



Reflections on 'The Greater Things'

October 2018

Volume XXXII Issue No. 10

"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)

BREASTPIECE OF DECISION By Deacon Andrew Froberg

When Moses consulted God, God would render His decision directly to Moses. Since Moses would not be with Israelites beyond the Jordan River, another means had to be used to determine God's decision. God did not speak directly to high priests in the manner that He spoke to Moses. For this purpose, the 'breastpiece of decision' is constructed according to God's instruction and was given to Joshua. In Exodus 28:15, the 'breastpiece of decision' is described: "you shall also have made, embroidered like the ephod with gold thread and violet, purple and scarlet yarn on cloth of fine linen twined." The ephod is a vestment worn in the Old Testament by the high priest and is a sort of apron worn only when he is performing his office as high priest. The breastpiece is worn over the ephod and was the most important and costly of all the priestly clothing because it had a very holy purpose. It was a sacred object that allowed the high priest to know the righteous will of God. The breastpiece is described in Exodus 28:22-29 (NIV):

For the breastpiece make braided chains of pure gold, like a rope. Make two gold rings for it and fasten them to two corners of the breastpiece. Fasten the two gold chains to the rings at the corners of the breastpiece, and the other ends of the chains to the two settings, attaching them to the shoulder pieces of the ephod at the front. Make two gold rings and attach them to the other two corners of the breastpiece on the inside edge next to the ephod. Make two more gold rings and attach them to the bottom of the shoulder pieces on the front of the ephod, close to the seam just above the waistband of the ephod. The rings of the breastpiece are to

be tied to the rings of the ephod with blue cord, connecting it to the waistband, so that the breastpiece will not swing out from the ephod.

***We can never say that
God is not a God who
cares about the details.
He does!***

The breastpiece of decision was an ornate pocket-like receptacle that held the Urim and Thummim, which is what God used to communicate His decisions. The breastpiece literally held/contained the 'decision' (judgment) of God. Knowing and following the decisions of God allowed the people the opportunity to walk in righteousness, and it is no different for us. God is gracious and does not hide His will. The **Urim** means *lights* and the **Thummim** means *perfections* – literally: 'perfect light' or 'perfect truth.' The Urim and Thummim is covered with 12 precious stones, 4 rows of three. God Himself instructed the type and placement of each stone, which represents one of the 12 tribes of Israel. The Urim and Thummim within the breastplate was used to ascertain God's decision in doubtful matters. The Urim and Thummim may have been referred to as 'sacred lots,' but they do not compare to what we consider lots to be today. God likely caused the precious stones to light in a particular way when a serious matter arose and there was not a direct indication from God as to the course of action. There are several suspected references to the use of the breastpiece of decision in the Old Testament. An example is when The Israelites are returning to Jerusalem. There were records of genealogy, but if those records could not be located for a family, in Nehemiah 7:65 (ERV), it says

"And the Tirshatha said unto them, that they should not eat of the most holy things, till there stood up a priest with Urim and Thummim." Another reference occurs when God refuses to answer Saul, "When Saul saw the Philistine army, he was afraid and trembled violently. He inquired of the LORD, but the LORD did not answer him by dreams or Urim or prophets." (1Sam 28:5-6)

The placement over the heart reflected the dire nature of these sacred indicators and it represented that the high priest carried the judgment of the Lord for the people over his heart. "And place the Urim and Thummim in the breastpiece of judgment, so that they will also be over Aaron's heart whenever he comes before the LORD. Aaron will continually carry the judgment of the sons of Israel over his heart before the LORD" (Exodus 28:30). Carrying the breastpiece over his shoulders expresses that he was taking on the weight of and responsibility of being the intercessor between God and the Israelites. It foreshadows Jesus taking the weight of our sins upon His shoulders and interceding before God for us. We are represented as the precious stones with our names engraved upon His Heart as He makes intercession for us!

The breastpiece did not offer physical protection, but being the high priest and having the decision of God when the need arose provided for the Israelites spiritual protection because the breastpiece reflected the righteous plan of God. This is important to keep in mind when reading the books of Wisdom, Isaiah, Saint Paul's letters to the Ephesians, and 1 Thessalonians. In each of these, the term breastplate is used, not breastpiece. A breastplate was an armor, metal or hard leather, that was meant to provide

LORD, SHOW ME YOUR GLORY

By Jaci Phillips, PhD

Lord I beseech Thee, show me Thy Glory!" This was the plea of Moses to the Lord. For each one of us, out of a love that creates an ever increasing hunger and thirst for the presence of our Beloved, the glory and the face (i.e., the intimacy) of our Beloved should be what we seek. *"You shall love the Lord your God with all of your heart, mind, soul, and strength."* It is the beginning, and even the end, of all spiritual growth to 'seek' the Lord in deeper and deeper levels of intimacy. It is a spiritual necessity. And as we seek Him, our love and hunger grow through the power of the Holy Spirit, who is literally the intimacy, love, breath, Word, and power of the Living God.

It is difficult for us to not see God as 'far off,' hard to relate to, or difficult to reach. After all, He is God, and we are... well, we are us with all of our warts and imperfections. But God is *not* a far-off God! He is an ever-present God. He is a Living God who is so full of love that He *IS* love and He created us out of love. He desires us to seek to be closer and closer to Him. And as we are, He heals, changes, and delivers us, and prepares us for the perfect plan He created us for. *"For I know the plans I have for you says the Lord, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope."* Jer 29:11 (ESV). It is in seeking the Lord that that plan becomes reality. *"Then you will call upon Me and come and pray to Me, and I will listen to you. You will seek Me and find Me when you search for Me with all your heart."* (Jer 29:12-13. Emphasis added). First comes the intimacy (prayer and seeking) and then comes the *"I will listen to you."* I once heard it put very succinctly. "It doesn't matter if you say 'you know the Lord' if the Lord doesn't know you!" Hits at the heart, right? Or right. 'RIGHT!' (it's possible that you may need to hear me say this in person, but it means that there is only ONE answer. Instead of a choice between right or wrong, the only answer is 'RIGHT!'). Maybe makes us a little uncomfortable? Yes? Or yes. 'YES!' Good! Because that's where growth begins! Recognizing that it's about an *intimate* relationship in which we must desire not shallow small-talk, but deep and intimate communication. To be 'known' by our Beloved, not because He is omniscient (which He is), but because we have made the *decision* to love Him and to seek to know Him more deeply while sharing our heart *increasingly* with Him.

Moses wanted as much intimacy as possible. He sought the glory of the Lord even if it killed him ("No one can see My face and live")! Even if he breathed his last breath as he beheld the glory of the Living God and saw His face just once, Moses longed for it. I have a friend who recently said that they felt

that if they loved the Lord with even one more drop, it would kill them. Do you know this feeling of being so filled with love for God that you feel like you might die if you had even a micron more? This is the hunger for the manifest presence of God that Moses had; the hunger that brings revival to whole regions and changes them as a result of a handful of God's faithful seeking His face on their behalf. This has been the pattern of revivals since Pentecost. Pray, pray, pray, seek, seek, seek, and then watch what occurs as a result!

The manifest glory and presence of the Living God is a known and felt visitation of the glory of God. It is a keen awareness of God walking among His people. In "The God Chasers" Tommy Tenney talks about the glory of God descending on a church where he was preaching in Houston, TX. It was clear to him as soon as he walked into the sanctuary that the *manifest* presence of the Living God was there. It was such an awesome power that no one wanted to interrupt it to even move or speak. He was actually afraid of what might happen if he took the pulpit. There was a reverential fear and respect for the power and presence of God in that place. When he did take the pulpit, he spoke one scripture and the power of God literally exploded. He says, "It's not by coincidence that the original Greek word for 'the power that raised Jesus from the dead' is 'dynamis' and it has the same root as 'dynamite.'" According to Strong's it means *"force (literally or figuratively); specifically, miraculous power."*

There was an indoor clap of thunder and the heavy acrylic pulpit was split down the center and the pastor was thrown 10 feet backwards (he was not hurt. He rested in the Spirit with the Lord showing him vision after vision for two hours. This was a pastor who was known for being very *'reserved'*). As the glory and power of God descended, people began to fall on their faces in weeping repentance for their sins. This has been the effect of being in the presence of God since Isaiah stood before the throne of God and cried out to die, saying *"Woe to me for I am man of unclean lips among a people of unclean lips."*

When we come into the true manifest holy presence of God, we are able to see all of our sinfulness with new clarity, and because we are also in the presence of pure love, there is also true sorrow and perfect repentance... and true conversion. As people come into contact with the presence of God, they are changed forever. That is what happens when the manifest glory of the Lord God meets those who are seeking His face and His presence and trying their best to walk in righteousness; those who are so *HUNGRY* to sit in that manifest glory of the Living God and of Jesus

Christ that they don't care if it is with their last breath that they see that presence or behold that face. One moment in that glory; one moment of looking into the face of God is worth their last breath.

We are in a time when the world needs revival. Not cheap, inauthentic, counterfeit grace that is only born out of emotionalism with no call to conversion and change; but the authentic, convicting, overwhelming, healing, delivering, awesome, miraculous, and even terrifying, true power of the Living God. God needs spiritual soldiers who will enter the battle and pray and He needs us to show people His light in the midst of much darkness. Many people doubt the power of God or they think that God does not perform miracles anymore, or even that He ever did, or they think that God won't create a miracle *for them!* It's a church and a world that needs the same touch from the glory of God as Tommy Tenney and as Azusa Street. And (PRAISE GOD!) we have something greater than the glory that faded as Moses was removed from the presence of God:

Now if the ministry of death, carved in letters on stone, came with such glory that the Israelites could not gaze at Moses' face because of its glory, which was being brought to an end, will not the ministry of the Spirit have even more glory? For if there was glory in the ministry of condemnation, the ministry of righteousness must far exceed it in glory. 2 Cor 3:7-9

As we pray without ceasing and continuously seek the manifest presence of the Lord, let us be willing to get on our faces and cry out, *"My Lord and my God! I beseech Thee, Lord. Show me Thy glory."* Even if it is with our last breath! ... And give us the hunger to know You more intimately! Let us be consumed with and by Your love and glory. It will *authentically* change us forever.

Please join us for our Annual 'Greater Things' Conference as we seek deeper levels of authentic intimacy and the glory of the Living God! (see page # for registration)

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

If you wish to send a contribution, checks can be made payable to:

Word of Life
Catholic Charismatic Renewal Center
St. Mark Catholic Center
429 E. Grandview Blvd.,
Erie, Pa. 16514

physical protection to the wearer. However, just as the Old Testament references reflect spiritual protection provided by following the will of God, the breastplate in the New Testament passages is meant to provide the spiritual protection that results in both consulting and seeking the will of God and then in following that will. In Wisdom 5:18, "He shall don justice for a breastplate and shall wear sure judgment for a helmet" In Isaiah 59:17, "He shall put on justice as his breastplate, salvation, as the helmet on his head; He clothed himself with garments of vengeance, wrapped himself in a mantel of zeal" (what a beautiful imagine; being wrapped in a mantel of zeal for the Lord). Ephesians 6:14 is the most famous reference to the breastplate of righteousness as spiritual armor. "So stand fast with your loins girded in truth, clothed with righteousness as a breastplate." 1 Thessalonians 5:8, "But since we are of the day, let us be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love and the helmet that is hope for salvation."

In modern terms, we as God's people need to be guided spiritually; we need to do God's will. We need to accept and act on God's decision. Our guidance comes to us and we need to 'take it to heart,' as was intended by the high priest on behalf of the Israelites. Whereas in the Old Testament, it was necessary for the will of God to be revealed through the breastplate of [God's] decision, and only the high priest was able to approach the Holy of Holies wearing the breastpiece

containing the Urim and Thummim, we are told to *clothe ourselves* in Ephesians 6 and to *put on the full armor of spiritual protection* given to us by God. That armor contains the breastplate of righteousness. The breastplate is a most vital piece of armor to any soldier because it protects the most important of organs, the heart. Our hearts are protected when we seek and follow God's will. We are clothed in the righteousness of Jesus instead of our own righteousness and we remain in righteousness by seeking to follow God's will, spoken to us in scripture and revealed to us *through the guidance of the Holy Spirit*. Although it might seem like it would be wonderful to have the Old Testament breastpiece of decision at our disposal, we have something much better than this: we have the Holy Spirit and the Gifts of the Spirit. However, action is required. Ephesians 6 implies an active cooperation on our part by the *decision to put on* the breastplate of righteousness by seeking the will of God and then listening to the promptings of the Holy Spirit. Just as with the Urim and Thummim, God does have a most perfect plan and generally has a 'yes' or 'no' answer for most things according to His perfect will. And His will, even though we may not understand it as we follow it, is the best, most perfect plan, and it offers spiritual protection, especially for our hearts. Our hearts never become hardened when we follow God's plan. Hardening of heart comes as we resist God's plans. Hardened hearts lose the ability to hear God speaking or to care what His will is regarding a situation. As

we repeatedly reject the will of God, a dangerous thing happens: at some point God allows our conscience to be seared, which means that we lose the ability to feel guilt or remorse, even though we are out of His will. God knows each of us and puts into place a plan that He knows is what is right for us. But we always have the freewill to reject His plan. Let us always put on the our own breastpiece of decision, carrying the Holy Spirit equivalent of Urim and Thummim, seeking and following God's will, thereby gaining the protection of the breastplate of righteousness. The Old Testament is fulfilled and revealed by the New, and the New Testament is concealed within the Old Testament. Whenever the Apostles (or Jesus) referred to scripture in the New Testament, they were referring to what we know as the Old Testament. Let us examine it with new spiritual eyes. Thank you Lord, for giving us the Holy Spirit as our 'breastpiece of decision.'

PROPHECY REPORT

"Where are the Levites? The holy men and women who know how to touch the holy things of GOD and live because they have insulated themselves with *death to self*. GOD is looking for *sanctified shoulders*. People who can handle what GOD is about to do." TOMMY TENNEY

"For the earth shall be covered with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD as the waters cover the sea." Hab 2:14 (ESV) JACI PHILLIPS

You do not want to leave too, do you?" Jesus asked the Twelve. Simon Peter answered him, "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. CATHY GEIGER



HEALING
MASS

Holy Rosary Church
2701 East Ave, Erie
Tuesday, October 9, 2018
6:30 PM (Worship 6:15)

**Sponsored by Son of God
Prayer Group**

Presided by: Fr Johnathan
Schmoldt and Fr Jerry Priscaro

God wants to heal us and will heal through the powerful gift given to us by the Holy Spirit. This is one of God's gifts to His Church. During a healing Mass or service we must remain open to the Holy Spirit and invite Him into our hearts. Come with expectant faith.

upcoming events

HEALING MASS (SPIRIT-FILLED)
 Sponsored by Son of God Prayer Group Holy
 Rosary Church, 2701 East Ave, Erie
 Tuesday, October 9, 2018 6:30 PM (Worship 6:15)

“Show Me Your Glory”
ANNUAL GREATER THINGS CONFERENCE
 St. Joseph Bread of Life Center
 147 West 24th St, Erie
 October 13, 2018 9 AM - 3:30 PM
 Lunch Included - Scholarships Available
 For Registrations Call: T.A. Walkiewicz (814) 833-9717
 See Page 5 for details and registration form.

SILENT DIRECTED RETREAT
 Cost: \$100 - McKean, PA
 Friday - Sunday November 2-4, 2018
 Registrations needed by October 15
 For Registrations Call: T.A. Walkiewicz (814) 833-9717
 Email: tawalk0313@gmail.com

THE GIFT - LIFE IN THE SPIRIT SEMINAR
 St. Stephen's - Oil City, PA
 Friday, November 9, 2018 6:00 pm - 9:00 pm
 Saturday, November 10, 2018 8:30 am - 3:30 pm
 Contact Denise Varo (814) 744-8199



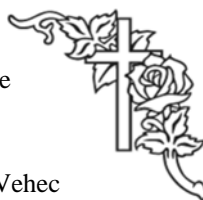
New Prayer Group

Promises Of God Prayer Group
 St. Mary's Church—Crown, PA
 Contact Denise Varo for details and times
 814-744-8199

Memorials

PRESENTED TO:
 Bobby Lee in Memory of Nancy Lee
 By: TA Walkiewicz

PRESENTED TO:
 The Vehec Family, in memory of Mike Vehec
 By: Jean & Bob Zimmer



Give and gifts shall be given to you; a good measure, packed together, shaken down, and overflowing, will be poured into your lap. For the measure with which your measure will in return be measured out to you.

Luke 6:38

Fundraiser - November 2018

The Word of Life Catholic Charismatic Renewal will be holding its annual pledge/fund drive in November. We depend completely upon donations in order to be able to spread the power of the Holy Spirit throughout the diocese and to print and distribute the newsletter.



† SUNDAY

Shalom in Jesus Prayer Group
 In home, DuBois, PA 6:30 PM
 Rick Kenawell (814) 375-0328

Acts II Community
 St. Julia Church, Erie, PA
 West Lake Rd. & Powell Ave. 6:30 PM
 Jack Heintzel (814) 838-1325

Holy Crown of Thorns Prayer Group
 First Sunday of the Month
 749 Bean Farm Rd, Sheffield, PA 1:30 PM
 Lil Herbstritt (814) 968-3208

† MONDAY

Disciples of the Holy Spirit
 St. Mary's Church Annex
 139 Church St., St. Marys, PA 6:00 PM
 Mary Ellen Frank (814) 781-3904

St. Andrew Chapel
(formerly Leopold Center group)
 Chaplet of Divine Mercy and Rosary
 1116 West 7th St., Erie Pa 3:15 pm (before Mass)
 Mary Lou Peterson (814) 866-5678

River of Life PG
 St. Bridget Ch., Rm. 4, Meadville, PA
 2nd & 4th Monday evenings 7:00PM
 Amy Mosbacher (814) 724-6104

† TUESDAY

Son of God Prayer Group
 Holy Rosary Church
 2701 East Ave. 7:00 PM
 Pat Montefiori (814) 823-3968

† FRIDAY

Light of the World Community
 In Home Prayer Meeting
 Call for location 1:00 PM
 T.A. Walkiewicz (814) 833-9717

† SATURDAY

God's Holy Love
 11 Russell St., Warren, PA 10:30 AM
 Virginia Baker (781) 217-1683

CONTEMPORARY MASS

Every Sunday 11:00 AM
 St. Joseph Church / Bread of Life Community
 Children's Liturgy of the Word

PERPETUAL ADORATION

Bread of Life Chapel
 St. Joseph Community Center

ST. JOSEPH NOVENA

Every Wednesday 7:00 PM
 St. Joseph Church / Bread of Life Community

"Show Me Your Glory!"

Annual 'Greater Things' Conference

"Lord I beseech thee, show me thy glory!"
Exodus 33:18

Saturday, October 13, 2018
9-3:30, \$25 w/ lunch included
St. Joseph Center
(behind the church)
147 West 24th St., Erie, PA

"Call to me and I will answer you, and I
will tell you great and mighty things,
which you do not know."
Jeremiah 33:3



Speaker: Dr. Jacqueline Phillips-Sabol, PhD

Jaci is a neuropsychologist who is trained to diagnose brain disorders. She was director of the Neurocognitive Disorders Center at the University of Texas at Houston. She has been a worship leader, prayer group leader, and speaker in the charismatic renewal for over 20 years.



Worship led by Jaci Phillips, Brianna Erdman, & friends with special guest violinist for the Erie Philharmonic Louis Nicolia

Moses wanted to 'see' the glory of the Lord.

He wanted to see the face of the God he loved and he begged God to allow Him this honor, even though he might immediately die ("No one shall see my face and live" Ex 33:20). This was a plea of a man who loved the Lord to be able to stand in the glory of the presence of the one he loved and to stare into His face. His plea was a yearning born out of intimacy ("I am pleased with you and know you by name" Ex 33:17), yet desiring closer intimacy. This is what God desires of us. Just as He desired relationship with Moses, He desires relationship with US! "The Father is seeking such as these to worship Him" Jn 4:34. He wants us to seek Him and to love Him. The 'more' that God desires to pour onto those who love Him is born out of our desire to be drawn 'deeper' into the arms of the Living God. As we hunger and thirst to be in the presence of the glory of the Lord, miracles happen. There are emotional, spiritual, and physical miracles in response to intercessions for people, relationships, and regions. As we more deeply seek God, greater things being to happen in a world that needs 'greater things.'

Registration form for Word of Life Event: "SHOW ME YOUR GLORY!" ANNUAL 'GREATER THINGS' CONFERENCE

Name (Print): _____ Phone _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____ Email: _____

Please send registration form and enclosed event fee to the Word of Life Office (make check payable to **Word of Life Center**):

Word of Life Charismatic Renewal Center
St. Mark Catholic Center
429 E. Grandview Blvd., Erie, PA 16514

Please sign me up to receive the monthly Word of Life Newsletter! Send it to my email OR Send it to my address

***If registration fee is a hardship or for questions, please contact TA Walkiewicz at: (814) 833- 9717 or wolccrc@eriercd.org.**

**Annual WOL CCRC Members meeting will take place during lunch
(you do not need to be a contributor to WOL to attend the luncheon)

FINDING JESUS, IN THE CATHOLIC CHURCH? (PART ONE) By Elaine Sinnott

I had no idea what God had in store for me, but boy does He have a plan!

He first drew me to Himself through a Christian Marriage Devotional, one I highly recommend to any married woman out there (*Wife After God: Drawing Closer to God & Your Husband* by Jennifer Smith). He taught me A LOT about myself, gently pointing out the things I really needed to change about *myself*, not my husband. What an important lesson that was to learn! And then He drew me into His loving arms. For the first time in my life, I *felt* God. People, I *truly felt* Him! A relationship with God is not only possible, but it's *ideal* and it's *what HE wants!* When you allow God to take that first step into the door of your heart – once you finally creak it open to see Who's standing on the other side – your world will never be the same. And you will NEVER want to go back! (I am overwhelmed with gratefulness.)

After reading that devotional and another by the same author, I had learned so much! But I still felt something missing. But I was very resistant to dive into the Catholic faith I had known since childhood because I had only known it to be boring all my life, to be quite honest and I know a lot of other people can probably relate to this. I didn't think I'd find the missing part in *that* faith. I was almost sure of it. Most of that problem, I would later learn, is that I knew pretty much NOTHING about the Catholic faith!

CURIOSITY BROUGHT ME TO LIFE!

One day in early 2017, I typed into the google search bar "Catholic women," expecting absolutely nothing in my results. Then God pulled me in even *more!* He squeezed me even tighter. He led me to a ministry – an incredible ministry! – called Blessed Is She (blessedisshenet.net), which is a community of *thousands and thousands* of Catholic women. This ministry offers daily devotions for women and by women, retreats, workshops, amazing studies and products, devotionals, local brunches, and SO much more! I was completely blown away. I honestly couldn't believe there were other

Catholic women out there seeking God, much less Catholic women who were so in love with the faith. This ministry led me to a new friend through the Blessed Is She Regional Facebook group. She immediately invited me to her church for a program called Alpha. Thankfully she asked me more than once because it truly changed my life!

A NEW BEGINNING

I went to my first Alpha where I met my friend, Tara, and she introduced me to the people in her group. Everyone was *so* friendly and, dare I say it, *normal!* I don't know why that surprised me, but it did. I honestly went the first time because they offered free childcare and a free dinner. And I needed to get out of the house. I couldn't beat that! There was contemporary praise and worship being sung in the background, something I had been praying for in a Catholic parish for a very long time. I felt tears welling up in my eyes and a huge lump in my throat. Then when we sat down, Tara invited me to Mass with them on Sunday. I was attending Mass at another nearby parish but not regularly. I asked her if they had any contemporary Masses and she said YES! There was a contemporary 11 AM Mass on Sundays, known as the family Mass. I had so many prayers answered that night that I was overwhelmed with joy and I had to truly fight back the tears. I'm beyond blessed to now call St. Joseph Bread of Life our home parish with Fr. Larry Richards as our pastor. What an amazing community and an incredible leader, who has a love so great for Christ that it's contagious!

ALPHA

Alpha continued each week and I continued going and growing, becoming more and more filled with the Holy Spirit with every session. I honestly wished it was more than once each week. The "Jesus High" I got from that program and my INCREDIBLE small group was unreal! If you don't know what Alpha is, I'm going to try to give you a condensed description. It's this amazing program for people who do not know Christ or want to know *more* about Him. It's not a Catholic program – strictly Christian and relevant to all denominations. The videos each week

are INCREDIBLE! I cannot say enough good things about Alpha. If you want something more in your life – and really, we all do because each of our souls yearn for Jesus – Alpha is the program for you. They're everywhere! You can visit alphausa.org to find one local to you. It will change your life and you won't want to go back!

THE GIFTS

Near the end of Alpha, I unfortunately missed the big retreat day because my husband and I had a wedding. But when I finally came back, I was greeted with a warm welcome and then heard stories of the retreat day. I found out that they had received the baptism in the Holy Spirit (which I had no idea what that even meant), the result of a great manifestation of our Lord with students from Duquesne University right in my very own hometown of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania in 1967 (or going back even further.. Pentecost!). Remarkably, It wasn't until I learned about the Charismatic Renewal that I learned I had experienced the results of the baptism in my childhood, around the age of 10!

A Healing

When I was maybe 10 years old, I was at my Aunt's house with a bunch of family members and a few friends of the family for a big family get together. I remember feeling sick, a little feverish, and told my mom. Somehow a friend of the family had found out and he told me to sit by him on the couch. So, my mom and I sat next to him, me sitting on my mom's lap, and he laid his hands on me. Then he started speaking in a language I didn't recognize for just a couple minutes and suddenly, *I felt that fever leave me!* I felt what can only be described as rubbing IcyHot all over my body. That feeling is still very vivid in my mind. As soon as he had finished praying, he immediately said, "There, she feels cooler already." I remember just staring at him thinking, "*What on earth did he just do?*" I also remember thinking, "*Thank goodness I wasn't lying about my fever!*" (LOL!) It was 18 years later when I finally realized what had happened that day in childhood...

(to be continued in part two,
Reflections Newsletter, Nov. 2018)

By The Word of Their Testimony

“But they have conquered him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, for they did not cling to life even in the face of death.”
(Revelation 12:11)



MASKS AND LIES By Michael Illig

Hello, my name is Michael Illig. I am a recent graduate of St. Vincent College and I am going to tell you about how I won my freedom.

Most understand winning freedom through stories such as William Wallace at Sterling Bridge or Desmond Doss saving lives while under fire at Hacksaw Ridge. However, what is not usually conveyed is that every man and woman in their lifetimes must win their own freedom. I was born with Asperger's syndrome, a high functioning form of autism. Because I think and function differently due to my diagnosis, many thought me incapable as a child to compete in athletics as well as to learn and function in a school environment. Unfortunately, those who had these assumptions were some of my teachers, coaches, and parents of children I went to school with. I was treated as incapable by adults and due to this, was bullied by my peers because children follow the lead of the authority figures in their lives.

It is in these situations where the enemy likes to build upon our wounds and tear us from God. As Sterling and Hacksaw Ridge were the sights of real battles, our lives are the grounds in which spiritual battles are being fought and where we face a very real enemy who wants nothing more than to tear us from God. Just as the enemy whispered lies into the ears of Adam and Eve, he whispered lies to me of how I was inferior, unworthy of love, despised, and unintelligent. These lies caused me to create masks that I would take on and off to try to please those around me. I carried and believed these lies all the way to college, as well as the other masks I created. My college experience was very different than my previous academic experience. I had friends who cared for me and loved me. All they ever wanted was that I be what God created me to be. But how could I when

I still believed the lies and wore the masks?

I was eventually invited to one of the college retreats called Ignite. I did not know what to expect. I only knew that I had no choice in the matter because a good friend of mine signed me up and simply said, “Be there.” At that retreat, I heard talks and witnesses about how the baptism in the Holy Spirit had changed people's lives. I only remember half of the talks because I fell asleep through the other half. However, the most life-changing experience I have ever had was yet to come. On the retreat, those attending were all invited to be baptized in the Holy Spirit, just as the Apostles were in the upper room. This experience can simply be explained as inviting the Holy Spirit to come into your heart to change your life. When it came time for the baptism in the Holy Spirit, I was frightened. I felt unworthy to receive God into my life. I felt that He would not accept me. As it came time for me to be baptized, I was asked what I needed prayer for in order for God to change my life. I did not know what to say. Then I felt words climbing up from the depths of my soul. They reached out and said “remove the masks so I could be who God made me to be.” I was prayed over and felt nothing, but God gave me powerful graces through the Spirit of Truth, which is the Holy Spirit, to slowly remove the lies and masks. I went consecutively on three more retreats and was re-baptized or re-infilled with the Holy Spirit three more times, with each one giving me new graces until the most recent Ignite. This time when I was baptized **I had an encounter with the Lord**. The Lord said many things, but the most important thing that stirred my soul was that He called me “*beloved and prized son*.”

From that day, the Lord has *filled me* with love and very many graces. I know I am imperfect. I know God is the source of all my strength and all goodness in my life and I do little at all to contribute to that. I know that my

freedom is not yet completely won. That can only be won in death. But I do know I am a beloved son of the Father and *how freeing* it is to know that. Through the Holy Spirit, Jesus removes lies and masks. We are all beloved children of the Father and the Father does not abandon his children. If you attend a Life In The Spirit or similar seminar with the mindset that the seminar is the battlefield in which you allow the Lord to conquer the lies and difficulties in your life, you too will know just how loved you are by our heavenly Father and how, when we ask Him to remove the barriers, nothing stands between Him and His children.

Editor's note: This is a testimony of an extraordinary young man whom several of us met when he was on the team and gave his testimony at a recent Life In The Spirit Seminar (LIS). I know you will be as inspired by it as all of us were who heard it that night. Something I love about Michael's testimony is that he didn't just go to one LIS seminar.

Testimony

We would love to hear from you!

Do you have a testimony of how God is working in your life that you would like to share?

Email it to: wolccrc@eriercd.org
Attention: Jaci Phillips



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*"Call to me and I will answer you, and I will tell you great and mighty
things, which you do not know." Jer 33:3*

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Word of Life Catholic
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429 E. Grandview Blvd, Erie PA 16514

Phone: (814) 824-1286

Fax: (814) 824-1285

e-mail: wolccrc@eriercd.org

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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
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**This newsletter may be copied to put in
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CHIEF EDITOR

Jacqueline Phillips-Sabol, PhD

EDITORS

Elaine Sinnott; Amy Mosbacher

FORMATTING

Elaine Sinnott; Loretta Laufer

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