



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

# The Serving Brother

THURSDAY NOVEMBER 26, 2009  
THANKSGIVING DAY

A Message from the Most Reverend Timothy McDonnell, Bishop of Springfield

## A Lesson in Christ's Limitless Forgiveness

It was December 27, 1983, two and a half years after an attempted assassination had seriously wounded Pope John Paul II in Rome's Saint Peter's Square. In the week between Christmas and New Year's, the Pope went to prison, to the cell where the convicted shooter was confined. The drama of the meeting was captured in the *Time Magazine* report the following week.

"For 21 minutes, the Pope sat with his would-be assassin, Mehmet Ali Agca. John Paul's words were intended for Agca alone.

"When the Pope arrived in his cell, Agca was dressed in a blue crewneck sweater, jeans and blue-and-white running shoes from which the laces had been removed. He was unshaved. Agca kissed John Paul's hand. 'Do you speak Italian?' the Pope asked. Agca nodded.

"The two men seated themselves close together on molded-plastic chairs in a corner of the cell, out of earshot. At times it looked almost as if the Pope were hearing the confession of Agca, a Turkish Muslim. At those moments, John Paul leaned forward from the waist in a priestly posture,

his head bowed and forehead tightly clasped in his hand as the younger man spoke.

"Agca laughed briefly a few times, but the smile would then quickly fade from his face. The Pope clasped Agca's hands in his own from time to time. At other times he grasped the man's arm, as if in a gesture of support. The two talked softly. Once or twice Agca laughed.

"The Pope forgave him for the shooting. At the end of the meeting, Agca either kissed the Pope's ring or pressed the Pope's hand to his forehead in a Muslim gesture of respect. The Pope said as he emerged from the cell: 'What we talked about will have to remain a secret between him and me. I spoke to him as a brother whom I have pardoned, and who has my complete trust.'

"As John Paul rose to leave, the two men shook hands. It was a moment of forgiveness."

Years later in a wide-ranging message on prisoners, prisons and prison life, the Pope reflected on what his

CONTINUED INSIDE,  
NEXT TO SACRED IMAGE



SOVEREIGN MILITARY HOSPITALLER  
ORDER OF ST. JOHN OF JERUSALEM OF  
RHODES AND OF MALTA

His Most Eminent Highness  
**Fra' Matthew Festing**  
The Prince & Grand Master  
Magisterial Palace, Rome, Italy

**Mr. Jack E. Pohrer, KM**  
Chancellor, American Association  
New York, NY

His Eminence  
**Seán P. Cardinal O'Malley, OFM Cap**  
Bailiff Grand Cross, Boston Area

**Mrs. Suzanne W. Downing, DM**  
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**Mr. Kevin J. McCullagh, KM**  
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**Deacon William F. Glinka, KM**  
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**Mr. Joseph F. Kane, KM**  
Hospitaller - Manchester

**Mr. John L. Allen, KM**  
Hospitaller - Fall River

**Mr. Gerald J. Power, KM**  
Hospitaller - Worcester

**Mr. Steven G. Caron, KM**  
Prison Ministry Leader & Publisher  
Boston Area

**Fr. George T. Williams, SJ**  
Deputy Chaplain & Editor  
Boston Area

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THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

**His Holiness Pope Benedict XVI**  
The Vatican

His Eminence  
**Seán P. Cardinal O'Malley, OFM Cap**  
Archbishop of Boston (Est. 1808)  
Metropolitan of the Province of Boston  
(Est. 1875)

**His Excellency Emilio S. Alluè, S.D.B.**  
Auxiliary Bishop of Boston

**His Excellency John A. Doohar**  
Auxiliary Bishop of Boston

**His Excellency Walter J. Edyvean**  
Auxiliary Bishop of Boston

**His Excellency Robert F. Hennessey**  
Auxiliary Bishop of Boston

**His Excellency Salvatore R. Matano**  
Bishop of Burlington (Est. 1853)

**His Excellency Richard J. Malone**  
Bishop of Portland (Est. 1853)

**His Excellency Timothy A. McDonnell**  
Bishop of Springfield (Est. 1870)

**His Excellency John B. McCormack**  
Bishop of Manchester (Est. 1884)

**His Excellency Francis J. Christian**  
Auxiliary Bishop of Manchester

**His Excellency George W. Coleman**  
Bishop of Fall River (Est. 1904)

**His Excellency Robert J. McManus**  
Bishop of Worcester (Est. 1950)

## A Letter from the Publisher

*To those Souls Incarcerated in  
the Order of Malta's Boston Area*

Brothers and Sisters,

The Knights and Dames of Malta extend a warm welcome to each of you, and our hope that you will find much here to enjoy! For our Catholic guests, these pages are also intended to enrich your practice of our ancient faith.

This edition tests a concept developed with prison chaplains and residents. If encouraged by you, we will seek the funding to publish regularly. If you find meaning in these pages, please pray for the success of our works, and for all who helped to put these words into your hands. Also, please write to us at the address listed to the left, to say what you liked and what would be an improvement. Your voice truly matters and will be heard with respect.

Finally, let us all join together in the words of President Washington's original Thanksgiving Proclamation of October 3, 1789:

*"...That we may then unite in most humbly offering our prayers...to the great Lord and Ruler of Nations and beseech Him to pardon our...transgressions;*

*"To enable us all...to perform our...duties properly and punctually;*

*"To render our National Government a blessing to all the people by constantly being a Government of wise, just, and constitutional laws, discreetly and faithfully executed and obeyed;*

*"...To promote the knowledge and practice of true religion and virtue, ...and, generally to grant unto all mankind such a degree of...prosperity as He alone knows to be best."*

Amen,

Steven G. Caron, KM

## Mass Readings for the Coming Month

	Week of Nov 23	Week of Nov 30	Week of Dec 7	Week of Dec 14	Week of Dec 21
<b>Mon</b>	Dn 1:1-6, 8-20 Lk 21:1-4	Rom 10:9-18 Mt 4:18-22	Is 35:1-10 Lk 5:17-26	Nm 24:2-17a Mt 21:23-27	Sg 2:8-14 Lk 1:39-45
<b>Tue</b>	Dn 2:31-45 Lk 21:5-11	Is 11:1-10 Lk 10:21-24	Gn 3:9-20 Eph 1:3-12 Lk 1:26-38	Zep 3:1-13 Mt 21:28-32	1 Sm 1:24-28 Lk 1:46-56
<b>Wed</b>	Dn 5:1-28 Lk 21:12-19	Is 25:6-10a Mt 15:29-37	Is 40:25-31 Mt 11:28-30	Is 45:6b-25 Lk 7:18b-23	Mal 3:1-24 Lk 1:57-66
<b>Thu</b>	<b>Dn 6:12-28</b> <b>Lk 21:20-28</b>	Is 26:1-6 Mt 7:21-27	Is 41:13-20 Mt 11:11-15	Gn 49:2, 8-10 Mt 1:1-17	2 Sm 7:1-16 Lk 1:67-79
<b>Fri</b>	Dn 7:2-14 Lk 21:29-33	Is 29:17-24 Mt 9:27-31	Is 48:17-19 Mt 11:16-19	Jer 23:5-8 Mt 1:18-25	<b>Is 52:7-10</b> <b>Heb 1:1-6</b> <b>Jn 1:1-18</b>
<b>Sat</b>	Dn 7:15-27 Lk 21:34-36	Is 30:19-26 Mt 9:35—10:8	Zec 2:14-17 Lk 1:26-38	Jgs 13:2-25a Lk 1:5-25	Acts 6:8—7:59 Mt 10:17-22
<b>Sun</b>	Jer 33:14-16 1 Thes 3:12—4:2 Lk 21:25-36	Bar 5:1-9 Phil 1:4-11 Lk 3:1-6	Zep 3:14-18a Phil 4:4-7 Lk 3:10-18	Mt 5:1-4a Heb 10:5-10 Lk 1:39-45	Sir 3:2-14 Col 3:12-21 Lk 2:41-52

## Prayer Intentions in Which You May Share

*His Holiness Pope Benedict XVI recently offered the following prayer intentions:*

- That all people of goodwill, especially those who make political and economic policies, may commit themselves to care for all Creation;
- That believers of different religions, through the testimony of their lives and fraternal dialogue, may clearly demonstrate that the name of God brings peace.

*In addition, on behalf of the people of the Church's Province of Boston, please pray that:*

- All of the men and women of the US armed services will return safely to their families;
- All those active in the US legal system will strive to be worthy of the ideals of American justice;
- Our business and political leaders will effectively collaborate to protect us from an extended economic recession.



Painted by Eugene Kazimierowski according to St. Faustina's directions. © Archdiocese of Vilnius, Lithuania. Courtesy of Marian Fathers of the Immaculate Conception, Stockbridge, MA 01283.

## BISHOP'S MESSAGE, CONTINUED FROM FRONT PAGE

contact with Mehmet Ali Agca and numerous other prisoners had brought home to him. “Jesus wants to save each one and with a salvation which is offered, *not* imposed. What Christ is looking for is trusting acceptance, an attitude which opens the mind to generous decisions aimed at rectifying the evil done and fostering what is good. Sometimes this involves a long journey, but always a stimulating one. For it is a journey not made alone, but in the company of Christ himself and with His support. Jesus is a patient traveling companion who respects the seasons and rhythms of the human heart. He never tires of encouraging each person along the path to salvation.”

As the holiday season approaches and in the days between Thanksgiving and Christmas, sometimes it is only the presence of Christ that is ours to hold on to. He is with us wherever we may be, but all of us need to recognize that we are brothers and sisters who need to forgive and be forgiven – something Jesus is always willing to do.

May His peace and His trust be with everyone in every place all the time. May we know the reason for Thanksgiving is the trust God has in us in sending us Jesus, His Son, a Son who was willing to trust us enough to become like us in all things but sin. May His presence make our circumstances easier, and the holidays more peaceful for us all.

## An Introduction to Cardinal Seán O'Malley *Archbishop of Boston and Bailiff Grand Cross, SMOM*



Seán O'Malley was born June 29, 1944 in Lakewood, Ohio, and raised in Pennsylvania. He joined the Order of Friars Minor Capuchin at age 21, and was ordained at age 26. He taught at the Catholic University of America, after earning both masters and doctoral degrees there.

While working in Washington DC, he founded a center to provide educational, medical, and legal help to immigrants. He was selected as a Bishop in 1984. Cardinal Seán has served as Bishop of St. Thomas, Virgin Islands; Fall River, Massachusetts; and Palm Beach, Florida. Pope John Paul II appointed him Archbishop of Boston in 2003. Pope Benedict XVI named him a Cardinal in 2006.

For his motto, Cardinal Seán adopted the Latin version of a phrase found in John 2:5, where the Blessed Virgin Mary instructs us that we are to do “whatever He tells us.” His Coat of Arms honors Boston by including symbols representing our first Bishop, Jean de Cheverus, and Boston Harbor. Personal symbols include a sailing ship taken from his family's crest, white stars representing Washington DC, and a black cross signifying the Capuchin Franciscans. A red Maltese Cross represents his membership in the SMOM.



## This Issue's Spiritual Message from Father George

### Forgiving Others: The Ultimate Freedom

Thanksgiving is always a good reminder that we have much to be grateful for, despite our struggles and trials. An attitude of gratitude will help us face many of our difficult challenges by helping us avoid falling into the pit of negativity, self-pity, and anger. No matter what, we can always come up with something to be grateful for.

Let's start with God's love and mercy. St. Paul wrote: "In Him (Jesus) we are redeemed through His blood and our sins are forgiven through the riches of God's grace." (Ephesians 1:7) *God is always willing to forgive us.* Now, *that* is something we can truly be grateful for!

There's an Irish story of a father and son who had a big fight and became estranged. The son ran away, and the father set off to find him. He searched and searched but could not find his son.

Finally, in a last desperate attempt to find him, the father put an ad in a Dublin newspaper. The ad read: "Dear Sean, meet me in front of this newspaper office at noon on Saturday. All is forgiven. I love you. Your Father."

On that Saturday over 800 young men named Sean showed up, looking for forgiveness and love from their fathers. We may not always realize it, but we are like each of these 800 men. We want so much to be forgiven!

We might find forgiveness of those who have hurt us to be difficult, but we can be grateful that God does not have any difficulty in forgiving us. I think a big reason we find forgiving others so hard is that we don't understand what Forgiveness really means.

Many people make the mistake of thinking forgiveness is *for the other person*, for the benefit of the one you are forgiving. The reality is that forgiveness is first and most important *for the forgiver!* It's for you, not for them.

We forgive others in order to set us free from the pain of holding on to the grudges and hurts. We forgive others so that we can stop renting space in our heads to them. We forgive in order to free ourselves.

Now, forgiveness does not require forgetting. Nor does it mean we ever have to approve of the person or what they did. If someone wrongs us, we do not have to pretend it's all right.

What we *do* have to do is realize that it's no longer important enough to ruin our happiness and our lives. When our hearts and heads are full of hate and hurt and revenge, we don't have room for love; and without love we die. Forgiveness sets *us* free! It creates room in our hearts and in our minds for love to grow.

How much pain and misery do we carry around in our hearts because we refuse to forgive others, and cannot bring ourselves to ask for forgiveness from others, from God and from ourselves? How often do we carry around the thoughts that we ourselves are beyond forgiveness? That thought is a lie and is the devil's favorite game to keep us imprisoned in suffering.

*Because the truth is that God's mercy and love and forgiveness have no limits!*

We are healed and saved by Love. We are healed and saved by forgiveness. Not because we deserve it, but because God in his endless mercy offers it to us freely. Jesus taught that no one is outside of God's mercy: God loves us all.

This Thanksgiving, instead of focusing on what you are missing, focus on what God is offering you. And let's use this time to show our gratitude by practicing forgiving others. The more we do that, the more we will open our own hearts to the Forgiveness that God holds out to each of us.

### 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 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.

### An Introduction to the SMOM's Boston Area

The 250 members of the SMOM's Boston Area serve the sick, poor and needy in MA, VT, NH and ME. We extend a hand of friendship to all helping prisoners, to find and cultivate an appreciation of God's love for them. The SMOM's Boston Area covers the Roman Catholic Church's Province of Boston, created in 1875 when Boston was made an Archdiocese and divided into smaller diocese.

The Metropolitan Archbishop of the Province largely represents the Church's unity by wearing the *pallium*, a traditional wool scarf placed upon his neck by the Pope. The bishop of a diocese, as assisted by auxiliary bishops, is the ordinary source of church authority on all matters pertaining to that diocese and reports directly to the Pope. The bishops are direct successors to the Apostles. They exercise in a communal and collegial manner the pastoral functions entrusted to them by the Lord Jesus of sanctifying, teaching and governing.

### Sudoku Puzzle

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

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.

## Community Resources for Friends and Family

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### Family Stabilization Services

Catholic Charities Greater Boston (617) 506-6600

Helps keep new, first, and second generation immigrant families in Boston together. These families face not only the normal hardships of living in the urban neighborhoods of Boston – economic hardship, crime, drugs, personal and family challenges – but also added stressors including legalization issues, language barriers, and adapting to a different culture.

Many of these families are reluctant to seek help in finding much needed services, need assistance and support in keeping their children safely at home, have children who are at risk of being taken out of the home, or have children who have just returned home.

Catholic Charities provides social workers with the cultural and linguistic abilities to help them. They are trained to connect with these hard to reach families and work to develop a trusting relationship with them. Regular visits are scheduled with the families, both individuals and as a group, and goals are established. Social workers help families develop stronger communication skills, set and enforce healthy and realistic limits, recognize their own strengths, and develop supports to fill in the gaps.

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### Jessie Albert Memorial Dental Center

Catholic Charities of Maine (207) 443-9721

Catholic Charities of Maine has been working to meet the dental needs of low-income families and individuals since 1971. They offer:

**Prevention Services** Several services are directed to preventing cavities and other dental disease. These services include: education about the proper care of teeth; the role that good nutrition plays in dental care; routine dental check-ups; fluoride treatments; application of protective sealants; flossing and cleaning teeth; distribution of prevention and educational information to individual patients and assistance to local schools and Head Start centers implementing community oral health programs.

**Treatment Services** Restorative services include: filling cavities; performing root canals; making crowns; extracting teeth; placing space maintainers; and treating early gum disease.

**Payments** Depending upon family income, some children dental services may be eligible for MaineCare or a sliding fee scale. Unfortunately, we can only accept cash, checks, credit cards or insurance payments for adult dental services.

**Community Outreach** The center provides space and equipment in the evenings for the free dental care for low income adults.

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