



Savior of the World Family With Love and Prayer

Pope Benedict :

The Nativity of Mary

Making a pilgrimage means setting out in a particular direction, travelling towards a destination. This gives a beauty of its own even to the journey and to the effort involved. Among the pilgrims of Jesus's genealogy there were many who forgot the goal and wanted to make themselves the goal. Again and again, though, the Lord called forth people whose longing for the goal drove them forward, people who directed their whole lives towards it. The awakening of the Christian faith, the dawning of the Church of Jesus Christ was made possible, because there were people in Israel whose hearts were searching – people who did not rest content with custom, but who looked further ahead, in search of something greater: Zechariah, Elizabeth, Simeon, Anna, Mary and Joseph, the Twelve and many others. Because their hearts were expectant, they were able to recognize in Jesus the one whom God had sent, and thus they could become the beginning of his worldwide family. The Church of the Gentiles was made possible, because both in the Mediterranean area and in those parts of Asia to which the messengers of Jesus travelled, there were expectant people who were not satisfied by what everyone around them was doing and thinking, but who were seeking the star which could show them the way towards Truth itself, towards the living God.

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Dearest Family,

I greet you in the name of God the Father, the Son and the Holy spirit. I will like sharing what is going on here out at saviour of the world. we are now on holidays and the children did well in their exams. this year we have one child who will have to take the entrance exams to enter school, Praise the Lord! all of this is able to happen because of you. you have succeeded in bring some body from nowhere to somewhere. I want to thank God for the total end of a successful academic year.

We are preparing to adopt more children into the home and we want to thank you for all your gift that you have sent I know the new children will feel belong and welcome.

we appreciate you and we thank you for every thing you have done may God bless you now and forever

And i will like to thank you all for the beds and mattress that are coming. we are all too happy to know that all the children will have a place for sleep

We are happy that the academic year ended and all the children are in a new class, But as usual, we have faced with the problem of school fees, uniforms, books and all school necessities. And schools are going to reopened in september and onto this day we did not

have the money to get these things. And the whole cost of the school fees is \$6500 for 38 children please we are kindly begging you for this sum. Because we ourselves know that we can not pay back but all we have is gratitude to what you have done and still doing for us.

May God continue to bless you and guide you in all your ways.

With love and prayer,

Louisa and children



Mattresses ready to be shipped. On each is the name of the donor

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The Beatitudes Part Four

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

The fourth Beatitude listed in St. Matthew's Gospel, chapter 5, verse 6, reads: "Blessed are they who hunger and thirst for justice for they shall be satisfied." Like the other Beatitudes that we have been contemplating, the Fathers of the Church – notably, St. Gregory the Great – and the Doctors of the Church – notably, St. Thomas Aquinas – link this Beatitude to one of the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit. As we have noticed with the other Beatitudes, it is not difficult to associate the grace of this Beatitude with one of the seven capital sins.

Those who hunger and thirst for justice open their souls to the Holy Spirit's gift of **fortitude**. The courage one exercises in facing dangers and challenges in order to do what is right, to remain faithful to the truth no matter how humiliating or painful that may be, is the courage that fortifies the person against temptations to the capital sin of **laziness**.

St. Thomas defined laziness as the "sadness one feels upon realizing that to do always what is right, just, and merciful can be difficult." This sadness, often if not always, is accompanied by a fear of pain; precisely the pain one experiences in doing what is both just and at the same time difficult.

I offer you today an example of a woman who lived by the spirit of this Beatitude. She is Chinese: her name is Anna Wang.

A group of bandits trapped and crowded together a great number of Catholics and brought them to a spacious conference hall that carried the name the "East Room" in the village of Da Ning in the Province of Hebei. The chief of this clan of society's misfits said to the group: "The government of our country of China has never given the permission to believe in a foreign religion. If you declare publicly that you refuse with your whole heart to continue to follow this foreign religion, you will enjoy your freedom. If not, you will be killed. Now those who wish to give up this religion may leave this room right now and proceed to the West Room. There is someone there who will give you your freedom."

Among the Catholic faithful gathered there in the East Room were Anna Wang, Lucy Wang-Wang, Lucy's five-year-old daughter, and her nine-year-old son. After a while, Anna's stepmother proceeded to the West Room. Suddenly she went back to the East Room to grab Anna's arm to pull her away from the East Room and push her towards the apparent safety of liberation. But Anna did everything possible to free herself from her stepmother's grip with a loud

cry, "I want to believe in God! I want to be a Catholic. I do not want to leave the Church! Jesus, help me, please, help me!"

Anna eluded her stepmother's grasp. Anna was truly free: she wished to remain faithful to the truth. She wished to remain faithful to herself. She knew deep in her heart that this fidelity is always at root, love for Jesus Christ.

This is justice: to love him who is offering us a precious gift that we do not deserve. That gift is heaven.

Night fell for the occupants of the East Room. The bandits lit an assortment of candles that they had stolen from the parish church. At this luminous moment, Anna said to those who were with her, "These candles have come from the parish. Their tiny flames are indeed beautiful. But the glory of heaven is a billion times more beautiful than these flickering flames!"

The next morning the bandits escorted all the Catholics to the place of their execution. When all were present and accounted for, Anna led everyone in prayer. A most meaningful moment was Anna's calm, strong, beautifully intoned rendering of the act of contrition so that all would be fully ready to receive the Divine Mercy for their sins.

Now there were many

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spectators on the scene who were not Catholic. When they saw the handsome, confident look on the face of the nine-year-old boy Andrew Wang Tianqing, many were bold enough to say to his mom that they wanted to adopt him. But his mom – as you may recall, Lucy Wang-Wang – held on firmly to her son; she showed her courage in a declaration that she made for all the bandits to hear: “I am a Catholic. My son is a Catholic. If you wish to kill me, you ought to kill us both. If you wish, you can kill my son first (*note: she wanted to be on hand to encourage her son*); afterwards, you can kill me.”

The nine-year-old boy went to his knees with an obvious look of freedom on his tiny body. He bent forward to lay bare his neck. Smiling, he fixed his gaze on his mom. The executioners sent him immediately to heaven by severing his head from his shoulders. They were no less brutal with Lucy and her five-year-old daughter. The entire family went straight to heaven.

After having killed five other women and a ten-month-old baby, the only Catholic that was left was Anna Wang. She went down to her knees and turned her body deliberately in the direction of her parish church. What she was doing was clear to

everyone, Catholic and non-Catholic alike. It was even more obvious that she had already entered a state of profoundly peaceful contemplation: no mystic could boast of a more silent and peaceful communion with Jesus. Then she began to pray so that everyone could hear her. She lifted her eyes and gazed toward the sky. She radiated pure joy.

Everyone present noticed that this was no longer a place of brutality, no longer a place of martyrdom. Everyone could feel it: the atmosphere had become sweet and tender. All onlookers had the sense that Anna was already feeling the eternal joy of heaven. She no longer felt a need to find a niche for



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herself in this world of ours. She certainly did not have the appearance of someone who was about to die. In fact, she looked like someone who enjoys center stage in the milieu of a great feast.

The chief of the bandits was astonished. He had wanted to prepare the scaffold to behead her, but he did not have it in him to do so. His whole body

trembled: he gazed at her, and begged her, “Please, my dear young woman, leave your church... now!”

Because Anna had entered a profound state of contemplation, she did not hear what the rebel chief was saying to her. He took the liberty to touch her on the forehead, and he asked her once again if she wished to abandon her Catholic faith. At this moment Anna came to be aware of what he was saying and doing. She cried out: “Don’t touch me!” Then she became calmer, the peace of Jesus was flooding her heart; and she said to him: “I am a Catholic. I will never deny God. It’s better for me to die.”

But the bandit did not wish to abandon his desire to convince Anna to save herself. He said to her, “If you deny your religion, I promise you, I will be able to find a good husband for you, from a very wealthy family, so that you can live in happiness all the days of your life.”

Anna answered him with dignity and courage: “I will never leave my religion. Besides, I’m already engaged.” Then she pointed her hand in the direction of the village of Wei and said to him, “I am the wife of the Catholic Church in the village of Wei.”

Now the bandit felt irritated. He took his dagger and cut a piece of flesh from Anna’s shoulder and asked her, “Are you going

to deny your Church?” She replied, “No.” The bandit cut her arm and severed it from her body. Anna was still on her knees; she smiled calmly and said: “You should know that the gate of heaven is open!” Then she bared her neck for the bandit. He decapitated her. An eyewitness tells us that even after her decapitation, her body stayed in a posture of humble prayer, on her knees.

A woman considered by everyone in her community to be a model of practical wisdom and capable of carrying heavy responsibility knew Anna as a confidant. She tells us: “When Anna Wang was martyred, I saw her soul ascend to heaven. She was dressed, let us say, in a very beautiful garment, a garment of blue and green silk, with a crown of flowers decorating her. Her face was very, very beautiful.”

Fifteen months after these executions, local Catholics unearthed the bodies in order to give them the funerals that their sacrifice deserved. It was an astounding moment: none of the bodies had suffered any decomposition. They had the same appearance as the day of their death.

Every child, adolescent and adult in Anna’s family has become Catho-

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CAN YOU HELP THE CHILDREN GO TO SCHOOL THIS YEAR?

With the backpacks, shoes, and other items just shipped, plus money Louisa was able to make selling vegetables grown on their little plot of land, the cost of education for the children has been reduced from \$9,000 to \$6,500. There is no free education in Sierra Leone, and those children who cannot pay the tuition or afford the uniforms or books, are simply not allowed in the school. There are no exceptions.

lic, even the stepmother who tried so forcefully to dissuade Anna. Pope John Paul II was also convinced: he canonized Anna and her companions on October 1 of the year 2000. We are speaking of the same ceremony when he canonized another apostle of Christian joy, the Sudanese woman, St Josephine Bakhita. St Anna Wang, pray for us!

Oh, there's one more biographical fact that you may wish to know: Anna Wang led the community in prayer, manifested herself as a truly mature contemplative, spoke with boldness and conviction to those who were about to kill her, and died a martyr's death at the age of 14. What were you doing when you were 14 years old? Were you hungering and thirsting for the truth... for the truth about God, about your true identity, and your capacity to be courageous and peaceful, your desire to live eternally in heaven?

Fr. John Gibson OCD

Look what you have done!

The children all will have a bed.
We thank the Lord for his kindness and mercy.

Thanks to all of you who responded so generously to our need for beds and mattresses for the children. We were able to purchase 18 bunk beds with 2 mattresses each.

This will provide for sleeping for 36 children.

Beds!

Along with the beds, we also shipped Angel Tree items donations received from St. John Evangelist parish as well items from others. These included sheets, school shoes, socks, backpacks, and clothes.



The process of packing begins



George on the fork lift



Christine and Elaine getting ready to load the shoes and socks



Sue, Matt, and Alex help out



Joe and George load the beds



DONE!



Finishing up