

## Gifted and Giving



### Sainthood for Father Junipero Serra

Pope Francis on January 16 announced his decision to canonize Fr. Junipero Serra, the Franciscan founder of the California missions during his visit to Washington, DC this fall. The ceremony will take place at the National Shrine of the Basilica of the Immaculate Conception.

The Pope decided to waive the requirement for two miracles. Blessed Fr. Serra is said to have cured a nun in St. Louis from lupus. However, a second miracle has not been attributed to his intervention. Pope Francis said that Blessed Junipero Serra has been considered to have been a holy man for many decades and that he is a good example of evangelization - bringing the gospel - to those who have not heard it. (*Cont. p. 3*)



### Gift - The Foundation of All Reality

By Susan Mahan, PhD

For a Christian, "gift" is a term for the very foundation of all reality. God in him/herself is gift. The Trinity is by definition constituted fundamentally as a Reality of love which is self-donating. Each Person of the Trinity delights in giving of Himself to the Other and receiving Love from the Other. There is the oddest paradox in this for the human observer. The most majestic Reality with endless glory is also the most humble. And, the greatest delight is to be able to please the Other with the gift of the Self. This sense of gift as the center of Sacred Reality turns the human sense of power on its head. Real power is surrender.

The Scriptures and writings of the saints and mystics are full of texts describing God's gifts to humanity. (*Cont. p. 3*)

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### "¿Por qué Sufren los Niños?" Papa Francisco Contesta a Los Jóvenes en Filipinas



El Santo Papa dejó su texto preparado para contestar la pregunta que le había puesto una niña rescatada de la calle. Glyzelle Palomar contó en pocas palabras las miserias que había padecido y preguntó, "¿Por qué Dios permite estas cosas, aunque no es culpa de los niños? ¿Y por qué tan poca gente nos viene a ayudar?"

El Papa Francisco no trataba de evadir la cuestión con palabras blandas y dulces. Explicó que sólo podemos entender algo "cuando el corazón alcanza a hacerse la pregunta y a llorar." En eso alcanzamos el tipo de compasión capaz de transformar al mundo.

Declaró, "Al mundo de hoy le falta llorar. Lloran los marginados, lloran los que son dejados de lado, lloran los despreciados, pero aquellos que llevamos una vida más o menos sin necesidades no sabemos llorar. Solo ciertas realidades de la vida se ven con (*Sigue en la pág. 4*)

## ASK THEOLOGIKA

NOT SO COMMON KNOWLEDGE

Dear Theologika,  
Why do the colors the priest wears when celebrating Mass change during the year? Can I choose the color I'd like him to wear to match my wedding's color theme?

Curious Bride

Dear Curious,  
The colors of the robes (vestments) worn by priests, deacons and bishops have been set for a very long time. They vary somewhat among the ancient traditions (Russian, Byzantine, Roman and others), but in general even across the ancient traditions they remain basically the same. Each color represents and cues a theme within the liturgy and liturgical season.

Liturgical colors are standardized by the Vatican, rarely changing. Today's color selections date from 1969 following the reforms from Vatican II. According to this new rubric (set of rules), Green,

the color of hope, is used during Ordinary Time except when the color for another feast takes precedence.

During Christmastide and Easter season, as well as many other feasts during the course of the year, white is used. For major feasts such as Christmas and Easter themselves, gold or silver may be used as the color of the vestments.

Violet is used for the four weeks of Advent and six weeks of Lent, setting a more penitential tone for those seasons. Blue may be used for Advent and feasts of Mary.

Red is for celebration of feasts related to the Lord's passion, the feasts of martyrs, Pentecost and the sacrament of Confirmation.

Rose vestments are used only twice: Gaudete Sunday (3rd Sunday of Advent) and Laetare Sunday (4th Sunday of Lent). Gaudete means Rejoice. Laetare means "be joyful". Rose vestments are a reminder that the time is nearing to celebrate God's great gifts of Incarnation and Resurrection.

Black is rarely used in the Roman rite, though it is permitted for use on All Souls Day and Requiem (funeral) Masses.

As you plan your wedding, know that your community will celebrate with you and the presider will wear our community's color of joy: white.

Blessings be yours,

*Theologika*



### **"Why Do Children Suffer?" Pope Francis Speaks to Filipino Youth**

During a presentation to young people in the Philippines, the Holy Father set aside a prepared text to answer a question that was raised by a 12 year old girl who had been rescued from the street. "Many children are abandoned by their own parents ... Why does God permit these things even though the children are not at fault. Why do so few people come forward to help?"

Pope Francis did not try to evade the question with platitudes. He explained that only when the heart reaches the place in which it can ask the questions and cry, do we arrive at a true compassion which can transform the world.

"In today's world, there is a lack of crying," he said. "Although the marginalized, the poor, and the outcasts cry, those of us who do not lack anything essential do not cry. Only those eyes that have been cleansed by tears are able to see things as they are.

"Let us not forget (her) testimony. She asked the great question 'why do children suffer?' crying. And the great answer all of us can give is to learn how to cry."

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## Growing in Faith: The Magi and the Gift of Holy Discontent

Fr. Geoffrey Plant of Sydney, Australia has prepared a multimedia homily for the feast of the Epiphany. He explains that the magi were wise men of their countries, not kings.

Fr. Plant suggests that in addition to their gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh, the wise men also brought the gift of Holy Discontent — the gift of prophecy and activism.

Visit *Theologika Digest* to see and enjoy the video.



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*(Serra, Cont. from p. 1)*

Blessed Junipero Serra has become a controversial figure since the mission system led to the downfall of the ancient cultures of the native people and their way of life. He and the other missionaries are blamed for the destruction of ancient ways. Others see him as the founder of California and a moderating force in the Spanish expansion into Alta California.

Native people today are divided on the subject, with some who focus on the positive aspects of Spanish colonization seeing him as “a very good man in a very bad situation” and others, focusing on the negative outcomes. Jesuit Father Thomas Rausch, SJ, PhD, of Loyola Marymount College, has characterized the controversy as a debate about judging “an 18th century Catholic missionary by 21st century standards of cultural diversity, religious pluralism and personal autonomy.”

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*(Gift – Cont. from p. 1)*

All agree that these gifts cannot be earned but are freely given by God and that there is great diversity of gifts.

A belief about human life that has existed from the beginning of the Biblical texts but is growing today is that everything in our lives is a gift. This can be hard to take because it includes what we experience as loss and pain. This vision requires us to admit that we do not see the whole picture.

## Candlemas, a time to celebrate



On February 2 we celebrate an important event in the lives of the

Holy Family: The Purification of the Blessed Virgin Mary and The Presentation of the Lord. This feast is also known as Candlemas.

For a list of 25 little known things about this feast, check out “A Day to Celebrate Three Feasts and a Blessing” in *Theologika’s* blog, from February 2, 2009.

If you celebrated the Feast of the Epiphany with a Rosca de Reyes or Kings Cake, this is the day to celebrate a meal together again. The host is the one who found the figurine or the bean inside the cake!

Enjoy!

*(Gift – cont.)*

Setbacks, challenges and tragedies seem pointless or unacceptable. They certainly do not seem to be gifts. But, Isaiah 55 states, “My ways are not your ways, says the Lord.” It’s a gift to be able to surrender to this.

Every day is a gift, an opportunity to learn more and to be happier. When Jesus speaks of giving us peace, he is not saying that we will not suffer. The gift he wants to give us is to know him and experience his love for us in the midst of our lives. He calls us to take up our cross, a strange gift perhaps but certainly the way to glory.



**(Papa Francisco a continuación)**

los ojos limpiados por las lágrimas.”

El Papa nos desafió, “No olvidemos este testimonio. La gran pregunta ‘por qué sufren los niños’ la hizo llorando. Y la gran respuesta que podemos hacer todos nosotros es aprender a llorar.”

**Martin Luther King, Jr. -- A Gift of One's Self**



The Feast of Martin Luther King, Jr is not a feast of the Roman

Catholic calendar, but rather a national holiday to celebrate a

civil rights leader and minister who advocated non-violence.

Dr. King was an imperfect human being, but his redemption, like ours, is based in obedience to Christ, the source of eternal salvation for all. Precisely because Jesus is the Son of God, His will is perfectly aligned with that of the Father, yet since He was truly divine and truly human, his obedience came at a human cost. It was through this obedience that Jesus went to his excruciating death on the cross and to the glory of the resurrection.

For Dr. King, Mahatma Gandhi, all Christian saints and martyrs, and ourselves, this call to obedience is not only a question of observing certain commandments but a deeper call to be the person God created us to be, to accept God’s truth about our mission in life to advance the kingdom of heaven.

We can only do it if we take the time to be quiet and to listen. There is a price to be paid, and eternal life to be gained.

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**Praying with Pope Francis**

General Intention: That those from diverse religious traditions and all people of good will may work together for peace.

Evangelization: That in this year dedicated to consecrated life, religious men and women may rediscover the joy of following Christ and strive to serve the poor with zeal.

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**Liturgical Colors and Seasons**

N	R	T	E	V	I	N	R	S	E	P	I	O	N	B
B	C	X	Q	W	A	S	D	C	S	T	O	U	J	L
V	O	R	D	I	N	A	R	Y	T	I	M	E	K	U
B	L	V	C	X	Z	A	S	D	F	G	H	B	J	E
N	O	M	P	O	I	W	U	Y	T	R	E	L	W	Q
G	R	F	D	S	C	H	R	I	S	T	M	A	S	A
H	J	K	R	L	M	I	N	G	V	C	X	C	Z	P
J	V	I	O	L	E	T	L	H	R	F	D	K	S	V
K	L	L	S	P	O	E	A	S	T	E	R	I	U	E
Y	I	V	E	Q	S	W	E	E	R	T	E	H	J	S
L	T	K	J	L	E	N	T	S	G	W	D	N	Z	T
R	U	W	E	M	S	E	A	S	O	N	N	X	V	M
T	R	A	A	E	W	Q	R	T	L	H	J	K	I	E
O	G	A	U	D	E	T	E	B	D	Y	D	R	N	N
Z	Y	X	N	C	V	M	B	D	K	S	H	A	R	T
V	E	G	K	M	Q	E	P	R	U	B	R	I	C	S
W	S	T	Z	I	X	R	N	W	Q	K	M	S	U	V
O	Y	M	A	S	S	E	W	T	H	G	K	R	V	B

Can you find:

- 5 Liturgical seasons?
- 8 Liturgical colors?
- 2 Sundays when Rose vestments may be used?
- The name we use for Eucharistic liturgy?
- A Latin word that means rules?
- A word that means "the work of the people"?
- The name of the special clothing worn by bishops, priests and deacons when celebrating liturgy?
- The \_\_\_\_\_ of vestments reflects the liturgical \_\_\_\_\_.

Hidden words are vertical, horizontal, or diagonal.