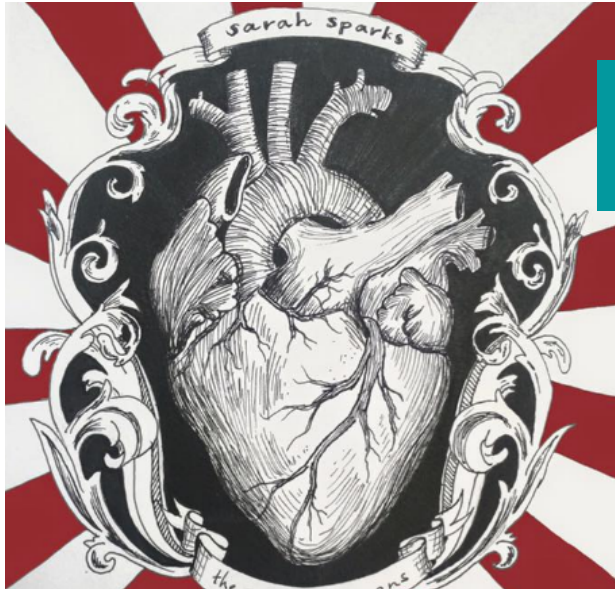


CANVAS & THE CLAY

Seeing The Work of the Divine Artist & Embracing Catholic Living

August 2021

Mary Kathryn Ladnier



PRAAYER IN SONG

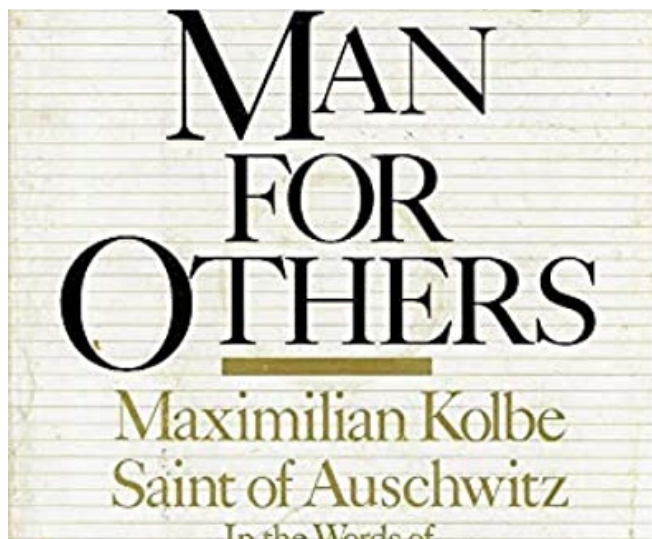
The Artist by Sarah Sparks

My roommate from college shared with me this song one day on campus. She asked me "Have you ever heard of Sarah Sparks?" She then introduced me to this young woman's album, *The Ways and the Means*. Every song on this album addresses a different way in which God works on our hearts. She played this song, *the Artist*, in particular saying it has really spoke to her. Sparks begins this song remembering the time she meets the Divine Artist. She speaks of offering her soul anew as a fresh canvas, a fresh medium for Him to paint on with His desires, His plans. She desires for Him to give her the brightest colors, the light and joy she receives from Him, for a beautiful future without any hardships. This is not what He chooses to place upon her. This prayer-filled song speaks to the ways and the means in which you and I should receive suffering, trials, and obstacles that are placed within our path: within the shadow of the Cross. If He allows hardships, it is to draw us closer to Him. He does not give us things we won't be able to handle when we have His grace.

TRUTH IN PODCAST

Episode 12: Demystifying St. Teresa Benedicta of the Cross (Edith Stein)

Looking for a good podcast to introduce you to the incredible Edith Stein, I came across this podcast from two years ago from the Discalced Carmelite Friars themselves. Br. Pier Giorgio, OCD spends this episode speaking of Edith, this patroness of theirs that is highly misunderstood and overlooked due to her intelligence. He takes time to "demystify" her from being a woman that is unreachable, unrelatable to the average layperson by speaking of her life, beyond her philosophical achievements and works. Fr Michael Joseph, OCD discusses with him the journey she takes throughout her life, beginning with her conversion to Catholicism from Judaism. She becomes a prominent Catholic women speaker throughout the world. She doesn't stop there as she becomes a Carmelite nun through her fascination with the heart of Theresa of Avila. She later will give her life within the gas chambers of Auschwitz for her beliefs and heritage. Although she is not acknowledged much in America, she is given the title of co-patroness of Europe from St. John Paul II upon her death. I encourage you to give it a listen. Her feast day is celebrated on August 9th.



WISDOM IN WORDS

Book: A Man for Others by Patricia Treece

Coming across this book on our bookshelf at home, looking to make another Franciscan friend, I picked up this phenomenal biography of Maximilian Kolbe. As someone that is usually attracted to the saint's writings themselves rather than a secondhand account, I did not know if I would enjoy this read; I would be mistaken! This account compiled by Treece brings to life this admirable, humble friar that was in love with serving Our Lady. She takes time to pull together interviews of individuals that would have known Kolbe throughout different stages in His life. Some of the accounts that speak closely to my heart are the firsthand accounts of the witness this middle-aged humble friar of Christ to his brothers and sisters in Auschwitz, suffering with them yet bringing them peace of heart in the tribulation also. This priest gave his life in a radical way to the hands of Our Lady, believing every hardship, whether it was famine, discouragement in his modern ministry of mass communication, or his physical beatings while in the work camp, it was all given to him to endure out of love and reparation for the hearts of Jesus and Mary. "All for the Immaculata" he would say until he entered Paradise, giving his life for the sake of another. His feast celebrates this day, August 14th, one day before we celebrate Our Lady's Assumption.



LOVE HIM TOTALLY

BEAUTY OF EXAMPLE

St Clare of Assisi

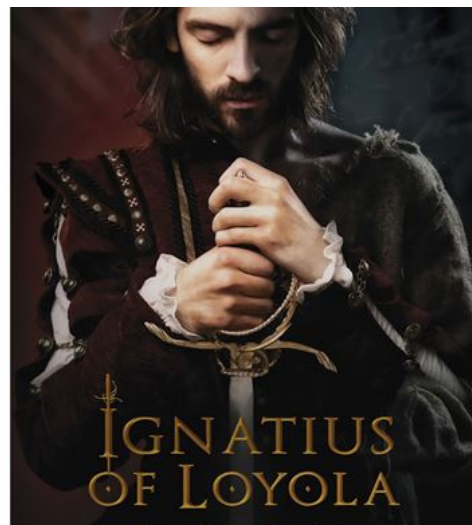
"Love Him totally, who gave Himself totally out of love for you."

Clare of Assisi, the daughter of a wealthy Count, quickly became intrigued with the powerful words of the Poor One, Francis, who had begun to have a reputation amidst the town. She was drawn to give her life in a radical way to the Lord as He had done, ridding oneself of all possessions for a greater freedom and service to the Lord. A beautiful young woman, her parents were against her following the lures of this town lunatic, yet Clare saw His wisdom and wanted to become one of his companions at the age of 15. Sneaking away from her home during the night with great courage at the age of 18, she sought refuge to the Portiuncula, the same chapel where the poor friars began to dwell. This night, she would choose to live this life in a new light, receiving a woolen habit and a simple rope in replacement of her jewels with a climax of Francis cutting her beautiful hair before the altar, Francis, not having a place for her to stay, as she was the first woman this Poverello, sent her to the refuge of a nearby Benedictine convent. Her family enraged demanded for her to leave, yet with overwhelming peace, she clung to the Altar. She began to develop a profound relationship with her Crucified Beloved there, speaking of contemplating and mirroring her Crucified Beloved, stripped and beaten out of love for her. She began to write with a princess of Bohemia, Agnes, who desired this simplistic life yet with fears of leaving. She would soon join her, Francis, drawn close to his beloved sister, by authority and rule asks Clare to become the abbess of the Second Order of Francis, the Poor Ladies. They soon would dwell in the ruins of San Damiano to dedicate their lives to the Lord. She is seen with monstrosity most regularly due to a particular story. Mother Clare said that if He was held from a window over the war zones of Perugia and Assisi, the neighboring towns, they would come to peace; they did so at once. She was aware of the protection, love, and care that her Beloved had for each of us in a radical way, only if we would in turn give back to him that same radical love with our whole being. Her feast day is celebrated August 11th.

CINEMA SPEAKS

Movie: Ignatius of Loyola

Although his feast was at the end of July, I think it is important to highlight this film on the Spiritual Master, St. Ignatius of Loyola. This film recently released with high definition brings to life this soldier, endowed with a longing for chivalry that would soon see the beauty of becoming a soldier for Christ upon his sickbed, through the inspirational lives of the saints. This wealthy one soon would become a poor pilgrim, like Francis and Dominic, before starting his own crusade of holy men. See Ignatius doing an all night vigil before the Blessed Virgin and giving his clothes to a beggar in exchange for a tunic in Mount Cassiano. See him within the caves of Manresa. See him undergoing trial in building rapport of his Spiritual Exercises. This saint will be brought to life before your eyes in a way you will never forget.



HEART OF MARY

This month of August, the Catholic Church is dedicated to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. This devotion gives us the opportunity to grow closer to the human heart of Our Lady, a mother who wants to love you with her tender care. I invite you to pray with the scenes of Luke Chapter 2. First in this passage, Our Lady's heart is mentioned when she is keeping and pondering the signs and wonders she has seen upon the birth of her Son. The second is when she has presented Jesus in the Temple, and Simeon prophesies to her that her Son will be a Sign of Contradiction. He says that she too will have to suffer for the salvation of souls, as a sword too will pierce her own heart. These passages lead us to begin to ponder the pains Our Lady would experience watching her Son's own heart being pierced before her own eyes. First receiving the myrrh at the manger, a costly embalming remedy, these words from Simeon's lips have solidified the foreshadowing of His death. Why would this pain be endured? For the sins you and I commit. Meditate on the Hearts of Jesus and Mary, pure and without stains of sin, yet they love you with such strong compassion that they say every day "Abba Father, not my will, but yours be done." They endure these swords out of love for you. What better way to console them than by stepping into the confessional, the door of mercy, this month with true sorrow for your sins. Sacred Heart of Jesus, have mercy on us. Immaculate Heart of Mary, Our Lady of Fatima, pray for us.