

Your Favorite Page - English is a Crazy Language

- 1) The bandage was **wound** around the **wound**.
- 2) The farm was used to **produce produce**.
- 3) The dump was so full that it had to **refuse** more **refuse**.
- 4) We must **polish** the **Polish** furniture.
- 5) He could **lead** if he would get the **lead** out.
- 6) The soldier decided to **desert** his dessert in the **desert**.
- 7) Since there is no time like the **present**, he thought it was time to **present** the **present**.
- 8) A **bass** was painted on the head of the **bass** drum.
- 9) When shot at, the **dove dove** into the bushes.
- 10) I did not **object** to the **object**.
- 11) The insurance was **invalid** for the **invalid**.
- 12) There was a **row** among the oarsmen about how to **row**.
- 13) They were too **close** to the door to **close** it.
- 14) The buck **does** funny things when the **does** are present.
- 15) A seamstress and a **sewer** fell down into a **sewer** line.
- 16) To help with planting, the farmer taught his **sow** to **sow**.
- 17) The **wind** was too strong for me to **wind** the sail.
- 18) Upon seeing the **tear** in the painting I shed a **tear**.
- 19) I had to **subject** the **subject** to a series of tests.
- 20) How can I **intimate** this to my most **intimate** friend?

There is a two-letter word that perhaps has more meanings than any other two-letter word, and that is 'UP.'

- **It's easy to understand** UP, meaning toward the sky or at the top of the list, but when we awaken in the morning, why do we wake UP?
- At a meeting, why does a topic come UP?
- Why do we speak UP and why are the officers UP for election and why is it UP to the secretary to write UP a report?
- We call UP our friends.
- And we use it to brighten UP a room, polish UP the silver; we warm UP the leftovers and clean UP the kitchen.
- We lock UP the house and some guys fix UP the old car.

- People stir UP trouble, line UP for tickets, work UP an appetite, and think UP excuses.
- To be dressed is one thing, but to be dressed UP is special.
- A drain must be opened UP because it is stopped UP.
- We open UP a store in the morning but we close it UP at night.
- When it threatens to rain, we say it is clouding UP.
- When the sun comes out we say it is clearing UP.
- When it rains, it wets the earth and often messes things UP.
- When it doesn't rain for awhile, things dry UP.
- One could go on and on, but I'll wrap it UP, for now my time is UP, so it is time to shut UP!

CREDIT CARD INFORMATION

NAME: _____

ZIP CODE: _____

EMAIL: _____

Visa Mastercard Discover

Amount you wish to give: _____

Card Number: _____

Expiration Date: _____

3-Digit Security code _____

Signature: _____

If you wish us to keep this credit card info. on file, check the box.

CROSS LINKS

CONGREGATION OF HOLY CROSS, UNITED STATES PROVINCE OF PRIESTS AND BROTHERS
 Holy Cross Association Post Office Box 771 Notre Dame, Indiana 46556-0771 Phone: 574.631.6022 association@holycrossusa.org hyst@holycrossusa.org

October 2014

Dear Hearts and Gentle People....

This is the time of year when folks frequently ask me, "How has your summer been?" I usually reply that it was good, throwing in comments about the unexpectedly mild weather, or the long weekends I took in lieu of a long vacation, etc. I keep thinking it was just a routine summer.

But I kept forgetting one big and exciting activity that engrossed me all summer: researching my family tree. Back in the 1970's I made a start on it. I spent days in the Lancaster, Penn. Public Library, going through microfilm after microfilm till my eyes felt like the spinning wheels on a slot machine. Everything was recorded on a big sheet of brown wrapping paper.

After Dad died, I was writing his obituary, and wanted to be sure of some family information. So I asked the family who had that paper tree ... no one knew!! Finally it was found ... to my great relief ... and once I saw it, I knew I had to work at it again and get it on computer.

There was one huge difference this time around: so many records are available on the Internet! It's unbelievable! The first couple of generations were easy enough. Succeeding generations were harder, but to date I've gathered information on 14 generations of family ancestors. We were Catholics, Lutherans, Mennonites, and Amish. There were farmers, soldiers, millers, shoemakers, bartenders, workers in a cigar factory and paper factory, vineyard owners, and even a few serfs back in feudal Germany. There were infant deaths and twins, no royalty, though ... sigh. Rogues? - not sure. Amazingly, all lines went back to Germany, many to a little village called Dieburg in the Darmstadt region. Someday I hope to get there and see what I can find (Father Provincial, hint hint!!).

It's not only been a detective story, but it's also a spiritual story, as well as a participation in history. Now I read about historical events, and realize that someone in my family lived in that time, was perhaps affected by that event, maybe even participated in the event (one member was a fifer in the Revolutionary War -DAR here I come!!). I look at the Saint of the Day, and realize that a member of my family lived at the same time and sometimes even in the same country. I look at the whole chain of ancestors and realize that if one link had been broken I wouldn't be here writing this to you. In my research, I came across many people who were working on their family trees that involved one or more of my ancestors. For sure, we Yost's have many distant cousins "out there." In this time of great individualism and nuclear families, it's awesome to realize that I bear in my body the genes and collective memories of 14 generations of men and women who were formerly known but to God. And now, especially with November coming up, I have a lot more people to remember in prayer.

And speaking of November, that's why I penned the reflection inside. It's a common question. We in Holy Cross will be remembering our beloved dead, and would love to remember yours. Jot their names on the enclosed prayer slip, and we will put it on the altar at Moreau Seminary. No offering is required, but if you choose to give something, it will be used for the needs of the Seminary and Holy Cross House.

Have a peaceful day!!

Fr. Herb

☺ Hugs!

PURGATORY AND PRAYING FOR THE DEAD

Several weeks ago, a benefactor called the office and spoke with Carol. He wanted to know why the Church prayed for the dead. Carol tried to explain as best she could, but her thinking was that it would be better for me to write the individual myself and explain things -which I did.

That is a very common question, one that is asked not only by those who are not Catholic but also by Catholics themselves. I think it's a fitting question to focus on in this edition of *Links*, focused as it is on November prayers for the dead.

Now the traditional understanding of praying for the dead is that it helps them to “get out of purgatory.” Purgatory is reserved for those who have died without mortal sin, but who are still required to be purified in some way before entering the fullness of eternal life with God. As the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* explains, “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.” (CCC 1030)

Note that the *Catechism* provides no description of Purgatory. When I grew up, it was considered to be a place of fire, since fire is usually used to purify. Not only that, but it was thought that the soul was sentenced to Purgatory for a given period of time, usually measured in years. I still remember indulgences being attached to certain prayers and practices that would give the soul 10,000 years off time served.

Now there’s a problem with that image of place and time. First of all, only bodies can be in a place. The soul has no such limitation. Second, only a body experiences time. At death, time ceases to exist for the person, for they are born into eternity. So to talk about Purgatory in terms of time and place makes no sense. There is indeed a Purgatory, but one can’t look up or down, right or left, and say: “There it is.” Nor can one attach time to the experience.

So what is purgatory like? First of all, I am totally convinced that purgatory can take place here on earth through physical, mental, or emotional suffering, through the spiritual pain of the absence of God, and through the process of trying to overcome a bad habit or addiction. If one can persevere spiritually, and even grow spiritually, through such experiences as depression, cancer treatments, struggling to provide for a family, living with a chronic disability, coping with the death of a child or loved one and so on, then they are experiencing purification. They are letting go of the old person and putting on the new person. They are entering into a deeper relationship with Jesus, one marked by gratitude and an acknowledgment of deep dependency on grace.

In the Catechism definition above, the word “holiness” is used. Holiness is not avoidance of sin; that is impossible for a human being. But holiness is falling and getting up, falling and trying again, falling and still loving. Holiness is refusing to give up, but trying always to find the hand of Jesus in daily life, grasping that hand tightly, and being grateful for that hand.

But what if one isn’t purified through their human travails? At this point, I should confess I’m not really sure what “purification” looks like. That’s a Church-y word. No one has ever been able to explain it to me in an understandable way. I guess the hoary dictum applies: “It’s a mystery, so stop asking questions and take my word for it.”

Personally, through reflection and prayer, I have come to think that if an individual is having to undergo purgatory, it will be an experience that happens right after death and will be quite excruciating. Here I recognize that “excruciating” is also a body term - but body terms are sometimes all we have to describe an experience. There I am, face-to-face with the God of infinite total pure all-encompassing love. I will know that I am not worthy, that I am a sinner, that I have not loved

God and others well in life. This will be glaringly, painfully – very painfully – clear to me.

Think, for example, of the most embarrassing moment you have ever had in your life. There you are, being confronted by someone you care for. Your face is flushed, your heart is racing, you want to be anywhere but where you’re at; the discomfort level is off the chart. You want to make excuses for the behavior, but you know you can’t because the truth is so glaringly obvious. Yes, you can deny everything, or blame others, or point to mitigating circumstances. If you do that, the hell of the moment will continue. Or you can admit you were wrong, apologize, make restitution, and life will go on.

God’s justice would certainly call for some punishment, but that’s not God’s way of doing things. Mercy comes first. Always mercy comes first. This I believed long before Pope Francis started talking about it, and it’s one of the reasons I am profoundly impressed by the man. Standing before the Lord, acutely aware of my unworthiness, I believe God will simply ask me once again, “Do you love me?” just like he asked Peter on the shore of the Sea of Tiberias. Maybe God will ask it two or three more times, but in the end, it will be “Welcome home.”

I believe this will not be a pleasant experience. So that’s why I pray for those who have died. I pray that they may have the humility and strength to say along with the publican: “Lord have mercy on me, a sinner,” or along with Peter, “Yes, Lord, you know that I love you.” One who has not been conscious of sin in his or her life will probably find it hard to say those words, thus perhaps short-circuiting God’s mercy and bringing on the justice. We were taught that the moment of death is when the decision is made for heaven or hell. I believe we’ll get a second chance at the purgatorial moment ... and that the prayer of the living will help the individual through that.

Another reason to pray for the dead is that it is a form of remembrance. A seminary classmate

sent me a saying from a homily he heard preached at a young person’s funeral. I have used it in every funeral homily since. “No one is ever dead as long as there is someone alive who remembers that person. And when there is no longer anyone alive to remember, that’s not all bad, because then we’ll all be together in heaven.” Because our prayer comes from the heart, then the beloved is held in our heart.

Praying for those who have died is linked with God’s attribute of being all-knowing. God knows and sees every moment of your life and mine from A to Z, birth to death. For us it is either past, present or future. For God it is always present. So let’s just say that at Point K in someone’s life, he or she was faced with a really serious temptation. God will take the prayers for the dead we have prayed at Point Z, and apply them to Point K, so as to help the individual resist that temptation. The same thing happens at every other point in an individual’s life.

Have you experienced that? Have you had serious temptations that would have presented great problems had you given in? In the end you said “No” to the temptation. Have you had a close brush with death, but somehow walked away? Have you had a conversion experience where you realized for the first time just how great and loving God is? It could very well be that you were helped by the prayers we will be saying at your funeral and thereafter.

A fourth reason to pray for the dead is because they are still alive, and still very much a part of the Body of Christ. Just as you ask me to pray for you, and I ask you to pray for me, so too we pray to, for, and with those who have died. Christians who have died continue to be members of the communion of saints ... they are still very much alive. We believe that we can assist them by our prayers, and they can assist us by theirs.

Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them. May the souls of the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen.