

CANVAS & THE CLAY

Seeing The Work of the Divine Artist & Embracing Catholic Living

April 2022

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PRAAYER IN SONG

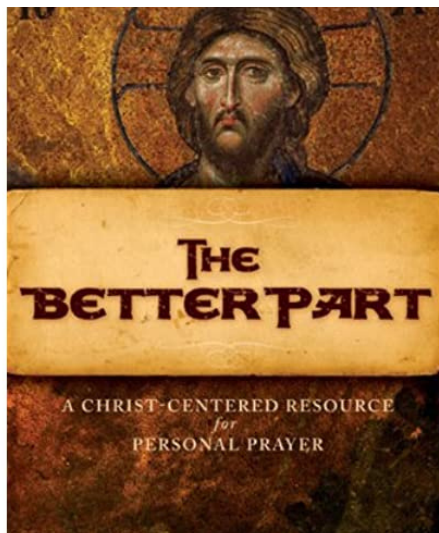
Graves into Gardens by Elevation Worship

This very popular song of worship released by Elevation in the midst of quarantine has been played through speakers across the nation these past couple of years. I've heard it in bookstores, car radios, social media posts, and even live worship. It is a song of Resurrection. When I think of healing and restoration in the Resurrection, I can't help but automatically think of the phrase "Graves into Gardens" now. Harkening back to the prophecies of Ezekiel and the songs of David in the Psalms, you can't help but sing this song with joy and even almost dance over the truth of our victorious King. This is an Easter song. It is a song of true praise, of restoration, of metanoia. Let's dance and sing with joy over His freedom and mercy, just like the crippled beggar dancing in the Temple with Peter and John at Solomon's Portico.

TRUTH IN PODCAST

Episode: Father Stu and Faith at the Movies - Mark Wahlberg

You have probably seen this film recently released and advertised on secular platforms throughout the globe: Father Stu. As a very skeptical critic of Christian/Catholic films that are released, I began to look into this film. I came across this interview on Catholic Answers Focus with Mark Wahlberg, Mel Gibson, and a man named Fr. Bart Tolleson. This film is based on a true story of a priest from Helena, Montana: Fr. Stuart Long. This interview is helpful to see a full scope of their intentions behind this film and what they seek to bring to the big screen. With Fr. Bart's perspective, a good friend of the real Fr. Stu, you are able to see that the people who really knew him see the fruit of this film. Although I haven't seen this film myself yet, I do plan on seeing it. Fr. Dan and I received letters in the mail from Sony Pictures and the real Catholic Dioceses that are involved with this film, endorsing this film to all Catholics over the age of 18. All popular Catholics in the media world have only endorsed this film and said they would even see it again. This film, I believe, may be crucial for evangelization of Catholicism today. It may be important for us to see and know about this film in order to discuss its fruits with our non-Catholic brothers and sisters.



WISDOM IN WORDS

The Better Part: A Christ Centered Resource for Personal Prayer

Looking for a book to help your prayer with the Gospels to become more alive, meditative, and fruitful? Fr. John Bartunek has compiled this book for you! Although the older copies consolidate all four gospels into one volume, they have separated them into four small volumes for the sake of printing recently. They are good to have on hand when a particular gospel strikes you at Mass or if the Spirit inspires you to dive deeper into a particular part of Christ's life. This book is a staple of Father Dan's personal prayer (his words, not mine haha). He gave me a copy of this book a while back, but recently, I've picked it up to pray with the Last Supper Discourses in the Gospel of John in light of Holy Week. Bartunek does a great job, through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, of placing you amidst each scene, parable, or discourse from Christ, opening your eyes to things you may have never considered before. Pray and consider the different perspectives of Christ with each passage: Christ as Lord, Christ as Teacher, Christ as Friend. He gives you a prayer to say to Christ, with an inspiration of how this applies to you personally in the 'Christ in my Life' section. He even includes reflective questions that could be used for small group discussions or personal study. I would also endorse this purchase, even if it is a little pricey. It's well worth the investment for future prayer. You never know when the Spirit will spark divine movements, desires, and inspirations that could be impacted and fostered through this work.



BEAUTY OF EXAMPLE

Saint Gemma Galgani

*"Fire! Fire in my heart! This morning it is burning... Dear Jesus, I love you so much!
I shall endeavor always to love You; I shall live to love You; I shall die to love You!."*

These words come forth from the mouth of a young girl that was overwhelmingly in love with her Lord. As a child, she begged to receive her First Communion before the age of reason at the time; her request was granted. This was only one initial sign of her great devotion and love for the Lord in the Holy Eucharist that would continue to burn aflame on the altar of her heart until her death. As she grew, she desired to join a religious order to give herself fully to the Lord, yet the Lord revealed to her in a mystical encounter that she would be denied this request. She was called to be His amidst the lay faithful praying and suffering for the conversion of her brothers and sisters. This did not stop her from loving and following the spirituality of the Passionists, uniting herself with her Crucified Beloved with great devotion; she would spend every Thursday evening with Him in prayer in the Garden of Agony. Praying to suffer with Him in a tangible way, she became a victim soul, afflicted with many illnesses throughout her life. This desire would reach its peak when she received the Precious Wounds of the Holy Stigmata to mirror Her Beloved. She is a loving, gentle sister of ours that can teach us the beauty of enduring trials and suffering for true redemption in Christ. As her relationship with the Beloved was hidden amidst the ordinary ways of life, she remains to be a hidden saint amidst many. This is why I have chosen to highlight her example this month. Her feast day is celebrated on April 11th. She was granted the gift of resting with Her Beloved, dying on Holy Saturday.

CINEMA SPEAKS

Movie: All or Nothing: Sr. Clare Crockett

I have been waiting for the perfect time to share this film with you... but the truth is there will never be a perfect time! SR. CLARE CROCKETT! What a WOMANN. I came across this beautiful soul for the first time in this film my junior year of college. My spiritual director at the time was a big fan of her story and made sure there was a campus wide showing of this film. Clare Crockett is a saint for our time. Although she hasn't received that official title from the Church, her life speaks to our generation. Every person that watches this film, seeing her speak and interact with others, hearing the witnesses of souls she has impacted... you can't help but think "What did I just watch? Who did I just witness?" Every person I have shared this with has had this same reaction. From jokester, trouble child, and drama queen (literally and figuratively), Clare Crockett becomes a religious sister to impact every soul she encountered from Ireland, Spain, Florida, and Guatemala; although her life ended tragically in an earthquake on April 16, 2016, her intercession and soul for sure lives on! Watch this film for free on Youtube!



All or Nothing!!

FILM ABOUT THE LIFE OF SR. CLARE CROCKETT



PEACE BE WITH YOU

This month of April, the Catholic Church is dedicated to the invocation of the Holy Spirit and the Eucharist. When Christ appears before His Apostles, He greets them with peace, breathing upon them. They begin to recognize Him in two particular ways: by touching His glorified wounds and breaking bread before them. He doesn't do this randomly! I mean it would be a kind of strange way to greet your friends for the first time after not seeing them for a while: breathing on them and telling them to touch your wounds. Jesus does this to continually reminds His disciples that He has risen, He is victorious, and He is not going to leave them orphan. Although He will ascend and return to sit at the right hand of the Father in forty days, He takes time to tangibly teach them about His redeeming Presence in the gifts of the Most Holy Eucharist and His Spirit. He wants us to touch His glorified wounds with Thomas, to truly see that He has already won. He has conquered death, and that He is still continuing to work in our life. He wants us to receive the Breath of Life, of freedom and true peace and to not be troubled. He is with us always, transforming us in His love and mercy.