

Healing in Purgatory

By Brother Cyril Stola, O.P.

We are all called to be saints. The Father desires that we be united in friendship with him in this life in order that we might forever dwell with him in heaven. The heavenly union with God is a perfect union that can begin on Earth, but it can also be inhibited by sin. Since it acts against this union, sin is the greatest evil of all. In the words of the Catechism, “nothing has worse consequences for sinners themselves, for the Church, and for the whole world” than sin (CCC 1488). When we sin, we cloud our consciences, build vices, and harden our hearts. Sin hurts our relationships with each other and with God. God’s mercy blots out our sins, but it does not automatically fix the ways in which sin warps us.

Over time, growth in grace and virtue can put our inner selves back into order. Throughout the course of life, the Holy Spirit takes repentant sinners and makes them radiant with divine life and estranges them from sin and vice. He especially effects this through prayer, the sacraments, and redemptive suffering. This process is one of purification. Those who fully embrace the Spirit’s actions live with hearts that seek God alone, and they immediately enter heaven when they die. Not all who revere God, however, come to such a point in life. Their time runs out before they’re fit for the heavenly union; they are united with God, but imperfectly so. Hope is not lost, however. In his mercy, God gives us an intermediate state between heaven and Earth where he purges away the sins and impurities that still inhibit our union with him. He gives us purgatory.

In purgatory, God puts men and women face to face with their sins. There, they fully understand how they acted against God, and they cannot grasp for any distraction or rationalization in facing even the smallest things that still separate them from God. Saint John Henry Newman puts this reckoning in stark terms in “The Dream of Gerontius.” In the poem, a guardian angel addresses his charge, an old man who just died a holy death with his sins absolved:

*And thou wilt hate and loathe thyself; for, though now
sinless, thou wilt feel that thou hast sinn’d, as never
thou didst feel.*

His state now allows him to see his past sins on a spiritual level; he hates that he committed such acts. This is a painful realization because sin is a painful reality. If we could see sin as it truly is—an offence against God—we would never sin. Purgation is like

physical therapy after surgery, it’s painful but ultimately it heals. God reveals sin in order to remove all traces of it and to bind up our injured souls.

Dante expresses the healing of purgatory beautifully at the end of the “Purgatorio”—the second part of his *Divine Comedy*. There, Beatrice chastises Dante for abandoning the love he had for her and God and for choosing to obsess over futile things instead. Faced with the shame and gravity of his sins, he weeps and then gets plunged into the waters of the Lethe. The Lethe, according to Greek mythology, makes one forget the whole of life. Dante, however, adapts this river to suit his higher vision. His Lethe makes one forget his sins and the warped mentality they gave him in life; it restores lost innocence and heals interior wounds. It makes a person like a little child, ready to enter the kingdom of heaven.

That purgatory purifies, heals, and brings souls to holiness is a great mercy and a source of hope. Even men and women who have struggled with sin all their lives, but not yet reached “sainthood” in this life, can be made perfect after death and thereafter dwell with God. Let us thank God for the gift of purgatory and pray for those who dwell there, that God’s work in them may be complete. ✠

All Souls Envelopes; All Souls Day is November 2

Get your All Souls envelopes in this weekend, October 26-27 so we can place envelopes on the altar and pray for your beloved dead by name—7 Masses in November.

Begin All Souls Novena on November 2

Available at the exits of the churches.

Praying the Rosary for Our Beloved Deceased on First Sundays at Our Lady of the Snow

All are welcome to pray the Rosary every **First Sunday** of the month at OLS at 9 a.m. before Mass. Members of the St. Theresa of Calcutta Mercy Group will lead the prayers. We will pray for the intention of gaining a plenary indulgence for those baptized Catholics who have died within our parish boundaries or who had their funerals at our churches. On **November 3** we will be praying for those who passed away in 2014, which includes: Dorothy Baierl, Barbara Baird, Wally Betray, Anna Muza and Johanna Hilbert.

St. Jerome considered this verse a clear proof of purgatory. **Malachi 3:3:**

“He will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, and he will purify the sons of Levi and refine them like gold and silver, till they present right offerings to the LORD.”

Mass Schedule for All Saints: Holy Day of Obligation

-Thursday, October 31

St. Ignatius, 5:30 p.m. [Matthew and Dani Hecker]

-Friday, November 1

St. Bernard, 8:30 a.m. [Keith and Debbie Morrison]

St. Anne, 5 p.m. [Scott and Donna Webb]

Our Lady, 6:45 p.m. [Dan and Diane Bielski]

St. Peter, 6:30 p.m. [James and Linda Mahon]

Eucharistic Adoration, StA, Oct 31, 6:30 pm-12:30 am

Please come and pray for conversion of hearts and reparation of sins occurring at the Circus Horrificus.

All Souls Mass at OLS on Saturday, November 2 at 9:30 a.m. This is All Souls Day—Start the Novena

Seminary Appeal: Second Collection in November

Coming the first or second weekend of November

First Friday Breakfasts for High-schoolers

Friday morning, November 1, at 8:30 a.m. at Java Lava in Granby. Free breakfast, one hour, good conversation.

Religious Education (RE) at Our Lady of the Snow on Thursday, October 31, is Cancelled

Comments about Gospel Vigilance

We are now standing in the face of the greatest historical confrontation humanity has ever experienced. I do not think the wide circle of the American Society, or the wide circle of the Christian Community, realize this fully. We are now facing the final confrontation between the Church and the anti-church, between the Gospel and the anti-gospel, between Christ and the antichrist. This confrontation lies within the plans of Divine Providence. It is, therefore, in God’s Plan, and it must be a trial which the Church must take up, and face courageously....

We must prepare ourselves to suffer great trials before long, such as will demand of us a disposition to give up even life, and a total dedication to Christ and for Christ. With your and my prayers, it is possible to mitigate the coming tribulation, but it is no longer possible to avert it, because only thus can the Church be effectually renewed. How many times has the renewal of the Church sprung from the shedding of blood? This time, too, it will not be otherwise. We must be strong and prepared and trust in Christ and in his Holy Mother and be very, very assiduous in praying the holy Rosary.

-Saint John Paul II

Wisdom of The Dialogue of St. Catherine

Summary of Chapter 36. There are three reproofs (corrections, warnings). God the Father says, “The first reproof was given when the Holy Spirit came upon the disciples...reproved the world with My Truth’s teaching, through the disciples’ mouths.” “This is a constant

reproof I bring to the world through the Holy Scriptures and through My servants.” “They cannot say, ‘I had no one to correct me,’ because I have shown them the truth.”

People are constantly being reminded. If they do not change their ways while they have time, they will be condemned in the second reproof, the point of death. Reminder from the Father to those who run away: “You received that lamp burning in holy Baptism, and you snuffed it out with the wind of your pride and vanity.”

“Paul, Apostle of Christ” Movie Nights

Fathers Michael and Peter want to have movie nights at all five churches with this movie. StA and StI, schedule with Fr. Michael; StB and OLS, Fr. Peter.

Calendar of Events

-Nov 1 (Fri). All Saints Day: Holy Day of Obligation.

-Nov 2 (Sat). All Souls Mass, OLS, 9:30 a.m.

-Nov 15 (Fri). Mass and Movie Night, StP; begin at 6 p.m.

-Dec 12 (Thu). OL of Guadalupe Mass, StP, 6:30 p.m.

Mass Collections, October 19 – 20

St. Anne	\$ 1926
St. Bernard	1118
Our Lady of the Snow	1355
St. Peter	656
St. Ignatius	399
Total	\$ 5454

Vocations Prayer Calendar

Please pray for our seminarians every day.

Sat—Luis Corral & John Croghan

Sun—Luis Mendes & Tony Davis

Mon—Jose Delgado & Patrick DiLoreto

Tue—Jason DiRito & James Finders

Wed—Micah Flores & Jonathan Francois

Thu—Amilcar Ramos & Thomas Gonzaga

Fri—Men and women applying for formation

Mass Intentions and Schedule for StA, StB, and OLS

KEY: StA = St. Anne; StB = St. Bernard;

OLS = Our Lady of the Snow

-Sat, Oct 26, StA, 5 p.m., People in our region/visitors

-Sun, Oct 27, StB, 7 a.m., Peter and Kathleen Brownell

-Sun, Oct 28, OLS, 9:30 a.m., Steve and Lisa Gatschet

Weekday Masses

-Mon, Oct 28, StA, 8:30 a.m., Diminish the Circus Hor.

-Tue, Oct 29, OLS, 7:30 a.m., Jordan and Victoria Goray

-Wed, Oct 30, StB, 8:30 a.m., Gilbert/Lorraine Maloney

-Thu, Oct 31, OLS, 8:30 a.m., Diminish the Circus Hor.

-Thu-Fri: **Holy Day of Obligation. All Saints Day**

Mass Intentions and Schedule for StP and StI

KEY: StP = St. Peter; StI = St. Ignatius (Walden)

-Sun, Oct 27, StP, 10 a.m., Benedict Kullman

-Sun, Oct 27, StI, 1 p.m., People in our region/visitors