



CATHOLIC SPIRITUALITY
FOR THE INCARCERATED
FROM THE ORDER OF MALTA,
AMERICAN ASSOCIATION

The Serving Brother

WINTER 2010 / 2011

ADVENT & CHRISTMAS SEASONS

A Message to the Serving Sisters and Brothers from Archbishop Timothy M. Dolan

**“Whatever you did
for one of these
least brothers and
sisters of mine,
you did
for Me”**

Gospel of Matthew 25:40

These words of Jesus are quite familiar to all of us. As Catholics, we have heard them on many occasions – in our catechism classes, at Sunday Mass, at wakes or funerals. While some listen to this story of the final judgment with a touch of dread, these words are actually full of encouragement and hope. Jesus’ message is clear: the way to love of God is through love of our neighbor. He reminds us that he has blessed us with the freedom to make this all-important choice, no matter how difficult it may be.

It should not surprise us, then, that decisions leading us to Jesus involve reaching out to those who are struggling. If we follow him, we must learn to care for those forgotten and pushed aside by society or burdened by the challenges of life. The folks who require loving the most are those

who made it difficult for us to love them at all – especially those who may have harmed and hurt us. Jesus did that on the Cross.

Tending to the needs of others highlights the most important aspect of Jesus’ work as our redeemer. He comes to heal, to repair the breach between God and his children, and by doing so, to make our living holy and wholesome. The loss of our friendship with God is due to our sins, or living as if our way is better than God’s way. In one sense, all of us are fellow prisoners because we are all held by this same power of sin. God has become man in order to free us! Loving others as God has loved us is what truly sets us free.

It becomes very easy for society to hate prisoners and to make them pay a price for their offense, even long after they have left prison. Jesus wants his friends to remember that he died for all of us – whether we are in prison or not. He reminds us that, prisoners must be treated with dignity and respect. We should not respond to violence with further violence or with condemnation, but with forgiveness and hope. Revenge is not justice, and it never works.

How convenient it would be to ignore the imprisoned and to deny them our concern! Thank God, care for those in prison has always been part of the ministry of the Knights of Malta.

What shall we choose to do? Care for our brothers and sisters in prison will de-

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THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH
His Holiness Pope Benedict XVI
The Vatican

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A Spiritual Message from Father George

Christmas: A joy beyond merriment

We are especially honored this month with an Advent message from Archbishop Timothy Dolan of New York, who was just elected the President of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. Please pray for Archbishop Dolan as he begins this very important service to the Catholic Church in the United States.

Advent is holy season of preparation for the celebration of the birth of Jesus Christ at Christmas. It is the first season of the Church's liturgical year, which also includes the seasons of Lent, Easter, and Ordinary Time. (The word "liturgical" refers to the public worship of the Church, most often Mass.)

Advent means "the beginning" or "the arrival" of something we really hope for. This edition of The Serving Brother is meant to help us all prepare ourselves in this season of Advent, to celebrate the birth of our savior, Jesus Christ.

Now, I know Christmas in jail or prison is a tough time to go through. Often we are tempted to just wish it past, because it is especially painful to be separated from our loved ones in this season. But there's another way to look at it that isn't about our own loss.

Christmas would not make sense without all that came later in the life of Christ: His ministry, the Gospel, the Last Supper, Good Friday, and of course – the greatest of all – the Resurrection of Christ that we celebrate on Easter Sunday.

Christmas at its core is a promise of peace and joy, but a promise made in a reality of fear, poverty, homelessness and darkness. Christmas is the dawning of God's light in the darkness that represents the suffering of all humanity.

If you read the first few chapters of the Gospels according to Matthew and Luke carefully, you won't find any holiday cheer, Christmas trees or Santa with his reindeer!

What *will* you find? A young woman who is not married, but is pregnant in a society that rejects unmarried mothers; her fiancée Joseph, who is confused and uncertain, and forced by the government to take his family far away from home; a cruel King Herod who will stop at nothing, even killing babies to hold onto his power; and a world that has begun to lose hope that things could ever get better.

It was in the middle of this darkest night that the "Dawn from on High" began to shine in our world. God himself stooped down, humbled Himself and was born into our human world as Jesus. He became one of us, in all our weakness and our fears. He came to us not as the Almighty, but as a tiny, helpless baby. His birth was announced first to shepherds who were low-status laborers and outcasts. And other strangers, outsiders, who were wise and open-minded, came from far away, following a star and their dreams, and they too found Jesus.

The real Christmas is not sentimental. It is love and hope in the middle of the harshness and difficulty of real life. And we can experience it fully even in prison. In fact, I think we can experience it especially in prison. Because in our darkness, in our

Mass readings for the winter months

WEEK	MON	TUES	WEDS	THUR	FRI	SAT	SUN
Dec 6-12	Is 35:1-10 Lk 5:17-26	Is 40:1-11 Mt 18:12-14	Gn 3:9-15, 20 Eph 1:3-6, 11-12 Lk 1:26-38	Is 41:13-20 Mt 11:11-15	Is 48:17-19 Mt 11:16-19	Sir 48:1-4, 9-11 Mt 17:9a, 10-13	Is 35:1-6a, 10 Jas 5:7-10 Mt 11:2-11
Dec 13-19	Nm 24:2-7, 15-17a Mt 21:23-27	Zep 3:1-2, 9-13 Mt 21:28-32	Is 45:6b-8, 18-25 Lk 7:18b-23	Is 54:1-10 Lk 7:24-30	Gn 49:2, 8-10 Mt 1:1-17	Jer 23:5-8 Mt 1:18-25	Is 7:10-14 Rom 1:1-7 Mt 1:18-24
Dec 20-26	Is 7:10-14 Lk 1:26-38	Zep 3:14-18a Lk 1:39-45	1Sm 1:24-28 Lk 1:46-56	Mal 3:1-4, 23-24 Lk 1:57-66	2Sm 7:1-5, 8b-16 Lk 1:67-79	Is 52:7-10 Heb 1:1-6 Jn 1:1-18	Sir 3:2-7, 12-14 Col 3:12-21 Mt 2:13-23
Dec 27-Jan 2	1 Jn 1:1-4 Jn 20:1a, 2-8	1 Jn 1:5-2:2 Mt 2:13-18	1 Jn 2:3-11 Lk 2:22-35	1Jn 2:12-17 Lk 2:36-40	1Jn 2:18-21 Jn 1:1-18	Nm 6:22-27 Gal 4:4-7 Lk 2:16-21	Is 60:1-6 Eph 3:2-6 Mt 2:1-12
Jan 3-9	1 Jn 3:22-4:6 Mt 4:12-25	1 Jn 4:7-10 Mk 6:34-44	1 Jn 4:11-18 Mk 6:45-52	1 Jn 4:19-5:4 Lk 4:14-22a	1 Jn 5:5-13 Lk 5:12-16	1Jn 5:14-21 Jn 3:22-30	Is 42:1-4, 6-7 Acts 10:34-38 Mt 3:13-17
Jan 10-16	Heb 1:1-6 Mk 1:14-20	Heb 2:5-12 Mk 1:21-28	Heb 2:14-18 Mk 1:29-39	Heb 3:7-14 Mk 1:40-45	Heb 4:1-5, 11 Mk 2:1-12	Heb 4:12-16 Mk 2:13-17	Is 49:3, 5-6 1 Cor 1:1-3 Jn 1:29-34
Jan 17-23	Heb 5:1-10 Mk 2:18-22	Heb 6:10-20 Mk 2:23-28	Heb 7:1-3, 15-17 Mk 3:1-6	Heb 7:25-8:6 Mk 3:7-12	Heb 8:6-13 Mk 3:13-19	Heb 9:2-3, 11-14 Mk 3:20-21	Is 8:23-9:3 1 Cor 1:10-13, 17 Mt 4:12-23
Jan 24-30	Heb 9:15, 24-28 Mk 3:22-30	Acts 22:3-16 Mk 16:15-18	2 Tm 1:1-8 Mk 4:1-20	Heb 10:19-25 Mk 4:21-25	Heb 10:32-39 Mk 4:26-34	Heb 11:1-2, 8-19 Mk 4:35-41	Zep 2:3; 3:12-13 1 Cor 1:26-31 Mt 5:1-12a
Jan 31-Feb 6	Heb 11:32-40 Mk 5:1-20	Heb 12:1-4 Mk 5:21-43	Mal 3:1-4 Heb 2:14-18 Lk 2:22-40	Heb 12:18-24 Mk 6:7-13	Heb 13:1-8 Mk 6:14-29	Heb 13:15-21 Mk 6:30-34	Is 58:7-10 1 Cor 2:1-5 Mt 5:13-16
Feb 7-13	Gn 1:1-19 Mk 6:53-56	Gn 1:20-2:4a Mk 7:1-13	Gn 2:4b-9, 15-17 Mk 7:14-23	Gn 2:18-25 Mk 7:24-30	Gn 3:1-8 Mk 7:31-37	Gn 3:9-24 Mk 8:1-10	Sir 15:15-20 1 Cor 2:6-10 Mt 5:17-37
Feb 14-20	Gn 4:1-15, 25 Mk 8:11-13	Gn 6:5-8; 7:1-10 Mk 8:14-21	Gn 8:6-13, 20-22 Mk 8:22-26	Gn 9:1-13 Mk 8:27-33	Gn 11:1-9 Mk 8:34-9:1	Heb 11:1-7 Mk 9:2-13	Lv 19:1-2, 17-18 1 Cor 3:16-23 Mt 5:38-48
Feb 21-27	Sir 1:1-10 Mk 9:14-29	1 Pt 5:1-4 Mt 16:13-19	Sir 4:11-19 Mk 9:38-40	Sir 5:1-8 Mk 9:41-50	Sir 6:5-17 Mk 10:1-12	Sir 17:1-15 Mk 10:13-16	Is 49:14-15 1 Cor 4:1-5 Mt 6:24-34

times of difficulty, Christmas is the light of God breaking into the prison – whether it is the walls of stone or the prisons of our hearts of stone.

Advent is a beautiful season of waiting in hope. We wait in darkness, trusting that the light of God is coming. In another sense, we wait in darkness because our eyes and hearts are shut – but when we are able to open our eyes and hearts to God's presence, we begin to see the light and the hope that is already all around us.

We don't need artificial Christmas lights, because we already have the genuine light of God. We don't need presents, because God is already present! We have been given the free gift of God's mercy and grace and forgiveness already! All we need is to open our hearts and our eyes to the presence of God breaking into our own prisons.

Use these weeks before Christmas to pray more; to do acts of kindness and generosity right here in prison; to read the Bible (especially the beginning of Matthew and Luke); and to work on forgiving someone who we need to forgive, maybe starting with ourselves.

If we are faithful, "The dawn from on high will break upon us, to shine on us who dwell in darkness and the shadow of death, and will guide our feet to the way of peace." (Luke 1:78-79)

I wish you and all your loved ones a truly Blessed Advent and Christmas season.

Father George T. Williams SJ, Editor of The Serving Brother, is now Chaplain of San Quentin State Prison. The oldest prison in California (opened July 1852), San Quentin houses over 6,000 men, including over 700 on death row.

The Chaplet of The Divine Mercy

The Chaplet of Mercy is recited using ordinary rosary beads. It is found in the *Diary of Saint Faustina*.

How to Recite the Chaplet

1. Make the Sign of the Cross: “In the name of the Father; and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.”

2. Opening Prayers (Optional) “You expired, Jesus, but the source of life gushed forth for souls, and the ocean of mercy opened up for the whole world. O Fount of Life, unfathomable Divine Mercy; envelop the whole world and empty Yourself out upon us.”

“O Blood and Water; which gushed forth from the Heart of Jesus as a fountain of Mercy for us, I trust in You!”

3. Our Father “Our Father; Who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name. Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. Amen.”

4. Hail Mary “Hail Mary; full of grace. The Lord is with thee. Blessed art thou amongst women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus. Holy Mary; Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death. Amen.”

5. The Apostle’s Creed “I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Creator of Heaven and earth; and in Jesus Christ, His only Son, Our Lord, Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary; suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended into Hell; the third day He arose again from the dead; He ascended into Heaven, sitteth at the right hand of God, the Father Almighty; from thence He shall



come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting. Amen.”

6. The Eternal Father

“Eternal Father; I offer you the Body and Blood, Soul and Divinity of Your Dearly Beloved Son, Our Lord, Jesus Christ, in atonement for our sins and those of the whole world.”

7. On the Ten Small Beads of Each Decade “For the sake of His sorrowful Passion, have mercy on us and on the whole world.”

8. Repeat for the remaining decades:

Say the “Eternal Father” (#6) on the “Our Father” bead, and then 10 “For the sake of His sorrowful Passion” (#7) on the following “Hail Mary” beads.

9. Conclude with Holy God (Repeat three times) “Holy God, Holy Mighty One, Holy Immortal One, have mercy on us and on the whole world.”

10. Closing Prayer (Optional) “Eternal God, in whom mercy is endless and the treasury of compassion inexhaustible, look kindly upon us and increase Your mercy in us, that in difficult moments we might not despair nor become despondent, but with great confidence submit ourselves to Your holy will, which is Love and Mercy itself.”

Chaplet of The Divine Mercy, from *Diary of St. Maria Faustina Kowalska: Divine Mercy in My Soul*, copyright © 1987 Marian Fathers of the Immaculate Conception, Stockbridge, MA 01263. Reprinted with permission.

Message of the Divine Mercy from Dr. Bryan Thatcher

Prepare the Way of the Lord

In this season of Advent, let us recall the words of Saint John the Baptist; he was preaching in the wilderness and knew that the arrival of the Lord and His public ministry was imminent. John exhorted the people to repent and to “Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight” (Mt 3:3).

To repent means to ask forgiveness, atone, and to be remorseful. We are all human; we will not find perfection this side of the grave. Asking for God’s forgiveness is a first step to healing.

What did St. John mean when he said, “prepare the way of the Lord?” How are we to prepare for the Lord’s coming? Yes, buying gifts, decorating our home or residence, wearing new clothes for Christmas are nice, but these are exterior forms of preparation. What the Lord is truly desiring is an interior preparation for His coming; a preparation of the heart. He wants us to love Him with our whole heart, try to obey his commandments, and most importantly, love God and love our neighbor as we love ourselves.

And as we try to grow closer to Him, our hearts will heal and grow as if we had a heart transplant! Ezekiel wrote, “A new heart I will give you, and a new spirit I will put within you; and I will take out of your flesh the heart of stone and give you a new heart of flesh” (Ezek 36:26). God alone is the great physician and can heal our broken hearts.

In preparation for Christmas, let us spend more time in prayer, and if possible, go to the Sacrament of Reconciliation, read and reflect on Scripture, and try to live the joy and happiness that a Christian should exude. Know that God loves you right where you are; He loves the sinner and hates the sin. His mercy is unfathomable and beyond our comprehension; all we must do is trust in His mercy. Jesus told Saint Faustina, “the greater the sinner, the greater the right he has to My mercy” (Diary, 723).

Let it be said of us as Paul wrote to Timothy, “the aim of our charge is love that issues from a pure heart and a good conscience and sincere faith” (1Tim 1:5).

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mand our time, our talent, our money, and our love. And most of all, it will demand that we follow the commands of Jesus, who never loses any one his Father has given to him. Both at the hour of our death and at the final judgment, Jesus will ask us the one question that makes us all equal before him: How well did you love me?

If we are to answer that question well, we must hear his words again, but as if for the first time: “Amen, I say to you, whatever you did for one of these least brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.” (Mt. 25.40)

His Excellency Timothy M. Dolan is the Archbishop of New York, and is also the newly-elected President of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. He prepared this message specifically for the readers of The Serving Brother.

Thoughts from Pope Benedict XVI

ON THE FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT: “Man Is Alive So Long As He Waits”

VATICAN CITY, NOV. 28, 2010

Dear Brothers and Sisters!

Today, the first Sunday of Advent, the Church begins a new liturgical year, a new journey of faith that, on one hand, remembers the event of Jesus Christ and, on the other, opens onto its ultimate fulfillment. It is precisely in this double perspective that the season of Advent is situated, both looking to the first coming of the Son of God – when he was born of the Virgin Mary – and to his glorious return, when he will come “to judge the living and the dead,” as we say in the Credo.

I would now like to reflect briefly on this suggestive theme of “waiting” (*attesa*), because it involves a profoundly human reality in which the faith becomes, so to say, completely one with our flesh and our heart.

Our whole personal, familial and social existence passes through this dimension of waiting. Waiting is something that is present in a thousand situations, from the smallest and most banal to the most important, which draw us in completely and in the deepest way. Among these, we think of a husband and wife waiting for a child; of waiting for a relative or friend who is coming from far away to visit us; we think of a young person waiting to know his grade on a major exam or the outcome of a job interview; in romantic relationships, of waiting to meet the beloved person, of waiting for a letter, or of receiving forgiveness... One could say that man is alive so long as he waits, so long as hope is alive in his heart. And man is able to recognize that what he waits for and what he hopes for discloses something about his moral and spiritual “stature.”

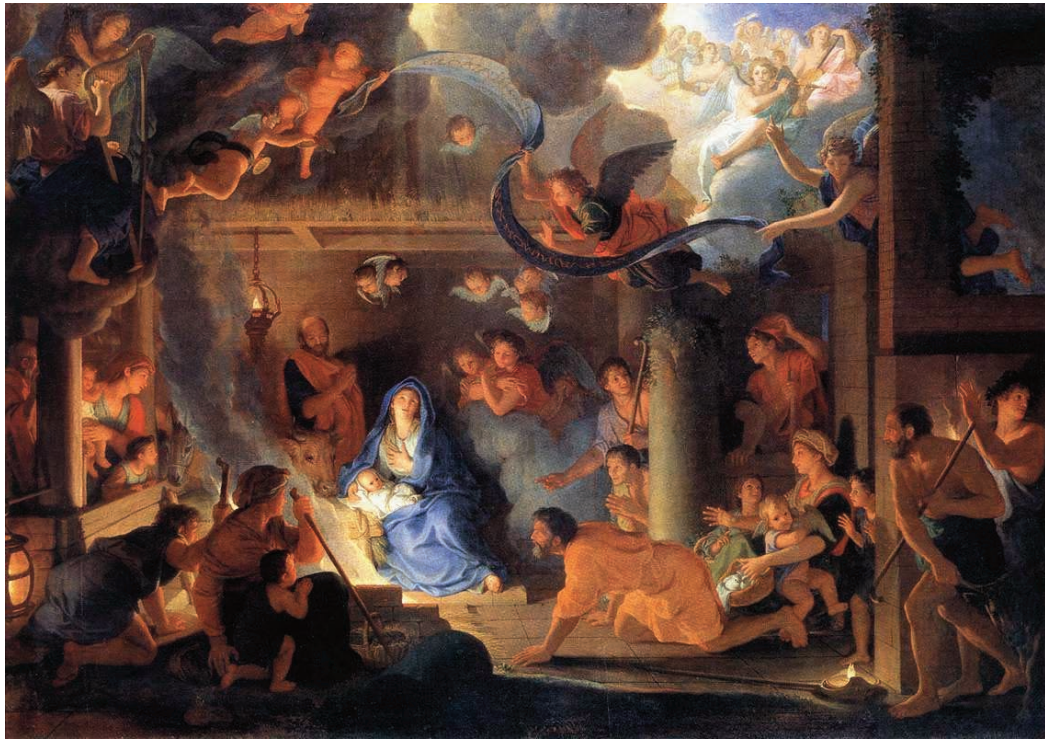
Everyone of us, therefore, especially in this season in which we prepare for Christmas, can ask himself: *What am I waiting for? For what, in this moment of my life, does my heart long? And this same question can be posed at the level of the family, of the community, of the nation. What are we waiting for, together? What unifies our aspirations, what do they have in common?*

In the time before Jesus’ birth, the expectation of the Messiah – that is, of an Anointed one, a descendent of King David, who would have finally liberated the people from every moral and political slavery and have founded the Kingdom of God – was very strong in Israel. But no one could have imagined that the Messiah would be born from a humble girl like Mary, the betrothed of the just man Joseph. Not even she could have thought of it, and yet in her heart the longing for the Savior was so great, her faith and hope were so ardent, that he was able to find in her a worthy mother. After all, God himself had prepared her before all time. There is a mysterious correspondence between the waiting for God and the waiting for Mary, the creature “full of grace,” totally transparent to the plan of love of the Most High. Let us learn from her, the woman of Advent, to live with a new spirit in our daily gestures, with the sentiment of a profound expectation that only the coming of God can fulfill.

Today, Christians begin a new liturgical Year with the season of Advent, a time of preparation to celebrate the Mystery of the Incarnation. By the grace of God, may our prayer, penance, and good works in this season make us truly ready to see the Lord, face to face.

Upon you and your families I invoke God’s gifts of wisdom, strength and peace! I wish everyone a peaceful Sunday and a good journey through Advent.

Thank you, happy Advent to everyone!



Painting by Charles LeBrun (1619-1690)

As God became Man, through Christ's birth we become new men

St. Leo I ("Leo the Great") was pope from 440 to 461. He authored the *Tome of Leo* to explain the two Natures and one Person of Christ, and in the year 452 persuaded Attila the Hun from sacking Rome. Proclaimed a Doctor of the Church in 1754, the feast day of St. Leo is Nov. 10. The following are excerpts from his sermons on the feast of the Nativity.

Let us be glad in the Lord, dearly beloved, and make merry with spiritual joy. For there has dawned for us the day of new redemption, of ancient preparation, and of eternal bliss. In this annual feast there is renewed for us the sacrament of our salvation, which was promised from the beginning, was accomplished in the fullness of time, and will endure for all eternity. (Homily 2,1.)

But you, O dearly beloved, to whom I can address no words more worthy than those of St. Peter: **"You are a chosen generation, a kingly priesthood, a holy nation, a purchased people."** (I Pet. 2:9) You have been built upon the impregnable rock Christ, you have been planted into our Lord and Savior by His true assumption of our flesh. Remain firm then in that faith which you have confessed before many witnesses, and in which, having been born through water and the Holy Ghost, you received the chrism of salvation and the seal of eternal life. (Hom. 4,6.)

For every believer, in whatever part of the world he may be, who is reborn in Christ, quits the evil path of his first origin, and by being born again is changed into a new man. For no longer is he considered as an offspring merely of an earthly father, but as belonging now to the seed of the Savior, who for this reason became the Son of man that we might have the power of becoming sons of God. (Hom. 6,2.)

Let us put off, therefore, the old man and all his works. Having received a share in the birth of Christ, let us renounce the works of the flesh. Recognize thy dignity, O Christian! Made a partaker of the divine nature, do not dare by degenerate conduct to return to former baseness. Remember of what Head and what body thou art a member. Call to mind that thou wert snatched from the power of darkness and translated into the light and kingdom of God. In the sacrament of baptism thou wert made a temple of the Holy Spirit: do not by evil actions drive from thee so great a Guest in order once again to subject thyself to Satan's thrall. For the blood of Christ is thy purchase money, and He who ransomed thee in mercy will one day judge thee in justice: who with the Father and the Holy Ghost reigns for all ages. Amen. (Hom. 1,3.) ✠

Give your brain a workout!

Sudoku Puzzle

	2			1			
8			9	4		3	
	9	6			8	4	
		4	1	8			
2		7		6		5	1
				7	3	8	
		8	6			7	5
		3		1	7		6
			3				8

Sudoku Directions – Fill each square with the numbers 1-9. No number can appear twice within the same row, the same column, or within the same frame of nine squares. [ANSWERS ON BACK PAGE](#)

Brain Teasers

Two identical women apply for a job. They have the same mother, same father, and the exact same birthday. The interviewer asks, "Are you twins?" to which they honestly reply, "No." How is this possible?

A boat has a ladder that has six rungs. Each rung is one foot apart. The bottom rung is one foot from the water. The tide rises at 12 inches every 15 minutes. High tide peaks in one hour. When the tide is at its highest, how many rungs are under water?

A prisoner is told "If you tell a lie we will hang you; if you tell the truth we will shoot you." What can he say to save himself?

Name three consecutive days without using the words Wednesday, Friday, or Sunday.

What is a Serving Brother?

The Order of Malta is one of the oldest institutions of Western and Christian civilization. During its early history as a military force, the Knights of Malta required the support of many helpers. One such group of helpers was known as "Serving Brothers." These men assisted the Knights when called to fight, and also served the Chaplains in tending to the sick. While not members of the Order, they fully shared in the values and lifestyle embraced by the Order.

As such, anyone may spiritually participate as a Serving Brother or Sister by actively participating in the life of the Roman Catholic Church. This can be achieved by activities such as regular attendance at Mass and worship services, keeping up with seasonal bible readings, saying the rosary and the Divine Mercy Chaplet, studying our Faith and staying true to the admonitions of our Lord Jesus Christ, guided by the teachings of the Church.

An introduction to the Sovereign Military Hospitaller Order of Malta (SMOM)

The SMOM is an international religious order recognized by a decree of Pope Pascal II in 1113. Led by the Knights of Justice who are professed Friars, its Grand Master holds the rank of Cardinal. Most of its 13,000 Knights and Dames are not under vows, but are devoted to developing their spirituality, serving the faith and caring for sick, poor and outcast souls. In 1783 Benjamin Franklin presented the *Libertas Americana* medal of the United States of America to the SMOM in thanks for crucial help it provided during the War of Independence. Over 1,800 Knights and Maltese sailors enlisted in the French Navy specifically to assist America win its freedom.

Patron's Pride!

Advice from our incarcerated Serving Sisters and Brothers, in the spirit of St. John the Baptist – patron saint of the Order of Malta – on how each of us can “Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!” and make a contribution in building up our Church and our world.

Doing the Work of John the Baptist in Our Own Lives

There are many things inmates can do to serve their communities in the spirit of St. John.

The first is through our testimony. Every sinner from Peter and Paul, through the men and women of today have a story of sin and redemption. I believe that we are meant to share it, to let others understand how we got to the point we committed our crime. And if we show others the very real, lasting consequences of bad decisions, it can help others avoid the same mistakes.

An inmate's testimony points out the amazing grace of God's forgiveness. So many people believe their sin is too great for God's grace. As a forgiven murderer, drug addict, spouse abuser or child molester, we can show God can and will forgive any who ask. Regardless of our circumstances, Jesus has us covered.

I believe another major contribution an inmate can make is by volunteering in his or her community. Our crimes so often hurt the community; thus, giving back

of ourselves seems just. I have many years to sit here, but my plans on release include volunteering. Soup kitchens need servers, dishwashers and cooks to feed others. One could volunteer at a suicide hot line or literacy program. If eligible, they could return to jails and prisons to volunteer in education or religious programs.

Even from prison you can make an impact. Our prison has volunteer programs for inmates to do clean-ups in the community. Some inmates have made trips to schools to discuss issues such as addiction.

Most inmates also have time, and we can use it to do for others. We could have a dedicated prayer life, holding novenas, saying a daily rosary, or following the Liturgy of the Hours. We also often have crafts or hobbies time available, and could create rosaries to be given away, or maybe make things like blankets or hats for cancer patients. There are endless options if the inmate has the guidance, time and dedication.

A Serving Sister
New England, ND

Puzzle solutions

- (1) They are two triplets.
(2) None. The ladder rises with the boat on the tide.
(3) "You will hang me."
(4) Yesterday, today and tomorrow.

7	6	2	3	5	4	1	8	9
9	5	3	8	1	7	2	4	6
1	4	8	6	9	2	7	5	3
5	1	9	2	7	3	8	6	4
2	8	7	4	6	9	5	3	1
6	3	4	1	8	5	9	7	2
3	9	6	5	2	8	4	1	7
8	7	1	9	4	6	3	2	5
4	2	5	7	3	1	6	9	8

Advice to a Much-Loved Sibling

If your life is in a mess of your own creation, your first thoughts will be to try and figure out how this happened and how you can get out of it. Your mind will try to pass the blame: part of you will say “if only this or that.” Part of you may even say “How could God have placed me in such a position?”

Face it: life includes pain. Sometimes it's fair and sometimes it isn't. Sometimes it's actually not our fault at all. But know this: God is always present. And we have two choices going forward, regardless of our life circumstances. We can ask for God's help and loving presence, that He guide us in doing whatever we were brought into this world to do. Or we can go it alone.

Now, if you were managing a baseball team, during the most crucial part of the game would you bench your star player? Or would you put him in? Let God guide you out of your pain, and toward the special purpose for which He created you. So draw near to Him... Talk to Him.... And listen!

A Serving Brother
N. Kingstown, RI

Your Contribution Needed...

Please tell us what have you done during this Advent season to “lead the way” in the spirit of our Patron, St. John the Baptist. Your contribution will be nicely packaged and delivered to the Order of Malta's Magistral Palace in Rome as a special present from our Serving Sisters and Brothers to His Most Eminent Highness Grandmaster Fra' Matthew Festing in time for the Feast of Our Lady of Lourdes on February 12, 2011. Send your letter to this address:

The Knights and Dames of Malta, 43 Essex Street, Andover, MA 01810