



The Word

*May Mary, Undoer of the
Knots, bless you forever!*

The Holy Father's Intentions for the Month of January 2017

Evangelization: That all Christians may be faithful to the Lord's teaching by striving with prayer and fraternal charity to restore ecclesial communion and by collaborating to meet the challenges facing humanity. *Beginning January of 2017 the Holy Father has one published intention rather than the two we have become accustomed to.*

Liturgical Reflections

The month of January is dedicated to the Holy Name of Jesus. "In the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those that are in heaven, on earth and under the earth" (Phil 2:10). Christ's name is chosen in heaven, and the Angel Gabriel announces it when he informs the Blessed Virgin of the incarnation: "Behold thou shalt conceive in thy womb and shalt bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus". It is a name that has marvelous implications, for it means "savior." The very name bespeaks the magnitude of His mission, His infinite love, a love that will cause Him to offer Himself up for us.

The name of Jesus is the sweetest of all names, and He who bears it is most worthy of all love. He who calls Jesus his friend can be assured that this friend is the most devoted and unselfish of all friends. Jesus is our all. In His name we may pray to the Father with assurance of being heard. In His name the Church administers all her sacraments. In His name she offers all her prayers and blesses homes, the fields, and the sick. In the name of Jesus she casts out evil spirits, and at the hour of our death bids us, "Go forth, Christian soul." She assures us that whoever shall call upon this name will be saved. When our soul has departed this life to seek its eternal home, the Church asks in the name of Jesus, "Eternal rest give unto him, O Lord."

— Benedict Baur, O.S.B.

In the first part of January we continue to rejoice and celebrate Christ's coming at Bethlehem and in our hearts. We have the wonderful feasts of Mary, Mother of God, where we honor Mary's highest title, and then we follow the Magi to the crib as they bring their gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh on Epiphany. Finally we reach the culmination of this season with the Baptism of Our Lord by St. John the Baptist. With a touch of sadness we take down our decorations and enter into the liturgical period known as Ordinary Time where we will devote ourselves to the mystery of Christ in its entirety.

This is a time of growth and an opportunity to allow the dignity of Sunday to shine forth prolonging the joy of Easter and Pentecost.

The opening days of January may be cold and nature bleak, but the domestic church still glows warm with the peace and joy of Christmas. We dedicated the New Year to Mary on the January 1st Solemnity honoring her as Mother of God; and on January 8, the Solemnity of Epiphany, we rejoice with her, as her Son is adored by the three Wise Men.

Our Herald, John, who ushered in the Advent season, is present once again to close Christmastide on the feast of the Baptism of Our Lord (The First Luminous Mystery), and to open the Season of Ordinary Time. He points to Jesus, the Lamb of God who unites time and eternity in the Eucharistic Sacrifice, and even January's diminishing darkness seems to echo St. John's prayer: "He must increase and I must decrease." In this liturgical season the Church eagerly follows Our Lord as he gathers his apostles and announces his mission. At Cana's wedding feast (The Second Luminous Mystery) he performs his first public miracle at the request of his Mother, and his disciples saw his glory and believed in him.

We, his present-day disciples pray for a like faith as we contemplate the eternal wedding feast of the Lamb and the unique role of the Blessed Mother in the plan of salvation. May we wholeheartedly obey her words of counsel: "Do whatever he tells you."

MINISTRY MUSINGS**Just a few “refresher” thoughts**

What are the goals of your service, your call?

Do you seek to represent the love of God and/or the support of the faith congregation?

Do you want to offer comfort or support; encouragement? Do you seek to be kind, attentive and honest?

The love of God is often communicated by a genuine interest in the person, their story and how they are coping with this experience without the anxious need to provide comfort.

To fully realize these in your service, your work is to know your own feelings and needs, and to attend to the feelings and needs of the person you are visiting.

When you get into the home or into the room:

Cheerful people can wear out their welcome as fast as those that are de-pressed or negative. Your goal will be to meet people where they are emotionally and spiritually. Practice an introduction that is short and clear about who you are, why you are here and what you know.

An effective introduction is in a tone that is neutral, confident, and open to moving in several directions. Do not quiz them or expect them to remember you.

“Hello, Ms. Jones.

I am Linda Smith, a visitor from ... Is this a good time for us to talk?”

Avoid asking, “Why are you here?” to people in the hospital; this information may be sensitive.

Instead you can say, “Tell me about your day today.”

As you enter, slow down and take notice of what is going on in the room, with the person and around you.

There are so many ways not to LISTEN; so many ways to interrupt, derail or distract. Listening is hard sacrificial work, requiring attention, maturity and skills. Some people ask too many questions

and interrogate the person, trying to be helpful.

Others are too passive and lack initiative in the visit.

Pep talks and encouragement can be a sign of your anxiety, and may not be helpful. Your

desire to help can actually harm the person, creating dependency and a sense of inadequacy.

The art is to be active enough to let the speaker decide the direction of the conversation.

Minimize advice, judgments, comparisons or corrections: **THIS IS MORE DIFFICULT THAN IT SOUNDS!**

Be confident and grateful in what you do, in WHO you represent and continue to be compassionate to those you visit. Thank you for your dedication to so many fragile people.

Taken from:

A GUIDE TO VISITING
THE SICK OR HOMEBOUND

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MARK YOUR CALENDARS!!!!!!!!!!

The honor of your presence is essential.

Saturday, February 25, 2017 we will be

“Reignited” by the enthusiasm of **Dr. Patricia Hughes** from the **Diocesan Office of Liturgy**.

This is a Required Training. Details will follow.

Special Thanks to Anna Barclay who has picked up the Second Sunday at the Hospital.

Ministry of Consolation Debriefing is Saturday January 21st. Carpooling will leave from Church at 8:20.

World Day of the Sick is approaching, February 11th, the Feast of Our Lady of Lourdes.

Thank you for all you do to make schedules work.

