

FROM THE PASTOR

My dear brothers and sisters,

In the Gospel today, Jesus calls Bartimaeus, the blind man, to himself and asks him a very important question: “**What do you want me to do for you?**” (Mark 10:51). Jesus asks us today, too, “What do you want me to do for you?” Have you thought about this question? The God of the universe asks *you* this question, therefore, think BIG! I think the reason we so often don’t get what we ask from the Lord, not because we ask for too much, but that *we ask for too little!* Jesus wants to give us our heart’s desire, and we ask Him if we can win the lottery, or things of lesser importance. Jesus wants to give us MORE than our hearts imagine! He wants to make us Saints (yes, even, and especially, you) so that we can *receive* all that He wants to give! You see, a saint is not someone who never sins, who has all of their “stuff” together. No, a saint is someone who recognizes that he is a sinner, and then *flies to God* for mercy, and *opens* himself to grace!

One of the greatest gifts He has given us in this time of grace, is His Mother, Mary. At the foot of the Cross, Jesus gave Mary to the beloved disciple (John 19:26-27) ... and **each of us is His beloved disciple!** He gives her to us as the **Mediatrice of Grace**. Now, don’t let the big words scare you off, let me explain. Jesus is the source of all grace, all the gifts from God. By His coming to us in the flesh (incarnate, as it were), taking on our humanity in all things, He raised up our humanity to His Divine Life, and opened our frail humanity to receive all the gifts of God. He chose to come to us through the Blessed Mother – He waited on her “Yes,” her “*Fiat* – let it be done unto me...” at the Annunciation (cf. Luke 1:38). Therefore, all grace (which is Jesus) came to us through Mary... and He still chooses to come to us through her! Sometimes we are aware of it and sometimes we are not. Even if we are not aware of Mary’s workings, she is still acting as Mother of Grace, mediating the grace of God to us (hence, Mediatrice of all Grace).

The last couple of years, I have invited the parish to join me in praying through the *33 Days to Morning Glory*. This, again, is a 33 day preparation to **consecrate ourselves to Jesus** through the gentle hands of Mary. In this preparation, we learn what it means to give ourselves fully to Jesus through Mary, and how this transforms our lives. By giving ourselves to her, we get to holiness (and so to Jesus) in the *swiftest*, *surest*, *safest*, and *easiest* way. Fr. Michael Gaitley’s reflections are easy to read, and only 2-2½ pages long. The last two years, we have started the preparation in November, and ended on the Feast of the Immaculate Conception (December 8). You may remember that this year December 8 is the **beginning of the Year of Mercy!** As we prepare of the great Year of Mercy, we look to Our Lady of Mercy to help us to be *open* to the gifts of mercy Jesus so longs to pour upon us.

I encourage every parishioner to consecrate or re-consecrate ourselves to Jesus through Mary. This year, the preparation will begin on Thursday, November 5. If you have the *33 Days* book or pamphlet, I encourage you to pull it out again. I have some more copies which will be available this weekend after Masses. This preparation will be a great way to open ourselves to the **incredible graces** that Jesus wants to pour upon us in the Year of Mercy!

Another great tool we have to go along with the books, is the “FORMED” website (if you haven’t checked it out, do it today: www.formed.org, scroll down to the “For Individuals” log in, and type in the parish code: **nr3434**). Fr. Michael has videos (under programs) which lead us week by week through the consecration preparation. I encourage you to use this resource to help you along the way to the Morning Glory.

My sisters and brothers, Jesus so longs to give us ALL GOOD GIFTS! Let us pray that through the intercession of Mary, Jesus may open our hearts to receive all the graces He desires to pour out upon us!