



Reflections on 'The Greater Things'

NOVEMBER 2021
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"Amen, Amen, I say to you, whoever believes in me will do the works that I do, and will do greater things than these, because I am going to the Father." (John 14:12)

OUR CITIZENSHIP Jaci Phillips, PhD

The people reading this are primarily citizens of the United States. Perhaps some of you are from other countries. We all have citizenship in a country. America is unique among all other free democratic republics in that it has endured longer than any other, though it seems to be presently quite threatened. Pray for America.

America is the only Nation on earth that was born out of love of God. God brought the Israelites into being because of His love for them, but America was born because a dream of the ability to love God and worship God openly and freely was burned in the hearts of a people. It was also born out of the desire for freedom - to slip the chains of taxation and the oppression of a tyrannical, out of control government that [I suspect] God did not bless.

There has never been a nation on earth whose constitution was built on scripture or that has held the same Constitution and Bill of Rights so dear that it has endured *unchanged* for over 200 years. *The average life of a constitution is 17 years!* On average, every 17 years other countries modify what their purpose and set of beliefs are. America's, based on our founding principals in those beautiful documents, has not changed, regardless of whether people still hold them dear or not. When your document of rights and purposes is consistent with the Word and statutes of God, and when God has put His blessing on it, it remains and endures until it is willfully trodden asunder.

Whether God will continue His blessing and seal on America likely depends on the actions of *citizens* from a *completely different place*.

Most of us are proud to say that we are Americans. It is clear that God's blessing has been on America. It's clear why we would be proud to be a part (by

the grace of God alone) of this great nation. However, we are citizens of a much greater and much more important place than this. We are literal *citizens* of the *Kingdom of God!* This is the citizenship that matters.

Everything we are seeing in the physical realm is a manifestation of a spiritual battle in the Kingdom of God, regardless of whether it is good or bad. And WE are citizens of *the only* nation that has any power over the spiritual realm battles we see playing out in our families, churches, cities, and in the world.

No one else has any authority or power to fight this battle; only the sons and daughters of the Living God, under the Kingship of the King of kings and Lord of lords, Jesus Christ! This is not just nice figurative language used by Jesus. It is a literal real and all-powerful Kingdom of our God. Jesus came to establish HIS Kingdom on earth. That Kingdom is *within* us. Once we are members of this Kingdom, it reigns from within us through the power of the Holy Spirit leading and guiding us as we unite our free will to the serving the will of our King.

Let's look at some of the virtues of our citizenship.

First of all... It's a government, "*Of the greatness of HIS government and peace there will be no end. He will reign on David's throne and over HIS Kingdom, establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness for that time on and forward*" Isaiah 9:7. But it is not a democracy. It is a King who *owns* us, and not a president who rules over us. Internally, we recognize and can literally feel (when we listen to the Holy Spirit) our citizenship in the Kingdom of God and we have a kind of *instinct* to love and honor King Jesus! This is something we need to become

more and more attuned to. It guides us in the will and power of our King. It is called *discernment*. It is the King speaking and leading and guiding our hearts and minds. In order to hear the King, we must get to know Him and spend time with Him. What a unique King we have, who wants to spend time with *every citizen* of His Kingdom. He is in *every moment* and *every breath*. Yet even though He is a King who owns us and gives us His law, He does not force us to follow it.

Jesus is a *good* King. Earthly rulers can be good or bad or anything in between, but we have the best King! And our King has established laws to be followed in His Kingdom. The citizens of the Kingdom follow all HIS laws and instruction because, through the power of the Holy Spirit, we love our good King so much! We know that *His laws are good*. We desire to please our King. Our King goes so far as to say that "***If** you love Me you will keep my commands.*"

The laws of the Kingdom of our God don't make sense to the world. Yet, if we are true citizens of this Kingdom, we follow them; even though it's not always easy and even if it is imperfectly.

Let's look at some of these laws that completely fly in the face of today's culture. I have taken the liberty of imagining our response and Jesus' response to some of these laws:

Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you. Matthew 6:27, NIV. (Really?? Yes.)

Bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you. Matthew 6:28, NIV. (This too? Yes.)

If someone slaps you on one cheek, turn to them the other also. If

NOVEMBER, SOULS, AND PURGATORY —BY KATHRYN WILCOX

ALL SOULS DAY AND PURGATORY

November is the month we remember those who have died. November 1, we celebrate people who have been identified by the church as being especially close to God. Saints! That does not mean that others who have died are not close to God, they just have not been highlighted. So, November 2 we remember all the other individuals who have died, some who are already in heaven and others not there yet.

This day is also called Day of the Dead in some cultures. We do not like to talk about death, but it is something that we all will face. I recently was quite ill and had to consider, “am I really sure what I will be dealing with when my time comes to face eternity?” This is a question that is harder to answer than it seems because no one really comes back to tell us what to expect. For answers, I turned to the scriptures, the Catholic Catechism and the writings of Catholic writers and saints.

First, will I go straight to heaven? I have non-Catholic friends who believe this. As a Catholic I have heard all my life about Purgatory. I went to the explanation in the Catholic Catechism.

"All who die in God's grace and friendship, but still imperfectly purified, are indeed assured of their eternal salvation; but after death they undergo purification, so as to achieve the holiness necessary to enter the joy of heaven." (Catechism of the Catholic Church, no. 1030)
God's perfect justice demands purification for any sins that are staining my soul at the moment of death. Until that takes

place, my soul is not worthy to be in the presence of God. This is balanced by God's mercy. So, even though God's justice demands that I am not worthy to be fully in His presence, the purification of purgatory will purify my soul. This makes sense because the bible says in Revelation 21:27 that “nothing unclean will enter heaven”, and Purgatory is how “just men are made perfect” (Hebrews 12:23).

Many saints have written about purgatory, and some have even visited during prayer ecstasy. My favorite saint, Saint Faustina, was one who visited purgatory and describes it as a grey, shadowy place. She went on to explain that those souls who are there cannot pray for themselves, so they begged St. Faustina to pray for them. She also understood that there are levels of suffering, just as has been described in visions of hell. Dante's *Inferno*, an inspired novel, gives vivid descriptions of the levels of hell. In purgatory, the lowest level is reserved for those who repented the least while on earth.

So... I do not fear death, and as to what will happen when I die? I do believe in life after death, and that there is Heaven, Hell and Purgatory make sense to me.

Frequent confession and prayer may help get me to Purgatory? and shorten my stay? I know that I need to trust God, so I often pray St Faustina's favorite short prayer: “Jesus I Trust in You.”

"Purgatory is the process by which God remedies all that is lacking in us and that's where our prayers can help the dead. Just as in this life, so also in purgatory, growth and healing is much easier when you've got help, in this case the help of our prayers." — Bishop Anthony B. Taylor

Fellowship Cafe - Saturday 11/13

Harmony's House

With Violinist Louis Nicolai

7-9pm - Lakewood United Methodist

3856 West 10th St Erie, PA

someone takes your coat, do not withhold your shirt from them. Matthew 6:29, NIV. (But it's mine. No. It's God's).

Give to everyone who asks you, and if anyone takes what belongs to you, do not demand it back. Matthew 6:30, NIV. (But it was a LOAN...! You will be repaid in heaven).

Everyone who looks at a woman with lustful intent has already committed adultery with her in his heart. Matthew 5:27, ESV. (Come on....!!! I can't even think bad thoughts? No. They reveal your true heart. Guard your heart and your mind.)

For the entire law is fulfilled in keeping this one command: "Love your neighbor as yourself." Galatians 5:14, NIV. (Even the ones I don't like? Yep.)

For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me will find it. Matthew 16:25, NIV. (But I'm afraid, Lord. I know. But I take care of the birds, right? I don't think I will make it. Do you remember how I protected and fed and led the Israelites? I can do the same for YOU. Trust in ME.)

Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect. Mathew 5:48, NIV. (I can't. I'll help).

Who has 'status' in this Kingdom? It just doesn't make sense!

Those who are last [in this world] shall be first [in the world to come], and those who are first, last. Matthew 20:16, AMP.

Listen carefully: I (your KING) am sending you out like sheep among wolves; so be wise as serpents, and innocent as doves [have no self-serving agenda]. Matthew 10:16,

AMP. Parentheses added.

Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you, and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of Me. Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven; for in the same way they persecuted and the prophets before you. Matthew 5:11-12, BSB.

Blessed are those who mourn. Blessed are the meek. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness. Blessed are the merciful. Blessed are the pure in heart. Blessed are the peacemakers. Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness. (Sermon on the Mount). Wow. A reminder that, as we work in the Kingdom, the fruit of hardship and suffering in this world is storing up reward in our eternal Kingdom. How very often I fail at these things, but how very much I want to cooperate with grace in order to be better.

Authority. The King gives us authority! And a **successful** tactic of the devil is to **make people forget that!** As we journey through this world of trials, *we travel with the authority of the King!* We are emissaries of the King! Picture one of those old movies with castles and knights on horseback. The King sends out His knight -his emissary- with orders straight from the King. The knight travels with a letter from the King and the knight is respected because he is on a mission from the king. Everyone respects the rule and will of the King because this King is the most powerful and most high of all kings and all authorities. All believers are *all* traveling emissaries with a mission and a message from our King! *As we go... we travel with the power and authority given to us by our King. We travel with the power to heal the sick, to raise the dead, to tread on serpents, to drink deadly poison, to cast out demons, to prophesy, to walk in knowledge and discernment. We travel in the power imparted to us by our King through the Holy Spirit. We travel with angels, whom He has given to watch over us. We travel with the protection of the Blood of Christ. "Though a thousand fall at your side, though ten thousand are dying around*

you, these evils will not touch you." Psalm 91:7, NLT. *The Lord is my light and my salvation; Whom should I fear? The Lord is the defense of my life; Whom should I dread?* Psalm 27:1, NASB.

In Hebrews, the Kingship and government we belong to is clearly described:

But to the Son He says: "Your throne, O God, is forever and ever;

A scepter of righteousness is the scepter of Your kingdom. (Hebrews 1:8).

After He completed the mission of rescuing all future members of His Kingdom, He sat down at the Father's right hand. He rules from the Father's right hand, but He doesn't just sit. He makes intercession for us. He pleads our case as the devil accuses us. He takes the place of sacrificed bulls and goats by the power of His shed Blood and He is our new and eternal High Priest forever. We were "bought with a price." We had to be ransomed with the Blood of King Jesus. What King suffers and dies for His own subjects? Yet, once we accept Him, His Blood redeems us and we belong to Him and are citizens of His Kingdom.

He has work for us! Spread the gospel, the good news of Jesus throughout the world. For us that means everyone He puts in our path. Pray. Fast. AND GO with the **authority of your King** to make intercession for this world. HE LISTENS TO HIS CITIZENS. Go with the power He bestowed on you through the Holy Spirit. He gave you HIS POWER! In a world that so desperately needs to believe in God more than science, show them the authentic power of faith in God.

I am a Ph.D. and a researcher. I am not minimizing science. All truth comes from God. However, because I am so familiar with research and data, I am also aware that what we know is frequently fluid and changing. Research is at times wrong and is frequently updated. Also, It is fallible human beings who interpret data so you can see the opportunity to sully the scientific method, whether intentionally or unintentionally. The most prestigious of medical journals recently had to retract a research study that they

Satan's Six Messages

DIARY OF AN EXORCIST MESSAGE 156 - MSGR STEPHEN ROSSETTI

When discerning whether someone has a demonic problem or not, I typically ask what "messages" they are hearing in their heads. Over the years, I have heard the demonically possessed and oppressed consistently relate six basic messages. Satan whispers (or yells!) these in people's heads without respite:

1. *You are a terrible person.*
2. *There is no hope for you.*
3. *God doesn't care about you.*
4. *You're mine. I will never leave.*
5. *You are going to hell.*
6. *You should kill yourself.*

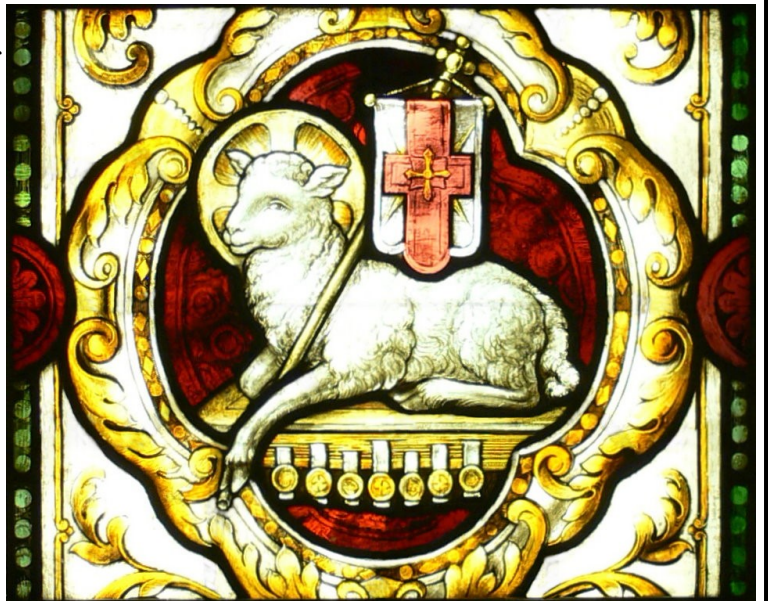
There is a little bit of this mental negativism in all of us, we who are tainted by Original Sin. But when Satan is doing it directly, the message is loud, consistent, and unrelenting. I personally believe that more than a few people take their own lives after being worn down with years of this mental battle.

What to do? I recommend people confront this on both the natural and supernatural planes....

On the natural level, Satan gets a foothold in people's psyches through their human weaknesses and sins. In this case, the more damaged our psyches, the stronger this negative self-talk in our heads. Satan will exploit this weakness.

So, we should engage normal human remedies for such mental negativity. For example, a variety of cognitive-behavioral interventions can be a help. There are a plethora of these on-line. Counseling by licensed professional, who is supportive of the faith, might bring some healing to the roots. For more serious cases, medications for obsessive-compulsive thinking may be indicated.

Ultimately the final antidote to Satan's message is the Good News of Jesus. This supernatural battle can only be finally resolved on the supernatural plane. Once we know deeply in our hearts that God loves us personally, and that we are saved by the blood of the Lamb, then our minds can fully be at peace.



The Trouble With Magic —by Michael Brown (with permission)

Here's a good book by Father Cliff Ermatinger, of Milwaukee, a priest surveying the occult landscape as an exorcist.

Yes, there are intellectual passages. There is theology.

But much of it involves the fascinating personal experience of folks who have been burned by their brush with darkness.

Take a young mother who, the priest recounts, "came into my rectory told me she had been raised in a family situation that is becoming less atypical in Mexico: her parents left the Catholic Church while she was still a teenager. *Having followed her parents' ambivalence with regard to religious practice*, she was not willing to follow her parents into their newfound Pentecostal group."

Instead — one day, after high-school classes — she went to a card reader.

And she marveled at how the reader seemed able to *describe precise details of her life*.

So great was the woman's impression of what transpired that she became hooked on it — card reading — like a drug.

And soon, she found that *she* too could "read" them.

When she and her husband moved to the U.S., says Father Ermatinger, she hung out a sign for her little card-reading enterprise, which helped make ends meet.

And also called a world — or nether-world — of problems.

The problem came at night — "sporadic nocturnal attacks which began to become regular," writes the priest (long a friend of this website).

"It began with horrible nightmares in which demons tortured her in hell." Then came physical attacks on her body, causing her to "wake up covered in bruises, cuts, and scratches."

That was around the time when she went to see the priest.

The last straw was when the experiences began happening during daylight hours, causing her to "disassociate": in effect, go into a demonic trance.

At one point during an episode, she picked up a knife to attack her husband and daughter as they watched television. "She finally reached liberation, but only after much suffering and a deep conversion that involved an intense sacramental life and the discovery of the Blessed Virgin Mary's role in her life."

Many exorcists attest to the power of Mary in exorcism.

Are there "curses"?

You better believe it, says the priest. Virtually all exorcists — Father Ermatinger no exception — attest to this. It's not pleasant stuff. He has seen strange objects coughed up or vomited by those being exorcised. And says some of the most powerful curses are levied by occultists who steal bones from cemeteries, grind them into powder, and use them in rituals or even sneak them into a person's food or drink. Such was the case with an aspiring young witch who cursed her seven-year-old brother, putting cursed sage in the boy's salad and causing him to become possessed.

During exorcism, the demon recounted the exact time and date of his entry sixteen years before!

"One time during an exorcism, I interrogated the demon and asked him how he entered the man I was exorcising," says the priest. "He laughed and told me it was very easy. 'My witch gave him a

cursed can of Coca-Cola twenty-one years ago, and I've been here ever since' [the demon said]. I commanded the demon to expel the cursed object and immediately a dark brown liquid poured out of the man's mouth."

As warned, not very pleasant. But revealing? How many others have been cursed? How often do witches afflict those active in ministry?

Yet there is the victory of Jesus and the purity of Mary in stark opposition and contrast. No demon can stand up to the Lord and His Blessed Mother — or even come close.

But they have to be invoked with active, prayed-up faith.

Take the fellow who was possessed by a spirit that identified itself as *Spiritus Luxuriae* — "spirit of lust. It entered when the man became addicted to pornography. Imagine how many in our day are likewise afflicted!

Said the demon, "I know I have to leave soon, but I'll be back again and again and again."

A hollow threat.

For, as Father Ermatinger recounts, "At that point, [the man's] face changed drastically, and he looked with horror, saying: 'The Great Lady!' and left with a scream.

"We all fell to our knees and welcomed the Blessed Mother (whose official birthday is this week) with a Rosary."

[resources: [*The Trouble With Magic*](#) and [*Michael Brown retreat: The Stand Against Evil*](#)]

<https://spiritdailyblog.com/spiritual-warfare/the-trouble-with-magic>

published. However, it's hard to put the horse back in the barn, and the retractions did not receive nearly the amount of publicity as the original publication.

So, while I love research and have the utmost respect for science, I also have a healthy degree of skepticism, which any good researcher should have. I have watched as people who know little about research or methods, etc. make idols of research; hanging on every word that comes from the black box in homes. While there has been monumental benefit to society from research, be aware that not all research is good and not many know the difference. Data and interpretations can be manipulated, and it is easy to be drawn into trusting poor research. Any researcher knows this. Just because someone says "research shows that..." doesn't mean it's good or real or true.

Do you remember this? - I remember when I was growing up and I was told how good eggs were for me. Then I remember as a young adult when 'researchers found that' eggs are bad for you and you shouldn't eat them. Then I remember when researchers said it was ok to just eat the egg whites. Finally I recall when eggs, for the most part and for most people, were once again good for you. Get my point?

I could go on with similar examples, but a much better known scientist than myself says it very well. Guy Consolmagno, the Director of the Vatican Observatory, recently stated that the popular phrase "Follow the science" implies that science is infallible. He goes on to say that "*science is not infallible*" and people's fear of "*blind trust in science has an element of truth to it.*" Relating his own personal experience, Father Consolmagno reported that he could name "*any number of papers I have written that turned out to be embarrassingly incorrect*" and times when 'the science' "*and how it is presented 'has turned out to be not merely imperfect but horrifyingly wrong.*" In a phrase I find eloquently simple and

profound, Consolmagno says that "*both those who promote science and those who disdain it are looking for certainty in an uncertain universe... but science itself is actually a process based on doubt and error, and learning how to analyze the error.*" He ends the article by saying: "*the only certain thing in life is God's love and mercy – and our need for both.*" Amen to that.

The world needs the authentic love and power of God that flows from the citizens of His Kingdom. They need a hope that doesn't change like research does. Jesus is the same yesterday and today and tomorrow. Much of science is not. Sometimes people need healing that doesn't come from a pill or a chemical, but from a believer interceding and delivering to them the authentic, unchanging, amazing power of their King!

The world is in a blender of confusion! Our King, and the wonderful message about becoming members of HIS Kingdom, IS simple TRUTH. It never ever changes no matter what is going on in the blender. Proclaim the truth and joy and power of your citizenship and your most wonderful, all-powerful, all-loving, merciful and just, King of all kings.

Go against the tide of the world by following the commandments of God, which are so opposed to the '*me first*' laws of the world. If we love our King, we *keep His commands*. This is how He knows we love Him - when we aspire to please HIM in everything. This is what it means to be a citizen of the Kingdom of our God. Let us go boldly into the spiritual battle, knowing where are true 'citizenship' is, with spiritual weapons, including of the Truth of His Word and the Power of His Spirit, so necessary for these times and for our own souls. Amen.

Cited Source: America Magazine, Oct 22, 2021, Guy Consolmagno.

WHAT CATHOLICS BELIEVE

Faith and Science

Science is the study of God's creation.

There are no discrepancies between true science and faith, for it is God Himself who made the secrets of nature what they are.

Since the same God who reveals mysteries and infuses faith has bestowed the light of reason on the human mind, God cannot deny himself, nor can truth ever contradict truth. (CCC 159)



By The Word of Their Testimony

SAVED BY A FISHERMAN

Submitted by Kathryn Wilcox

One of the biggest issues many of us have is accepting the love of God, just as we are.. “How could Jesus want me? I am a sinner.” “I have to change, reform, before I give my life to Christ.” That is the lie we hear in our head. The lie that the enemy of God uses to convince us that we are not worthy, so should just stay away from God.

I just recently heard the testimony of a person who was hearing the same lie. And the voice in her head convinced her to commit suicide. So she took an overdose of drugs. But instead of dying on the spot, the drugs got her to go outside on a cold winter day and walk to the river near her house. She took off most of her clothes and entered frigid water that had ice chunks floating in it.

That should have been the end of a very sad life.

Instead she was spotted by a fisherman, who called 911. Then a brave fireman plunged into the icy water and pulled her out.

As she told the story, her face radiated joy. “I was saved by a fisherman,” she said. “And because I was saved I realized that God loves me. He did not let me die. I am now getting to know Him through His words in the Bible, and now I know that no matter where a person is in their life, God will not give up on us. He loves me, ***JUST AS I AM.***”

The first apostles Jesus called to follow Him were fisherman.

“Follow me,” he said, “and I will make you fishers of men.” Matthew 4:19 KJV

Word Of Life has exciting news! As of January 2022, we will be adopting a NAME CHANGE to: FAITH ON FIRE, CATHOLIC CHARISMATIC RENEWAL CENTER

Word of Life Annual Membership Meeting

Saint Mark Center,
429 E Grandview, Erie, PA
Friday, November 12, 2021
3:15 PM

First Saturday of the Month Mass in honor of Our Lady

9:00 AM at St. Gregory's, Northeast, PA
Sacred Music beginning at 8:50 AM
Music provided by: Soloist, Jacqueline Phillip;
Violinist, Louis Nicolai and Organist Corey Spacht
Celebrant: Rev. Jerry Priscaro

Word of Life is *completely* dependent upon your donations to spread the fire of the Holy Spirit in the Diocese of Erie.

Your donation, no matter how much, makes a big difference!

Contributions can be made by check made payable to
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Text the word “give” to our dedicated giving number: (570) 536-9187

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11/13 7-9 pm Lakewood United Methodist Basement

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The office is generally open limited hours.
Please call before coming.

The purpose of this newsletter is to proclaim
the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and to provide
teaching, news, and calendar of events, which
help to foster Catholic Charismatic Renewal
throughout the Diocese of Erie.

**This newsletter may be copied to put in
churches or shared with others.**

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Volume XXXV

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