
 - C. Homosexual sex
 - D. All of the above
- 4) What number king of Israel was Solomon?
 - A. First
 - B. Second
 - C. Third
 - D. Fourth
- 5) Which is the longest Psalm?
 - A. 1
 - B. 43
 - C. 119
 - D. 117
- 6) Which is the shortest Psalm?
 - A. 1
 - B. 43
 - C. 119
 - D. 117
- 7) What is the second book in the New Testament?
 - A. Matthew
 - B. Luke
 - C. Mark
 - D. 1 Corinthians

Bible Quiz Answers!

Questions on the previous page

- 1) D: Abraham had 8 children: Ishmael (by Hagar, Sarah's slave woman), Isaac (by Sarah, his first wife), and Zimran, Jokshan, Medan, Midian, Ishbak and Shuah (by Keturah, his second wife) (see Genesis 16, 21, 25)
- 2) C: The judges were people who saved Israel from her enemies. Example include Samson, Barak and Deborah. Just because they saved Israel did not make them holy; many of them had some major sins.
- 3) D: All of the above: witchcraft, idolatry, and homosexual sex were all called abominable or detestable, among other things like cheating (see Deuteronomy 7:25; Leviticus 18:22, 27-30; Leviticus 20:13; Deuteronomy 25:13-19, 2 Kings 23:24)
- 4) C. Solomon was the third king of Israel, following Saul and David (see 1 Samuel 10 & 11, 1 Chronicles 11:3, 1 Kings 1).
- 5) C: The longest Psalm is Psalm 119, which has 176 verses!
- 6) D: The shortest Psalm is Psalm 117, which has only two verses!
Praise the Lord, all you nations; extol him, all you peoples. For great is his love toward us, and the faithfulness of the Lord endures forever. Praise the Lord.
- 7) C: The second book in the New Testament is the Gospel of Mark. This is the shortest Gospel at 16 chapters.

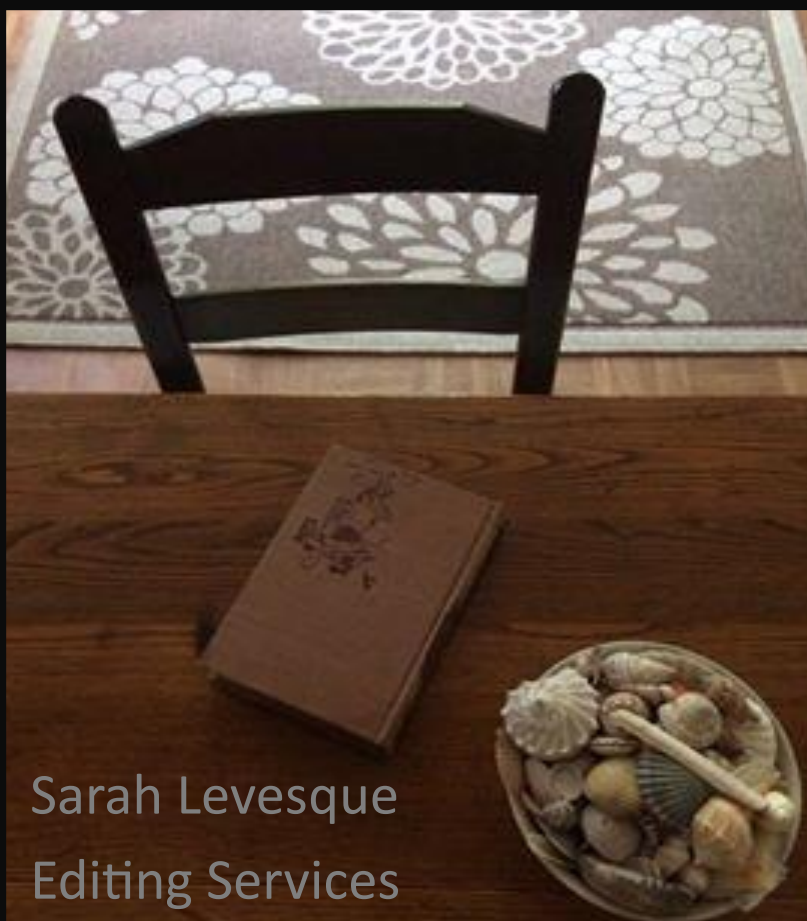
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