

# Spirit of Life

Roman Catholic Church

## WELCOMING SR. JOSEPHINE TO SPIRIT OF LIFE

Being a religious sister has been a phenomenal experience for Sr. Josephine — a member of the Congregation of Teresian Carmelites who arrived at our parish in April — and she has awe-inspiring stories to prove it.

“About 10 years ago, a woman with cholera was sent home from the hospital to die, since the doctors said there was no more they could do for her,” she says. “They brought her to my clinic, and I prayed over her, and Our Lady healed her through my hands. Today, she is still well, living with her husband and children.”

In the 31 years that she has been a professed sister, she has witnessed the extraordinary power of God — her divine spouse — at work, time and time again.

“I have seen many miracles take place in my healing ministry and in my apostolates,” she says. “Really, every day is a miracle for me, living as a sister.”

As St. Teresa of Calcutta once

said, “Vocation is like a little seed — it has to be nourished. You have to keep on looking after it. Vocation cannot be forced. It has to come from above. The person whom Christ has chosen for Himself — she knows.” Such was the case with Sr. Josephine.

“I felt a call to the religious life from my childhood,” she says. “It was within me to want to be a sister. God gave me the desire to offer myself to Him in religious life..”

Indeed, little by little, the grace of God watered the “seed” of her vocation, through the beautiful examples of her mother and various religious sisters.

“My mother was very pious and she influenced me by her example,” she says. “She went to daily Mass and took part in many activities at church. I also studied in a convent school. When I was in high school, I visited a hospital run by the Teresian Carmelites, and when I met some of them, I felt motivated to join them. I



*Sr. Josephine*

felt called, so I entered after graduating.”

When asked what her favorite aspects of being a sister are, Sr. Josephine responds, “I am thankful that as a sister, I can spend more time in prayer than I could if I were not a religious. I also really like listening to people, counseling them and helping them get healed.”

As far as hobbies go, she enjoys singing and gardening.

If someone feels a call to the

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## STEWARDSHIP

### DON'T TAKE A VACATION FROM STEWARDSHIP THIS SUMMER

Everyone deserves a vacation. After nine grueling months of school, kids get to enjoy the summer to relax and regroup before beginning a new grade. Employees, after diligently working long hours and dealing with stressful situations, deserve time away from the office to enjoy their favorite getaway.

No one would argue that we need to mentally refresh our minds and bodies from time to time so that we can come back rejuvenated and ready to do our best.

Taking a break from some things, however, is not a possibility.

Take stewardship, for example. Imagine saying to yourself, "Well, this month I think I will not pray, not share any of my talents with anyone in need, and I will hoard my treasure." What would doing this accomplish? You certainly wouldn't feel refreshed, rejuvenated and ready to be at your best. Instead, feelings of greed, selfishness and spiritual unrest may occur. Stepping back from being a good steward just doesn't make sense.

So, now that summer has arrived in full force and our leisure time each day has increased, how can we remain good stewards?

It is likely that the regimented opportunities available during the school year are no longer available. Youth ministry and parish religious education formation may also be on summer break.

So, where do you turn? How can you keep your faith alive?

First and foremost, don't stop praying. The slow-paced days of summer are a perfect time to quiet ourselves for a few moments and try to reconnect with God. Why not take a moment of your free time each day to read the Gospel or a spiritual reflection while lounging in a hammock?

Next, try to participate in an outreach program over the summer. Think of the life of Christ – everything He did on Earth was an act of service. Now, think of the gifts God has bestowed on you. He wants you to share them with others like He did, and summer gives us the time to do just that.

If you like working with kids, you can volunteer at the Vacation Bible School by helping to

decorate, organize or being a team leader for the younger children.

If you are handy with tools, you may call Habitat for Humanity to see how you can help build a home for a family in need.

Or, if you are musically inclined, you can share your singing or instrumental gifts with a local nursing home. Maybe you are good in the kitchen. If so, you could offer your culinary skills to a local soup kitchen or food bank.

If you are a strong student, you could offer tutoring services to neighborhood kids to help prepare them for the next school year.

No matter what gift God has given you, there is a way to share it.

Getting paid for volunteering sometimes happens. And, if you have a summer job while on break, you'll get a paycheck for sure. Have you ever taken an opportunity to think about sharing the first fruits of your check?

As a young adult, returning a portion of your paycheck to God is an important thing to consider. Giving a portion back to Him is a way to say "thanks."

Whatever you do this summer, don't take a break from being a good steward. Remember that the time God gives you is a gift. What you do with it – whether on vacation or not – is meant to give Him glory.

## A LETTER FROM OUR PASTOR

# TIME IS LIMITLESS... OR IS IT?

Dear Parishioners,

Some years ago, Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI encouraged Catholics to renew their devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus during the month of June. In thinking about that, it made me realize that we all like to measure time – not necessarily in minutes and hours, but certainly in terms of what happens at particular times of the year. In the Church, we celebrate so many occasions that measure time – Easter, Christmas, Corpus Christi, Pentecost, Ordinary Time, the feast days of our saints, and much more, all of which give us that sense of moving forward.

In our own lives and the lives of our families, we mark birthdays, anniversaries, Baptism days, and more dates than we can possibly remember. These dates commemorate or remind us of a point in time. Time is also one of those gifts from God that we attach to the idea and life of stewardship.

We are fond of saying that time is the one thing given to all of us in equal amounts. However, we all know that is not necessarily true. Does a mother with several children have the same amount of time as a person with no family? Does a company manager who is expected to be available seven days a week have the same amount of time as someone who works a 9-to-5 job?

My point is that time is a valuable commodity, whether we feel like we have a lot or very little. God, on the other hand, is timeless. The Lord sees things in an eternal view, while we tend to look at it in shorter measures. The question is really “What do we do with our time to serve others and to increase



our relationship with God?” We have said many times that each of us needs to set aside time for both of those purposes – to serve and to pray. There is a reason it is called “prayer time.” Prayer should be a part of our lives, as much as eating, sleeping and working.

Another thing that June brings to mind is how life slows down for most of us. Young people are on summer vacation from school. Families and individuals take vacations. Unfortunately, some see it as a time to take a bit of vacation from worship. We can see it in declining Mass attendance and in the reduced number of activities within ministries and organizations.

We all mark time. We all know that it is limited, and can be fleeting. That is why even countries celebrate special days that mark time – throughout the summer season, Americans celebrate Memorial Day, Independence Day, and Labor Day. How do we mark time as individuals, as families, and as a parish? That may say more about our understanding of stewardship than anything else. Maybe now, as summer is upon us, is the perfect time to concentrate *more* on our spiritual habits, rather than less.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Msgr. Chad Gion".

Msgr. Chad Gion,  
Pastor

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## DEDICATED TO SHARE THE CONGREGATION OF

When Mother Liza came to visit Spirit of Life this spring, her heart was overjoyed by what she witnessed.

“I am so glad to be visiting this beautiful church,” she says. “I have found that our sisters are very happy here serving the people, and that the people are also happy with them. They really enjoy helping in the food pantry, and sharing their time with those in need and talking to them. They like being there for the parishioners, as well. I believe that people will find in them someone to listen to them, and care about them.”

She also can’t help but be impressed by the way that the Spirit has been at work in our parish family.

“I am so thankful I have had the opportunity to come here a second time,” Mother Liza says. “I find that the parish has really grown and developed. The laity is very active and they are so devoted to adoration. It is marvelous!”

Mother Liza serves as the Superior General of the Congregation of Teresian Carmelites, or CTC, a flourishing religious order of religious sisters founded in 1866 by Servant of God Mother Eliswa, a widow from India. According to their website, the CTC’s motto is “passion for God and compassion for the poor,” as well as “faithful and constant contemplative prayer experientially lived in our community as the source of familial simplicity of heart and committed compassion for the poor witnessed in the ecclesial context.”

“Our charism is contemplative union with God in a life of communion through charity and ecclesial service,” Mother Liza says. “All of our apostolates



*Mother Liza*

are charities. We work in the areas of education, healing ministry, jail ministry, empowerment of women, and in the care of the aged and destitute.”

Furthermore, the sisters are dedicated to sharing God’s love with families by visiting them, praying with them and reading God’s Word to them.

*“We try to help bring families as close to Jesus as possible. We believe that if families are taken care of, then the whole Church can remain holy, and keep growing. We like to visit the homes of parishioners so they feel that they really belong at the parish.”*

– Mother Liza

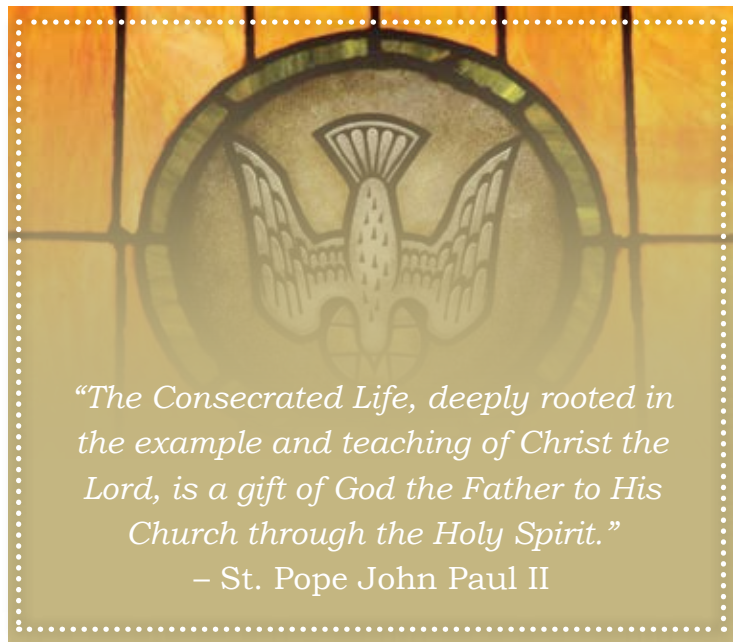
## BRINGING GOD'S LOVE OF TERESIAN CARMELITES

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The CTC cherishes a deep devotion to St. Teresa of Avila, a towering mystic who founded the Discalced Carmelites, and honors her dedication to prayer by remaining an apostolic-contemplative community. The CTC has 1,400 sisters spreading Christ's love and light by their prayer, presence and service in India, Europe and Africa. They also have two convents in North Dakota – one in Mandan and one in Fort Yates. They are a vibrant order in the Church today, and God continues to bless their works of mercy.

"It would be good for the Church to have more vocations to our congregation," Mother Liza says. "Our sisters may not be directly promoting vocations, but if young women witness the beautiful

way of life that we live, maybe they will want to join us too."



*If you would like more information about the CTC, please visit [ctcsisters.com](http://ctcsisters.com).*

## WELCOMING SR. JOSEPHINE TO SPIRIT OF LIFE *continued from front cover*

religious life, Sr. Josephine urges them to lay what is in their heart before the Lord.

"If a girl or woman feels a desire to become a sister, I encourage them to pray about it," she says. "Prayer brings victory. When we pray earnestly before God, He looks out for us, and when He looks out for us, nothing can beat us!"

When reflecting on the time she will spend at our parish, she mentions that, "Whatever God wants me to do at Spirit of Life, I will do it, and I will do my best!"

Let us make sure to pray in a heartfelt way for Sr. Josephine and thank God for her presence among us.

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## CELEBRATING THE FEAST OF THE SACRED HEART OF JESUS

The Sacred Heart of Jesus is probably the most widely recognized representation of Christ's divine love and unwavering compassion for all of humanity. Devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus has been practiced for centuries, and this devotion continues to play an important role in today's Catholic faith. As we celebrate the Feast of the Sacred Heart of Jesus on June 23, we have a wonderful opportunity to learn more about this essential Catholic devotion and its role in Church history.

Devotion to the Sacred Heart extends as far back as the 11th or 12th centuries. While there are no definitive texts or histories that verify initial devotees, it is understood that the devotion grew out of the Benedictine and Cistercian monasteries of the time. By the 16th century, documented devotional prayers and exercises had been formulated, and the ascetic writers began making more extensive reference to the Sacred Heart. But it was not until the 17th century that devotion to the Sacred Heart moved beyond being practiced on a private, individual basis. St. Jean Eudes established the first feast of the Sacred Heart, and this was shared with devotion to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. It was then that the devotional feast of the Sacred Heart began to spread to other dioceses and religious communities.

However, the devotion as we know and understand it today largely stems from the visions of Jesus Christ to St. Margaret Mary Alacoque. While these visions were numerous, the most remarkable revelation, known as "the great apparition," occurred during the octave of Corpus Christi in 1675. As Jesus said to Margaret Mary, "Behold the Heart that has so loved men... instead of gratitude I receive from the greater part (of mankind) only ingratitude."

Reporting her vision to Fr. Claude de la Colombière, Margaret Mary was then directed to write an account of the apparition. Despite her initial reluctance to do so, as well as her misgivings upon its completion, this written account would soon be published and widely read among both clergy and laymen, thus playing an instrumental



role in spreading the devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. Another book, *The Devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus*, was written by Jesuit Father Croiset after Jesus told Margaret Mary to have Fr. Croiset write it. Following Margaret Mary's death in 1690, Fr. Croiset would compose a short biography of her life that was amended to his book, which served to further increase interest and practice of the devotion.

Over the course of the next century, devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus would continue to spread. By the latter half of the 18th century, a Mass of the Sacred Heart was given papal approval for Poland and Portugal, followed two decades later by Venice, Austria and Spain. Then, in 1856, the Feast of the Sacred Heart was officially established by Pope Pius IX.

While the specific readings and exercises for the feast day have been changed and replaced over the years, the basic tenets that extend back to the visions of St. Margaret Mary Alacoque remain the same – the acknowledgement of and devotion to Christ's unending compassion and love for all of us.

## WILL YOU CONSOLE ME?

**I**t was a Saturday night at 7. Hurt, crying and confused, I opened the door to the Adoration Chapel. I was seeking solace and consolation. I had apparently come to the right place. Who signs up for adoration on a Saturday night in the summer, I thought to myself?

From time to time, I take open hours of adoration at our local parish. A few years ago, the parish took a leap of faith and decided to offer perpetual adoration to all of its parishioners. It was

an enormous undertaking with hours to be filled by two adorers 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. I guess that's what's meant by "perpetual" – constant or unceasing.

How I wound up there on this particular Saturday night could only be attributed to God's mercy and love. I remembered earlier in the week seeing that particular hour open. I thought, well, that's an hour I would never take. I would want to spend it with my husband, family, or even friends.

Without my brain being fully aware, my hand wrote down my name and I left.

That Saturday was usual in a houseful of kids, but even more chaotic as all of our married kids had been home, some with new infants. We had spent the prior week celebrating my parents' 50th. It was a joy and so much fun. But, in every family, there are always a few conflicts. I had tried my best to cook, clean and even host a baby shower for one of my daughter-in-laws. By the end of the week, I was tired and a little worn out.

Through all of the commotion, one of the kids questioned some of my motives for all of the festivities, etc. I knew in my heart that I had done all of these actions out of pure love for my family. I was struck to the core. I looked to my husband for consolation, as Todd is always the best at reassuring and loving me. This time was different, however, as even he was unable to console me.

I glanced up at the clock, 6:25. Almost time to leave, I thought. Then, I did something I never do – I left early. When I arrived at the chapel, I discovered that the adorer for the earlier time slot had forgotten to show up. The person I relieved was so happy to see that I was early.

I knelt down in the pew unable to even look up at Christ. I began pouring my heart out to Him. After a time of crying and telling Him how I had been so wronged and unjustly accused, I finally looked

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## LITURGY SCHEDULE

### Spirit of Life

Tuesday - Thursday: 9 a.m.

Friday: 9 a.m.

Saturday: 5 p.m.

Sunday: 9 a.m., 11 a.m., 6 p.m.

**CONFESSIONS:** Sunday: 8-8:30 a.m.

Saturday: 3:30-4:30 p.m.

Wednesday: 7-8:30 p.m., and 20 min. before  
weekday Masses except Mondays

### St. Martin's Parish

Even Months: 9 a.m.

Odd Months: 11 a.m.

### St. Anthony's Parish

Even Months: 11 a.m.

Odd Months: 9 a.m.

## WILL YOU CONSOLE ME? *continued from page 7*

up and asked Him, "Will you console me?"

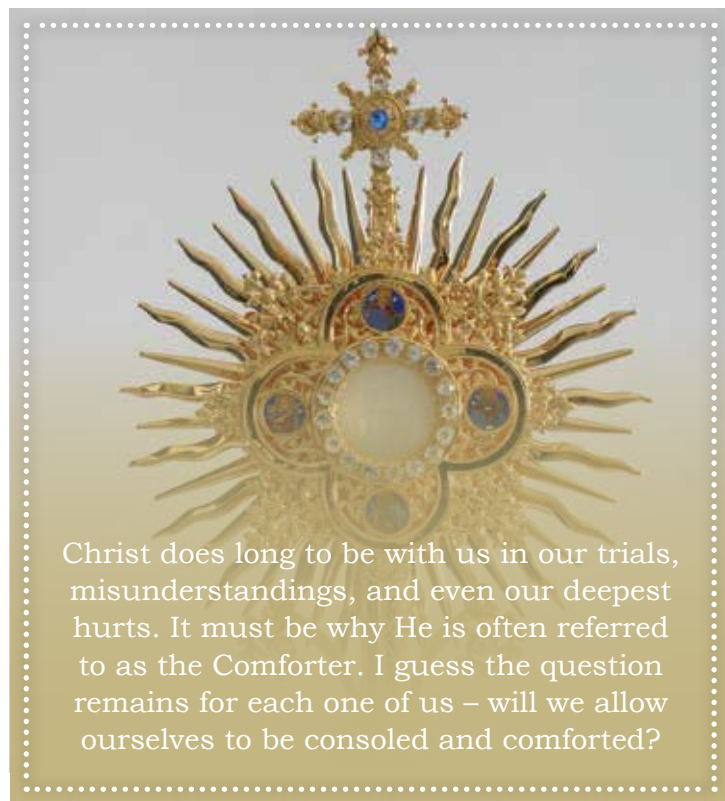
I immediately heard this reply in my heart: "Will you console me?"

I sat in the small chapel all alone in utter disbelief. Was Christ actually asking me to console Him? Why, yes I thought. He must really need to be consoled too. He knows exactly how I feel. He has been misunderstood, deserted, falsely accused, abandoned, and even betrayed.

I answered our loving Savior, "I will console You and You will console me. We will console one another."

A peace that surpasses all understanding encompassed my whole being. I felt loved, cherished, but most of all, consoled. What a gift that night was to me. I will forever treasure it in my heart. Christ does long to be with us in our trials, misunderstandings, and even our deepest hurts. It must be why He is often referred to as the Comforter. I guess the question remains for each one of us – will we allow ourselves to be consoled and comforted?

*Shelly Preszler is a member of Spirit of Life and writes and speaks on matters of faith.*



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