



OUR LADY OF  
**LOURDES**  
CATHOLIC PARISH

# THE LOURDES WORD

FALL 2022



## Fall Theme *Favorite Saints*

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[www.ollindy.org](http://www.ollindy.org)

## Saints Alive

by Linda Abner

If someone had told me thirty years ago I'd be writing about my favorite saint, I'd have laughed at that person. I was a good Protestant girl who knew that, Yes, there was a Communion of Saints – believers who have died and gone to their reward – but we certainly didn't pray to them. Perish the thought! We laid everything on Jesus.

As I learned more about Catholicism, I read somewhere a suggestion of one of the differences between Protestant and Catholic devotion: When you worship in a Protestant church, Jesus is there, and it's wonderful. But when you worship in a Catholic church, Jesus and His whole family are there, and it's a celebration!

I've come to love and understand the saints as spiritual friends and examples: souls who, just like us, lived and worked, and had feet of clay and stiff necks, as well as misconceptions, heartache, sorrow and sometimes unimaginable burdens to bear. Yet they clung to their faith and give us encouragement and inspiration to cling to ours. And, since we know they now live in the Light and Love of God, we can trust that they also, in ways we can't understand, are praying for us, helping us on our way towards that same Light and Love, Jesus.

Then of course there is Mary, His Mother. I was always drawn to the Madonna, even as a small child. Images of her filled me with comfort and hope. She seemed so gentle and humble – so perfect. I wanted to be like her (thus setting the bar impossibly high from an early age!). Looking back now, I wonder if it wasn't Mary who, ever-so-motherly, led me to the Catholic Church.

I took St. Monica as my name saint when I was confirmed. I found in her a parallel to my own life – and then, most serendipitous! – I discovered her Feast Day was the same day as my son's birthday. Coincidence? I think not! I felt God's hand at a time I sorely needed it – and now ask St. Monica to pray for me to persevere with trust and faith, as she did.

I love the wisdom and kindness of St. Francis deSales, who advised, “Be patient with everyone, but above all with yourself.” And the simple, yet profound insight of St. Therese, the Little Flower, who knew “it is not death that will come for me, but God”, and “Charity consists in bearing with those who are unbearable.”

Another beautiful example, to me, of self-denial and trusting surrender is St. Mother Teresa of Calcutta. Despite feelings of abandonment, depression and doubt, she

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never wavered in her love of Jesus and mission to care for Him in “the poorest of the poor.” Her life is a picture of persevering prayer and faith in the face of personal darkness.

There are so many saints from whom we may draw encouragement and guidance! Not least of which are those unnamed saints, our own fathers, mothers, ancestors and loved ones who have gone before us.

I love the prayer of St. Jeanne Jugan, who founded The Little Sisters of the Poor: “We must always say, 'Blessed be God. Thank You, my God. Glory Be to God'. ”

May it always be so. Thank You, God, for the gift of our friends, the saints!



~Parish Mission Statement~

We, the faith community of Our Lady of Lourdes Parish, strive to live, share and be Christ in all we do.

# An Army of Saints

by Andrea Fleak

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A few years ago, a friend asked me who my Army of Saints is. At first, I didn't understand the question. What is an Army of Saints? So, I asked him to explain and share his. He began to identify different saints that he has a devotion to for various reasons and calls all these saints his Army, for they protect him and intercede for him. Who would be in my Army?



I first thought about St. Francis and St. Clare. The Franciscan order has played a significant role in my life. Francis heard the call to rebuild the church and, after physically rebuilding a church, realized that the call wasn't about a structure but about the people who make up the church. He cared about the

people and nature and wrote the *Canticle of Creation*. Fittingly, he is the patron saint of animals. Clare came from a wealthy family, but much to her family's disapproval, she turned her back on wealth to embrace poverty and follow Francis. She is the first woman to write a rule for a religious order. She is often seen holding a monstrance because when the convent was being attacked, Clare held a monstrance out her window, and the power of the Eucharist made it so no one could attack the convent. This saint duo story is one of courage, boldness, progress, and unwavering faith. Saint Francis and Saint Clare of Assisi, Pray for us.

St. Anthony of Padua is a saint that I actually know little about until I did some research. He was ordained a priest, but then after a few years was asked to leave so he could become a Franciscan; he worked alongside St. Francis. He is the patron saint of lost things, which put him in my Army. I am sure many of us rely on his intercession when looking for something lost – "Tony Tony, look around; something is lost and can't be found." Saint Anthony of Padua, Pray for us.

St. Teresa of Calcutta, or Mother Teresa as she is more commonly known, chose to go to the people of Calcutta in India. After three dreams where she heard the people and the Blessed Virgin Mary asking if she would refuse to bring them to Jesus, she said yes to the call to go to Calcutta. Many of us have seen on TV the work that she did or have read about it. Mother Teresa started the Missionaries of Charity. She wrote a beautiful reflection for her Sisters called, "I thirst for you." In this reflection, she reminds her Sisters (and all of us) that Jesus loves us so much that He thirsts for us to be with us and that no matter what, He is still seeking us, ready to love us as we are. "No matter how far you have strayed without a destination, no matter how often you have forgotten Me, no matter how many crosses you bear in this life; I want you to always remember one thing that will never change: I THIRST FOR YOU – just you, as you are." Mother Teresa reminds us of the dignity of each person and to see others with the eyes of Christ. Saint Teresa of Calcutta, Pray for us.

And finally, Mary, Undoer of Knots – Mary has always been a special devotion to me. This image of Mary, Undoer of Knots, is depicted with Mary in the middle with two angels, one on each side. All three are holding this white ribbon; for the angel on the right, the ribbon is in knots. Mary is undoing the knots as it is being passed to the angel on the left. The ribbon represents our lives, and the knots are those things that give us distress and keep us from Christ. Saint Irenaeus wrote, "The knot of Eve's disobedience was untied by the obedience of Mary; what the virgin Eve bound by her unbelief, the Virgin Mary loosened by her faith." Mary, Undoer of Knots, Pray for us.

These saints that make up my Army are just a few of the ones I call upon for their intercession and their exemplary life. They remind me to live and love boldly with compassion, to rely on God, and to pray for the difficult things in life. Who is your Army of Saints?



# Sister Catherine Labouré

by Marianne Markovich

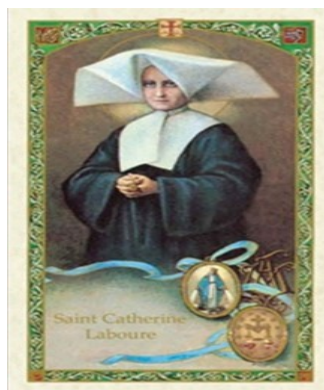
French Sister Catherine Labouré is my favorite saint. This is also my Confirmation name!

Most of us have heard of St. Vincent de Paul and St. Bernadette Soubirous, but few know of the connection to Sister Catherine. For me it started when my parents named my baby sister Mary Catherine Labouré about the time I was to start preparation for Confirmation. I was determined to find out who this French nun was and why she was so special to Mother Mary!

Sister Catherine was born a French peasant in 1806, and her own mother died when she was only 9 years old! When Catherine was 24 in 1830, she entered the convent of the Daughters of Charity of St. Vincent de Paul. After the death of her own mother, Sister had a great devotion to Mother Mary, and during the night of July 18, 1830, the Blessed Virgin said to Sister Catherine, "God wishes to entrust you with a mission." Mary conversed with Catherine, and on November 27, 1830, Mary appeared to Catherine in a brilliant light! Mary is standing on a globe and holds in hands a small ball surmounted by a cross. Mother Mary tells Catherine to have a medal struck on this model. Finally after some struggle with the clergy, on June 30, 1832, the first medals of "Mary Immaculate" were widely distributed to the sick and suffering of Paris! Because of conversions, healings and benefits, the medal quickly became known as the "Miraculous Medal." (I was given a lapel pin of that medal at Confirmation by my family, but it was lost several years ago!)

During my recent visit to Paris, I found Rue de Bac with the very Chapel where Catherine Labouré first learned of the "Immaculate Conception." She died in 1876, but the garden for the children of Paris still bears her name. I purchased another medal and had it blessed by a visiting Archbishop who brought a bus full of tourists from his hometown to say Mass at the chapel! Back when I was confirmed all those years ago, I never imagined I would be able to visit St. Catherine's convent chapel!

Side note: The first little booklet I read was Sister Catherine's story told to a little French girl named Marianne! So I changed the spelling of my name to match hers.  
Merci, Saint Catherine!



# That Person is a Saint

by Mark Hudson

My mother often referred to someone she admired as a saint. While making a simple statement, she brought to light that most saints are not formally canonized by the Church. All Saints' Day on November 1 is a day for the Church to celebrate all those who have gone before us in simple fidelity and love in the ordinary life of every day. We recognize those who have been compassionate despite all of their handicaps and responsibilities life brings.

This idea of sainthood for those who have lived a life of charity and compassion in the ordinary day-to-day aspects of life was recently brought home to me while watching the movie *St. Vincent*. It starred Bill Murray and Melissa McCarthy (not two actors one would normally associate with sainthood). Murray, as Vincent, drinks, goes to strip clubs, bets at racetracks, overspends his bank account balance, and owes his bookie a considerable amount of money. McCarthy plays a single mom, and she and her 10-year old son Oliver move in next door. The child has recently enrolled at a Catholic school in New York, and Vincent is asked to watch Oliver after school. At first Vincent approaches this reluctantly, but later views this as a source of income and agrees to watch Oliver as requested. As the movie progresses, the viewer notices a gradual transformation in Vincent. To his surprise, he enjoys Oliver; he enjoys his company, takes him places, and nurtures the child in his own strange way.



The topic highlighted in Oliver's religion class at St. Patrick's school is "what is a saint." The teacher explains that saints are all around us. They live in the ordinariness of life just as they are. They impart expressions of charity. As their friendship grows, Vincent displays a love for Oliver in a not-so-common way that one would expect. He teaches him how to fight the bullies at school, takes him to the race track explaining the betting process that includes how to bet the trifecta, and instructs him how to play keno and over and under. A very insightful action which Oliver witnesses occurs one day when he accompanies Vincent to visit his wife in the nursing home where she now lives as a result of Alzheimer's disease. While there, Oliver notices the degree of affection Vincent has for his wife even though she is not cognizant that Vincent is her husband.

The movie ends when the school has each student recognize a saint. Oliver thoroughly investigates Vincent's life. He discovers that the "mean old man" was awarded a bronze star by President Johnson, for heroic efforts while in Viet Nam. He observes that his neighbor feeds his cat expensive quality pet food even though his cupboard is empty. And he noticed the sweet manner in which he loved and cared for his wife. As the movie ends, Oliver names Vincent as his saint of choice in the school assembly. The child has recognized the beauty in living one's life with love and compassion.



*If you enjoy writing and would like to submit an article, poem, etc., then please see the last page of this publication.*

# St. Monica

by Kate Cabell

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I have always been drawn to stories of perseverance. One such example is St. Monica's persistence in praying for her son, Augustine. If any mother had a reason to worry, it was St. Monica.

Augustine lived a life of immorality and his mother prayed for his conversion for seventeen years. Being a mother who worries, I feel a kinship with her.

My role as mother and grandmother has been a blessing, but along with the role over the years has come a lot of worry over my children's safety and well-being. I try to let go at the end of the day, but it doesn't always work. I'm talking some; sometimes serious, sometimes unfounded, never-ending worry that often makes it difficult to fall asleep. Difficult that is until I was inspired to seek St. Monica's aid.

I asked St. Monica for her assistance in praying for my children. As I'm waiting to fall asleep I now have a routine of placing my children and anyone else for whom I want to pray in St. Monica's embrace. After awhile I had to think that St. Monica's arms could only stretch so far (silly, I know) so I asked our Blessed Mother, Mary to join her. I then decided that Mary's mother, St. Anne would be a perfect addition. I say an Our Father, a Hail Mary and a Memorare and ask that these wonderful mothers to ask God to guide my children in the ways of their sons and daughter. Sleep comes much easier after this.

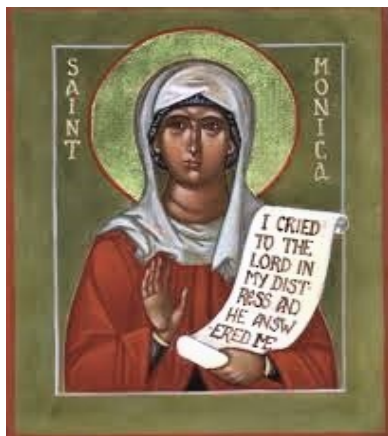
Curious, I asked my sister if she has a favorite saint and she named St. Francis of Assisi. Her very favorite, though, is Saint

Larry. Larry and she were married for 58 years when he passed away after a long battle with kidney disease. She often speaks of how much she misses his take charge attitude. He always knew what to do to keep her grounded and safe. She said she asks Saint Larry to talk to Jesus about their kids and grandkids. I love that when she receives communion she feels closest to him in the communion of saints. I can't imagine how non-believers bear the loss of loved ones.

A friend named Saint Joseph as his favorite saint. He said he remembers that in his childhood parish there was a statue of Saint Joseph holding the infant Jesus. Through this he always envisioned him as a kind, loving and compassionate person. He knew that he could have easily left Mary after she conceived Jesus but followed what he had been told by an angel of the Lord in a dream, that she had been conceived by the Holy Spirit and was carrying the savior of the world. For my friend, this formed a belief that in our lives we must follow what we are called to do which is sometimes challenging and confusing not only to us, but to our families and friends.

A priest friend of mine named as his favorites, Saint Francis of Assisi, Mother Theodore and Archbishop Romero, but he doesn't go to them on a regular basis. He said that he actually considers the Holy Spirit his patron saint. He said he calls upon the Holy Spirit before any major preaching, like a retreat or a significant funeral or even on the weekend when he doesn't think he has anything to offer.

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A fellow parishioner was telling me of his news that his wife is in remission. His great relief and his praise to God was palpable. His face was aglow with the wonder of God's love. I asked him, as we talked, if he had a favorite saint. He, being a proud Irishman, said "Saint Patrick!" But he said that he didn't really go to him for intercession anymore. I realized that his connection with God was so deep and pure that he didn't feel the need of an intercessor. He just goes straight to God with his needs.

We, as Catholics, are blessed to believe in the communion of saints who we join with and rely on to intercede for us to our God and to guide us in the ways of holiness.



*A Sonnet for St. Peter  
by Malcolm Guite*

*Impulsive master of misunderstanding  
You comfort me with all your big mistakes;  
Jumping the ship before you make the landing,  
Placing the bet before you know the stakes.  
I love the way you step out without knowing,  
The way you sometimes speak before you think,  
The way your broken faith is always growing,  
The way he holds you even when you sink.  
Born to a world that always tried to shame you,  
Your shaky ego vulnerable to shame,  
I love the way that Jesus chose to name you,  
Before you knew how to deserve that name.  
And in the end your Savior let you prove  
That each denial is undone by love.*



St. Francis, one of the best known and loved saints of all faiths worldwide, has the following prayer attributed to him. I say it daily on my morning walk. Below each line is my interpretation of the prayer.

## **Lord, make me a channel of your peace**

What can I do every day to make this happen? Smiling is a good place to start, paying it ahead for someone in need, opening a door for the elderly, preaching the Gospel, using words if you must.

## **Where there is hatred, let me sow love**

I know sometimes this can be very hard, especially in the difficult times in which we live; exhibit empathy, display compromise, be non-judgmental, show respect.

## **Where there is injury, pardon**

It is harder to admit you were wrong; realize words can be very hurtful, take a break or limit social media.

## **Where there is discord, unity**

Be the first person to extend your hand, shake, be compassionate; there are always two sides to every story, and it takes courage to compromise.

## **Where there is doubt, faith**

God does answer prayers but not always on your schedule, so trust in HIM and most importantly believe in HIM; always ask yourself what would Jesus do?

## **Where there is error, truth**

We are surrounded these days with error (from the media, social media and non-believers); believing, living and speaking the truth will always be correct, so take the high road.

## **Where there is despair, hope**

No one has the perfect life – again we are bombarded with advertising showing all smiles, beautiful cars, lovely homes, and perfect bodies; remember life is to be lived each day, so make it special, reach out to friends and family when in despair as they will often provide the hope you are seeking, and know God is always there.

## **Where there is sadness, joy**

This is the simplest for me since I am the eternal optimist; I wake with a smile and give them away freely every day, hoping that smile may make someone's day special.

## **Where there is darkness, light**

It is not always easy to see the light, but I know it's there; the challenge is finding it everyday.

*(continued on pg 9)*



## **O Divine Master, Grant that I may not so much seek:**

This is very challenging in our “me” society; giving to others means it comes back to you ten-fold.

### **To be consoled, as to console**

This could be a listening ear, a hug, a smile, just the simple gesture of holding one’s hand in silence; be in the moment for those in need.

### **To be understood, as to understand**

Try and put yourself in a person’s situation without judgment; be a good listener.

### **To be loved, as to love.**

Love God with your whole heart and soul, and love your neighbor as yourself.

### **For, it is in giving that we receive**

We receive blessing every day we are alive, breathing; it’s how we use the day, apply our talents, and share and give of ourselves that matter.

### **It is in pardoning, that we are pardoned**

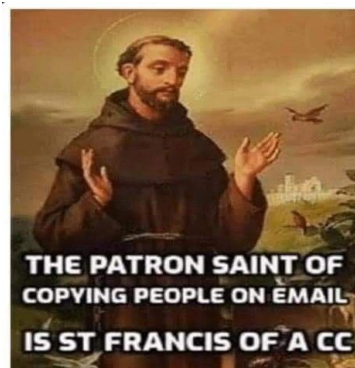
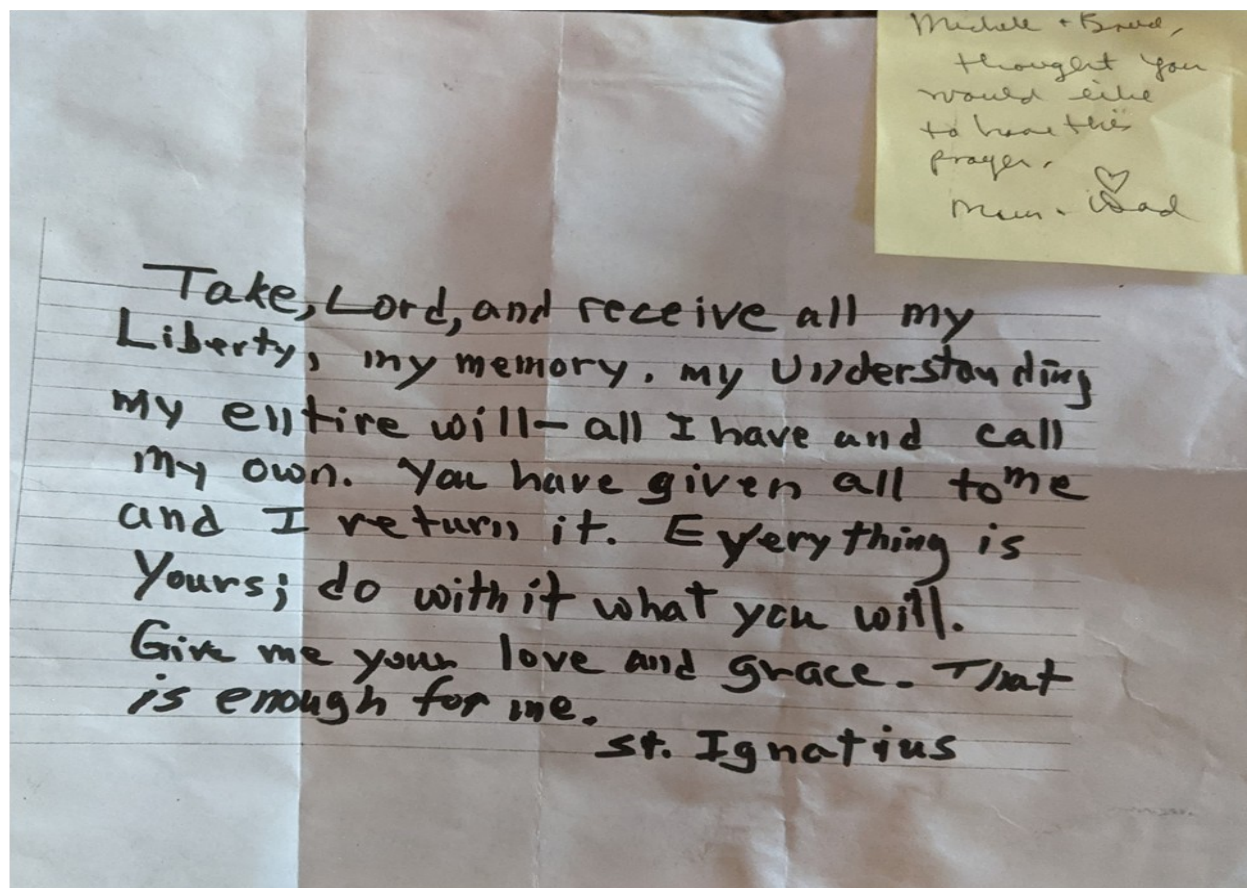
This can sometimes be very hard, but saying “I am sorry” are three very important words sometimes forgotten in our society today.

### **It is in dying that we are born to eternal life.**

Here is where we ARE judged by God regarding what we have done with our gifts He has given us, considering our choices in life; did we do our best?



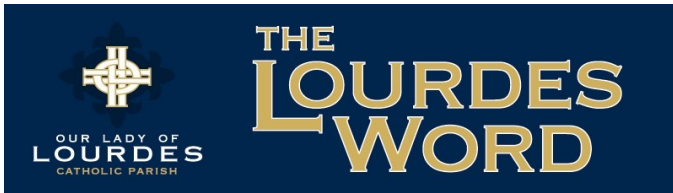
by Michele & Bruce Oertel



*Canticle of Creation ~ St. Francis of Assisi*

O Most High, all-powerful, good Lord God,  
to you belong praise, glory,  
honour and all blessing.  
Be praised, my Lord, for all your creation  
and especially for our Brother Sun,  
who brings us the day and the light;  
he is strong and shines magnificently.  
O Lord, we think of you when we look at him.  
Be praised, my Lord, for Sister Moon,  
and for the stars  
which you have set shining and lovely  
in the heavens.  
Be praised, my Lord,  
for our Brothers Wind and Air  
and every kind of weather  
by which you, Lord,  
uphold life in all your creatures.  
Be praised, my Lord, for Sister Water,  
who is very useful to us,  
and humble and precious and pure.  
Be praised, my Lord, for Brother Fire,  
through whom you give us light in the darkness:  
he is bright and lively and strong.  
Be praised, my Lord,  
for Sister Earth, our Mother,  
who nourishes us and sustains us,  
bringing forth  
fruits and vegetables of many kinds  
and flowers of many colours.  
Be praised, my Lord,  
for those who forgive for love of you;  
and for those  
who bear sickness and weakness  
in peace and patience  
- you will grant them a crown.  
Be praised, my Lord, for our Sister Death,  
whom we must all face.  
I praise and bless you, Lord,  
and I give thanks to you,  
and I will serve you in all humility.





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Our quarterly publication of *The Lourdes Word* is an attempt for us, the followers of Christ, to publicly reflect on our faith journey. Each edition has a specific theme. In this issue, readers were asked to tell us about their “*Favorite Saint*.”



We invite the parishioners of Our Lady of Lourdes to submit writings which they feel will help address the theme of the next publication. All submissions will be reviewed by the publication committee. Please note that due to space requirements, editing may be necessary. Therefore, please limit your submission to 525 words or fewer. The theme for the next edition will be “*The Sacrament of Baptism*.” The edited copy will be returned to the author for review before final publication. Please feel free to submit writings through the parish secretary.