

May through December 2024

Everything you did not want to know. Not sorry.

CarlosMichael360

“Tacos y Frijoles!”

Published monthly by Carlos Michael Padilla.

www.carlosmichael.com



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Wednesday 050124 7:49 AM

Peace be with you!

Fonts. After reviewing the previous issues of this publication, I decided to go with a 12-point font rather than a 16-point font. I intended to publish it as a one-column versus a two-column newsletter, however, as most newsletter and magazine publications go, they are almost always in two-column format.

I hope to make this edition of CarlosMichael360 less *convoluted*, which means *something that is very complicated and difficult to understand*, to a publication you will enjoy reading.

I would like to begin each entry with this reminder: *the mercy of Jesus Christ is available to all of us. He is waiting to receive us. Do not believe that there is not a place for you at His table. There is! Go to Him. Share with Him what is in your heart. Ask His forgiveness and trust in His Mercy.*

However, keep this in mind, being forgiven does not mean we may continue doing what we were doing previously on the presumption of His mercy. It means *trying* to do better because you understand that it is the right thing to do. However, should you fall, go to Him asking His forgiveness as many times as is necessary until His grace covers your situation.

For some, and only God knows the reason why, this may be a lifetime affliction, temptation, urge, desire, way of being. One may require more than just a moment in the confessional or in church.

You may also require the assistance of a professional. That's okay. Trust that God is leading you in the right direction in the hope that your soul will find peace through the guidance of said professional [or spiritual director] in tandem with God's mercy and love.

Tandem: It means, *working together, especially well or closely.*

Casey Cole, OFM. Currently, I am reading a book by Casey Cole, OFM (creator of *Breaking in the Habit* and a Franciscan priest), titled: *The Way of Beatitude: Living Radical Hope In A World of Division and Despair.*

To date, I have read chapters one and two.

Chapter 1 is titled: *Surrender: Blessed Are The Poor In Spirit.* "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven" –Matthew 5:3.

Chapter 2 is titled: *Heartbreak: Blessed Are They Who Mourn.* "Blessed are they who mourn, for they will be comforted" –Matthew 5:4.

The reading notes I took from these two chapters have been profoundly helpful with my understanding of the first two beatitudes and how to apply them in my life.

Let's talk about this book on a "live" show sometime.

Falling Short. Every day, as I examine where I fell short the day before. I would seem that no matter how much I try, I continually fall short. The temptation in that moment would be to become angry and frustrated with myself [*as I have done in the past*] for those falls.

While I am sorry for what I have done, I choose to ask forgiveness, remain joyful, trust in God's mercy, and pray for the grace to learn from those experiences so that I may do better moving forward.

I know, you are probably thinking, "Man! This dude is all into the Jesus way of thinking!"

Well, yes and no.

Yes, I accept the Church's teaching authority and desire to be obedient to God, His commandments, and His Word.

No, I don't view myself as a *water walker* who is all faith and no fun. While I do aspire to become a *saint*, what form that takes is in direct proportion to my faith journey.

I am only as much a saint as God's grace and my cooperation with His grace allows. However, I cannot dismiss my life journey experiences and how those experiences shaped my thoughts, affected my behavior, led to sin, etc.

I want to talk about them. I want to share them. I want to grant my neighbors access to my vulnerability, pain, and weaknesses so that they may better understand my strengths and who I am as a person.

I want my neighbors to understand why I behave as I do, believe as I do, view the landscape as I do and to lovingly correct me if my way of being is out of sync with my beliefs.

The challenge with sharing your life story is to be careful not to share too much of the wrong things and more of the right things. What happens if you have more wrong than right? You share it, respectfully, with the understanding that the whole purpose of sharing is not to hear oneself talk, but to show that this life is not about us but about God.

In 2014, I learned that everything comes directly from God, and that we are created from love for love—**His love**. I learned that life is not about us but about God, neighbor, and self, in that order. Our purpose [or mission] is to find our way back to God that we may live with Him [as He intended] in eternity.

Timeline. I am going to look at the timeline I included in April's edition of CM360 and treat it as grapes on a vine that are ready for harvesting. I will select only the best grapes from the vineyard [*timeline*] and smash them into the best tasting wine ever to be bottled from my winery. Hey, if I cannot afford to own a winery, I will pretend that I do using my imagination.

Closing. In closing, please know that what I share [*about me*] is not to hear myself talk, nor to boast, complain, lament, point fingers, etcetera. I want my life-journey experience to cause you to love God as I do, if not more. Secondly, I want to leave a written record; a testimony if you will, of the time I was privileged to live on earth.

CarlosMichael360

by Carlos Michael Padilla

“Love isn't a perfect state of caring. It's an active noun like 'struggle.'”

--Fred Rogers (1928-2003)

Friday 050324 6:50 AM

Peace be with you!

Eek! A Mouse! I was informed this morning that a mouse is running about the house. My son discovered the little varmint early this morning as he was entering his bedroom after cleaning the bathroom.

If I had the ability of Saint Francis of Assisi to speak with the animals, I would call the mouse [out] and send him [or her] on his way. However, since I do not possess such a gift, I will have to find an alternative means of sending the little rodent packing.

His Mercy. Hello and happy Friday. God is good. Let us thank Him for the blessing of this day and the gift of our life. Remember that His Mercy is available to us all. There IS a place for you at His table. Trust that He is leading you exactly where you need to be.

First Friday. Today is **First Friday**. I believe the Lord wants me to complete the nine consecutive First Friday's which I hope to do beginning next month. How appropriate since the month of June is dedicated to the **Sacred Heart of Jesus**. How I love my Jesus.

First Saturday. Aside from going over the **First Saturday** checklist, I feel prepared. I am waiting for the delivery of my *table podium*. I pray that it serves Our Lady as intended. I need to pray for the graces required to bring more souls to the practice of this devotion and the praying of the Rosary.

Saturday 050424 5:53 AM

Peace be with you!

Practice What You Preach. I feel terrible. I went to bed feeling *indifferent*. That goes counter to the motto of "*Practice what you preach!*". There is no excuse. Wrong is wrong, and right is right. I acted wrongly. I have asked God's forgiveness. Now I must ask my friend to forgive me as well.

Overdrive. My mind feels as if it is always in overdrive. Listen to me ramble on as if I am the only one who experiences *sensory overload*. I am not going to complain because everything is a blessing. Rather, I choose to give thanks and glory to God. I will learn from this, and hope to do better with the grace of God, of course.

The Prideful Man Falleth! Reflecting on what my youngest son said to me during a conversation we were having earlier in the week, he is correct with respect to *pride*. Perhaps I have been acting prideful without realizing that is what I have been doing.

It seems that a trip to the confessional is in order. Perhaps time spent with the Lord in adoration is a good practice as well. That will give Him glory and refresh my mind, body, and soul as well. Wednesday is a good day for that. In the meantime, I will believe and trust in the Father Creator that I am exactly where I need to be and that HE is the author of this story.

--

Courage. I am thinking back to the time when I auditioned for a role in the PTA sponsored play: *The Wizard of Oz*. I earned the role of the *Scarecrow*. How fitting when you consider how much like the Scarecrow, I felt I was in those days.

However, what I am thinking about here is not the role itself or the process involved in securing that role. I have talked about that *ad nauseum* in previous writings and on former *Coffee Break* shows.

What I am thinking about is the fact that I found the *courage* to audition after hearing the announcement that auditions were being held. I never viewed myself as a courageous person. What was I thinking?

I was a *nobody* trying to become *somebody* via an elementary school play. And for a moment, albeit briefly, I did feel like somebody. Not in an uppity, hey-look at me sort of way. *Somebody* in the sense that I decided, I acted on that decision [*my fears aside*], I auditioned for the role, and earned the role of the Scarecrow, hoping in the process that I made my parents proud—at least for that moment.

Thinking back to my parents, I wish I had been a better son. A better brother to my siblings. A better friend to my friends. A better father to my children. A better person, period!

How many people have I offended over the years? How many have I let down? How many did I fail to show Jesus through me?

I close my eyes, and I can see the faces of those beautiful souls that I let down, hurt, or disappointed.

Forgive me, my friends. Forgive every word, action, or deed that was not representative of Christ. I never meant to be the person that I was, but the person that I was supposed to be and if what I said, did [or acted out] caused pain in your heart, anger in your soul, or led you on a path that God had not intended, please, forgive me.

That takes courage too. To ask forgiveness and to admit that you were wrong. That is what I learned from that audition experience. Not then, but today as I reflect on it.

“We’re off to see the wizard, the wonderful wizard of Oz!”

CarlosMichael360

by Carlos Michael Padilla

“A wise man can learn more from a foolish question than a fool can learn from a wise answer.”

--Bruce Lee (1940-1973)

Sunday 050524 6:03 AM

Peace be with you!

First Saturday. I was blessed to attend two events on Saturday. The first was the *First Saturday Devotion* at St. Thomas More. Fr. Daniel Gormley heard our confessions and celebrated Mass. I enjoyed the conversation I had with Gary Christensen while setting up room number three for meditation and fellowship. Those in attendance were me, Gary, Janet, Jane, Jack (the three J’s), and Ms. Irma. Missing were Tammy, John (another “J!”), Dolores, Teresa, and Ms. Leda. This was Gary’s last First Saturday with the group. He is moving to Utah at the end of this month.

COHO On Saturday afternoon, I had an opportunity to represent *COHO* (Coalition of Hispanic Organizations) at the *Hispanic Partnership Committee Latino Crew Appreciation Event*. The event was held at the *HBA* (Home Builder’s Association) *Mike Fretz Center* on East 43rd Street, Tulsa.

It is a shame they had a low turnout considering the organizations that were present and the food that was available. It did, however, give me an opportunity to hand out a few business cards and to gain ideas moving forward.

Cinco de Mayo. I forgot, today is *Cinco de Mayo*—the fifth of May. Happy *Cinco de Mayo* to everyone who celebrates this event each year and a “happy birthday” to my niece Theresa.

The Mouse (Again!). The mouse that Josh reported seeing Friday morning has been caught. However, it turns out there was not one, but TWO Meeses (ME-says) aka mice running about the house. Both were caught on glue traps in the kitchen. I suspect where there are two, there may be more. Let us hope not.

It is a dog-eat-dog world out there in terms of the animal kingdom. I don’t know which is worse, being born a cow, turkey, chicken, sheep, goat, pig, or a mouse because in the end, you either end up being “et” by humans or become an unfortunate tasty snack for a predator—unless you find your way into my house and get caught on a glue trap. Ugh! Using glue traps is not exactly my first choice to put the mice out of the house. When I consider all the critters that we have caught in this house using glue traps over the years including mice, baby snakes and spiders (aka Thudders!) of every size, causes me to consider what Amy and I were thinking (back during our married days) when we would sleep on the floor in the living room (in the mobile home) because there were only two rooms which we gave to the children. I do not even want to know what crawled over and around us. No, thank you!

My Age. While I am beginning to show and feel my age, I cannot stop thanking God for the blessing of making it to my current age. The

reality of *death* knocking on the door is ever present on my mind, however, I have decided to focus instead on prayer and whatever good in terms of service to God through neighbor I can do while enjoying this life that is currently being blessed to me. If only I had more energy and more purposeful duties. I don’t want to waste this blessing on anything that does not serve God’s purpose.

Tuesday 050724 8:52 AM

Peace be with you!

Keeping Busy! Wow! Praise God. Monday was a busy, exhausting, but productive day in the service of the Lord. At least I pray that is the case.

I think mowing both the front and back lawns is what did me in, but it was worth it. The yards look nice, and I was able to beat the rain while communing with God through nature. I always enjoy that part of the job. The only part I do not like is that big dog (aka Big Tache) that continues to roam the neighborhood barking all manner of *dogcenities* at whomever it pleases, including yours truly. He even chased me [*and the car*] down the street one morning. The nerve!

In The Mail. Speaking of nerve, I received a mailing from an LGBTQ organization (why, I will never know) called **G&LR**. While I do my best with Christian love and charity to be understanding and prayerful of my LGBT brothers and sisters, receiving this mailing bothered me by what was printed across the face of the envelope. Printed was the following: **Escape the Straight and Narrow**. Not nice!

While I do not wish to cast judgment nor speak ignorantly without understanding the printed message in context, I could not help but feel that statement was a direct response to **Matthew 7:13-14** that says:

"Enter through the narrow gate; for the gate is wide and the road broad that leads to destruction, and those who enter through it are many. How narrow the gate and constricted the road that leads to life. And those who find it are few".

Look, I am grateful to the Father Creator that the LGBT community no longer must hide in the shadows [or closets] or fear losing their jobs because of their *sexual orientation*, although choosing to remain chaste, I believe, is the better choice. Putting out statements such as "*Escape the straight and narrow*" for me is akin to doing what was being said or done to the community back in the day?

Let us not return hate with hate. Okay, so we do not agree, that happens. Just because we do not agree does not mean I am going to hate or dislike one segment of the population from another. *All are equally loved by God*. Nor am I going to print literature whose purpose is to slander, hurt, and cause damage in the same way the community was accusing the other side of doing only a few years ago.

I consider myself to be *all people attracted* be they the same or opposite sex. That is because God loves me and I love Him and therefore, I love all that He has created. However, as an *all people attracted* male who sometimes spends too much time *man crushing* and *bromancing* (*see the April edition of CM360 to read that article*), who chooses to remain faithful to the teaching authority of the Roman Catholic Church, I do not abide by the *eye for an eye, tooth for a tooth* mentality.

What happened in the past was wrong, but I am always going to walk on the side of charity, mercy, and love which means even if my friends are active LGBTers, that is between them and God. All

I can do is love them where they are, pray for them, and let God be God! That is all I ask in return.

Short Story: Alejandro & Maureen

Alejandro and Maureen are best friends who met at work. It was friendship at first sight. Maureen worked in accounting. Alejandro was the IT Onboarding Service Delivery Manager. By the time they began meeting at the local coffee shop on the 15th of each month [*both are now retired*], Maureen has since lost her beloved husband (Miguel) while Alejandro has lost his oldest brother (David) and both parents. Maureen is Protestant Christian. Alejandro is Roman Catholic. Both are devoted to their faith in God and their commitment to service of neighbor.

In today's episode, Maureen notices that Alejandro is walking with a limp and wants to know what caused the limp. In the meantime, Alejandro does his best to reassure Maureen that he will be okay.

"Maureen! Maureen!" Alejandro says with a huge smile, always happy to see his dear friend. The two embrace as if they had not seen each other in years. *"That is what I love about Alejandro,"* Maureen once told a friend. *"He gives the best hugs."*

After greeting each other, the couple walk to the counter where *Scott Whitford*, owner of *"It's A Small Coffee Shop After All"* always looks forward to serving the two friends. *"Ever since those two have been meeting here, there seems to come with them a light of peace and joy that I do not experience when they are not here,"* Scott said to *Ryan*, another long-time customer.

"Are they husband and wife," Ryan asked staring intently at the two as they talked. *"No,"* Scott said in return. *"They are best friends—friends almost*

to the degree that Jonathan and David were friends in the Bible.” Ryan, still stalling, said in reply, “God Bless them. Those are the best kind of friendships to have.”

Maureen noticed that Alejandro was moving a bit slower and that he had a slight limp on his right side. *“Are you okay Alejandro?” she asked. “I noticed that you are walking slower than you usually do and seem to have a limp favoring your right side.”*

Alejandro sat quietly for a moment before looking up at Maureen, sighed, and said, *“Yes, I am fine. Just tired. I mowed the lawns yesterday and while doing so, I stepped into a hole, and ... well, you know ... I fell on my right side.”*

“You what!?” Maureen said in response. *“Not to worry,”* Alejandro said in response. *“My son was with me. He helped me up and asked me to go inside and rest. He said he would finish mowing the yard.”*

Although she did not say anything, Maureen was concerned about Alejandro. She was concerned that his advancing years were catching up to him and that he should probably slow down and get more rest.

Clearly aware of what she was thinking, Alejandro said in response, *“Listen to me my Christmas princess. I know what you are thinking. No worries. I plan to take my son’s advice and slow down and rest more. I will enjoy life, such as sitting right here with my dearest friend over coffee.”*

Maureen smiled at hearing that. *“I am happy to hear that you have decided to take Gabriel’s advice,”* she said in return. *“Does that mean you are going to continue to serve on that board, work with the Church, and keep that office you have on Jingo and 41st Street?”*

Alejandro smiled and said, *“I most likely will resign from the board. It is good work that they do for the community, however, I feel that it is time for an old codger like me to step aside and allow the younger folks to take the board in a new direction. It’s their time. God will take care of the rest. As for the Church and the office, I enjoy the work that I do for the Church, plus the extra income helps. I am considering letting the office go and working from home. The benefit to working from home is working in your underwear with no one being the wiser.”*

Maureen laughed and said in reply, *“Wouldn’t I like to be the fly on the wall in that scenario!”* The two laughed again, sipping on their coffee, while enjoying the tasty pastry Scott had delivered to their table.

“Thank you, Scott!” Alejandro said. *“Have we told you lately how much we appreciate you and your delicious coffee shop?”*

Scott smiled and said, *“Yes, Alejandro. You have and thank you. Feel free to keep telling me as often as you wish. You two are my favorite customers.”*

Both friends smiled before Maureen spoke up and said, *“Scotty dear, this is the best little coffee shop in America, and we are proud of you and the good that you do.”*

Scott smiled, thanked Maureen, and excused himself so the couple could continue their conversation.

Looking back at Alejandro, still concerned about the fact that he fell while mowing the lawn, Maureen inquired if perhaps Alejandro should see the doctor, just to make sure everything is okay.

“Ahhh!” Alejandro said with a snicker. *“Doctors, Schmockters! I promise you I am okay, but if any signs of discomfort, swelling, discoloration...anything shows up--I will go see the doctor.”*

Maureen looked sternly at Alejandro and said, *“Well, see that you do mister! I am not ready for these monthly get togethers to end because you are too stubborn to see the doctor.”*

Alejandro knew how important these monthly coffee meetings are to Maureen. He reassured her once more that he would do as he promised.

At that moment Maureen looked up and asked, *“Were you wearing those cute white rugby shorts that you always wear when you work outside or go for a walk along the river?”*

Alejandro looked at Maureen with a surprise expression, chuckled, and asked, *“Maureen my dear. Have you been spying on me?”*

The two laughed before Alejandro admitted to wearing his famous white rugby shorts. In fact, after so many years of wearing white shorts, Alejandro has become affectionately known to his neighbors as *“White Shorts”* or *“Mister White Shorts.”* A nickname he wears as proudly as he does his white shorts.

After catching up the couple agreed to meet again the following month. Maureen is planning to visit her daughter in Michigan for two weeks. Alejandro is planning to spend time with his two sisters in Colorado. Both are honored to share such a beautiful friendship and thank God daily for the other, Scotty and *“It’s A Small Coffee Shop After All.”*

Thursday 050924 6:05 AM

Peace be with you!

It is amazing all that can happen in the span of a single day. Wednesday started out great, then I ran into a snag, but at least the day ended great.

Have I mentioned that what I look forward to most each morning only after my time with the Lord and His Mother; the Father and the Holy Spirit is the time I spend writing in this journal?

I realize it has fallen short of its billing as a sort of Carlos Michael *journal, handbook, yearbook, and almanac* and instead is more of just a journal.

Let’s see if I can do something to correct that.

I have been holding back from truly letting my hair down as it were for the sake of not sharing too many of the wrong things (*about my life journey experience*) or about myself without offending the reader.

Besides, who wants to hear the boring details of my life?

When I think back to the first time, I became truly aware of *“life”* I think what a fool I have been not to trust, love, and praise God enough for such a wonderful life.

Seriously! Despite all the knucklehead nonsense we experience along the way (*be it our fault or in cooperation with other knuckleheads*), I truly have lived a wonderful life.

Think of all the beautiful, amazing, and sometimes not so beautiful or amazing souls I have known and loved, befriended, and fellowshipped with, shared, and learned from, prayed, and cried with through my association with family, school, work, church, and yes, even social media over the years.

And what about the “friends” I knew in school who were more than just a passing classmate whose names are too many to recall.

The list of friends or relationships built through work and church is equally long. The point being—how many souls have we known or loved during our wonderful life journey who changed our life (*good or bad*) and whose life was changed because of their friendship with us. That is something to think about and be grateful for.

CarlosMichael360

by Carlos Michael Padilla

“Knowledge is like underwear. It is useful to have it but not necessary to show it off.”

--Bill Murray (1950)

Saturday 051124 8:22 AM

Peace be with you!

As a matter of policy, I prefer not to comment on matters related to *politics* or *religion* for obvious reasons. While it is true I do speak about my faith as a Roman Catholic as it applies to me or the role my faith played with respect to my formation, character development, and across my life journey, I do my best to stay out of the fray as it were. However, every now and again you come across something in the media or that has been shared with you that causes you to scratch your head and ask, “Really!?”

This morning at 8:04 AM, I received an email from *Marjorie Dannenfelser*, President of the *Susan B. Anthony Pro-Life America* organization regarding a statement made by *Robert J. Kennedy Jr.*, a Roman Catholic and the son of the late Robert J. Kennedy Sr that reads:

Hi Carlos,

Did you see Thursday’s jaw-dropping interview with independent presidential candidate Robert F. Kennedy, Jr.?

He said he supports abortion rights even if the baby is full term. Murder instead of birth for any reason. I will give RFK this: at least he’s being honest. This is the abortion extremism Joe Biden, Kamala Harris, and today’s Democratic party champions.

We want to make sure every American knows the truth about what the Democrats really want.

Read the statement we released Thursday night: <https://sbaprolife.org/newsroom/press-releases/rfk-jr-s-extremism-exposed-backs-full-term-abortion-on-demand>

Thank you for making this work possible.

My response besides prayer, prayer, prayer (God will hear our prayers), is this: ‘*How can these politicians (Biden, Pelosi, and Kennedy) take the position that they have and still call themselves Roman Catholic?*’

That is like me calling myself Roman Catholic and still engaging in a fully committed, full blown same sex relationship that is devoid of chaste behavior. It is not the fact that a person is *attracted* to a person of the same sex that raises the flag for me. What does (*raise that flag*) is any of us who confess to being Roman Catholic (*practicing Roman Catholic I might add*) but taking the position that some of these Catholic politicians have who I am keeping in my prayers. That is the equivalent of burning both ends of the candle, if having one's cake and eating it too! The words *hypocrisy, ignorance, arrogance, and pride* come to mind if we think (or believe) that we can take a position that we know is contrary to what we believe as practicing Roman Catholics and be okay with it.

It is not okay!

The taking of a life, any life, be it in the womb not long after conception or at any stage of becoming a baby through a loving, sacramental marriage between husband and wife is wrong, wrong, wrong.

How can any politician or any of us for that matter, stand at the podium chastising a foreign government for the way the government treats its people when our own country is doing the same thing through abortion and euthanasia?

What is next—euthanize the mentally ill, those who are deemed to be a drain on the system, the elderly who are no longer contributing positively to society? When does this go beyond the threshold of where it currently is?

I will continue to pray and believe in the promises of Christ, but know this, God will only allow this to go on for so long before His justice, rather than His mercy intervenes. That is my two cents for what it is worth!

CarlosMichael360

by Carlos Michael Padilla

“Evil is not a toy one can simply play with and then put away when bored.”

--Fox Mulder (The X-Files)

Sunday 051224 7:07 AM

Peace be with you!

Consecration. I completed day 32 of the 33-day *Consecration to Our Lady of Fatima* videos with Ken and Janell Yasinski.

What a blessing it has been for me to revisit this consecration, which I performed a couple of years ago through these same videos with this same couple. Much has changed since then—meaning I was not always faithful to that consecration as I should have been, hence, my desire to review these videos and renew my consecration. Salvation is important to me. I fear God's justice. It is important to me to *right the ship* as it were through the grace of Christ, by the intercession of holy mother Mary and through the sacraments of reconciliation and the Holy Eucharist. Repentance is the key. Love is the motivator. The rest is trust in the mercy of God.

Saturday. I enjoyed a great Saturday. The number of steps walked, mainly because of mowing the lawns, was a whopping **17,356!** Praise God. Although I was tired, I enjoyed the work that I was privileged to complete on the

yards. The best part of mowing is the time I spend with God through nature. It is interesting to note the fact that I disliked yard work when I was younger, although I believe I have always enjoyed mowing (*still do.*) However, now that I am the age that I am, I enjoy yard work. Weeding, not so much (smile).

St. Benedict. I am going to Mass at St. Benedict's in Broken Arrow this morning. Gary will accompany me. Two more Sunday Masses to go and Gary will be on his way to Utah. **Note:** *Besides "Brother G," I often like to refer to Gary as a "tall drink of water" or "Gy-raffe" and Utah as "Moo-Tah!"*

Happy Days Are Here Again! Happy days are here, as in I will finally get to shuffle things around the house, including the room that Gary presently occupies. I can dispose of what is no longer needed, which, hopefully, will give the house a more open and decluttered appearance. It is time to start *detaching* from the unimportant, allow others to enjoy what has been enjoyed, and limit myself to only that which is pleasing to God.

Update (11:56 AM). I just returned home from Mass. Brother G, and I ate breakfast at IHOP. I am grateful for the opportunity to go to confession before Mass and to receive Holy Communion. I may now make my consecration to Our Lady on Monday, the 107th Anniversary of Our Lady's apparitions at Fatima while in the state of grace.

Gary Christensen. Gary tells me that he will be traveling from Oklahoma to Kansas to Colorado and Utah when he moves on the first of June. What a beautiful trip that will be. I wish my brother a safe and pleasant trip. His physical presence will be missed.



Photo: (2014). Mom with my sister Cindy on my sister's wedding day.

THE FOUR TREES

By Andrew Hallas

Once upon a time in a land not too far away, four trees began to take root on top of a small hill.

Three of the trees are very selfish. They are arrogant, proud trees who are always boasting about how big and tall they will become, teasing each other that they will live forever.

The fourth tree, however, is happy and content just to be a tree.

As time passes, the three proud and selfish trees spend their days growing tall boasting daily to one another how wonderful each will become.

The fourth tree listens but is happy and content just to be a tree.

Many years pass. The three proud and arrogant trees have grown tall and impressive, however, they have also grown ever more arrogant, selfish, and proud, boasting, and teasing constantly how they are better than the other and how surly they will now live forever, like their Redwood cousins in California.

The fourth tree, however, is not the best looking or the tallest tree, but is happy and content just to be a tree.

Then one day, along comes a woodcutter who cuts down the three proud, arrogant trees. The first tree is made into the city gates. The second tree becomes a warship. While the third tree becomes a great place of worship. Each of the three trees is proud and happy about what they have become and their new position in society, each boasting that they are better than the other and will now live on forever in their present state.

The fourth tree, however, is happy and content just to be a tree.

One day, a great army invades the land and destroys the city gates. The great warship is sunk in the harbor, and the great place of worship is burned to the ground.

Only the fourth tree survives, growing on the hill, happy and content just to be a tree.

The fourth tree knows that it will not live forever. It acknowledges that the day will come when it too, will pass away. But not before it seeds the ground with four new little trees growing on that hill, each day happy and content just to be a tree.

What is the moral of the story?

True greatness lies not in the pursuit of self-importance and pride, but in the humility to embrace one's unique place in the world, the wisdom to appreciate life's simple joys, and the kindness to leave a legacy of positive influence.

Source:

<https://4enlightenment.com/2019/09/30/the-four-trees/>

CarlosMichael360

by Carlos Michael Padilla

“I have had great success being a total idiot!”

--Jerry Lewis (1926-2017)

CBWCM (Script)

Coffee Break w/Carlos Michael
Wednesday, 051524

MATURITY. According to *Max Life Insurance* (dot) com: **Maturity** *is not a matter of age, but instead, of how you choose to respond and react to various life situations. It is essentially a level of mental development or wisdom that has a bearing on all areas of an individual's life, right from their conduct to their relationship with others.*

According to *Esther Pauline "Eppie" Lederer*, better known by the pen name *Ann Landers*, an American advice columnist who began writing

the "Ask Ann Landers" column in 1955. Her mother defined maturity this way in a 1963 article: "*Maturity is the ability to stick with a job until it is finished. The ability to do a job without being supervised. The ability to carry money without spending it, and the ability to bear an injustice without wanting to get even.*"

FYI: The "Ask Ann Landers" column continued for 47 years, by which time its readership had reached 90 million readers.

Let's Coffee Break!

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Intro

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CHANGING THINGS UP! I am going to change things up with respect to this show and the CarlosMichael360 newsletter I publish each month and post to the website: carlosmichael.com.

Whatever is scripted for the show, regardless of the show (e.g., *Coffee Break w/Carlos Michael, Coffee Break Catholic, Coffee Break Short Break, or Carlos Michael 360*), that script will become part of the newsletter as well (if possible).

Think of it as a sort of 2-for-1 deal. I will file this under the heading of *posterity*: a noun that means *future generations*, in this case, anyone interested in reading about a life lived and the individual who lived that life between 1961 and whenever the last broadcast or entry is posted or entered, whichever comes first.

Whether one listener or millions listen to these broadcasts or read these entries, is unimportant. What is important (for me) is this: *Who I am is not as important as what I do and what I do is to know, love, and serve God, by knowing, loving, and serving my neighbors.*

WHO IS MY NEIGHBOR? Who are my neighbors? I will let Fred Rogers (1928-2003) of Mister Rogers' Neighborhood (1968-2001) answer that question: "*All we are ever asked to do in this life is to treat our neighbor—especially our neighbor who is in need—exactly as we would hope to be treated ourselves. That is our ultimate responsibility.*"

According to philanthropydaily.com, January 30, 2020, *Fred Rogers himself seemed to endorse an idea of neighborliness that extended far afield of place and propinquity. He spread welcome messages about the value to you of every child, no matter who they were, where they lived, what they looked like, or what connection they might have to you. Everyone is our neighbor.*

What is the definition of *propinquity*? According to Google's Dictionary, *propinquity* means *the state of being close to someone or something; proximity.*

What kind of neighbor are you...truly?

Are you the neighbor who does to be seen; the one who finds subtle ways to boast of your good deeds, or are you the neighbor that tries, whenever possible, to assist and love your neighbors, unnoticed?

When was the last time you left the comfort of where you are and asked your closest neighbor to you in the spirit of Godly love, "*Friend, is there anything I can do for you*" and meant it? Not to the neighbor you love, but that neighbor who isn't always so kind or loving toward you.

My first neighbors are equal in the sense that they hurt my heart equally, but are equally loved and served because to do otherwise would violate what Jesus said in [Matthew 22:35-40](#), [Mark 12:28-34](#), and [Luke 10:27a](#):

“You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and you shall love your neighbor as yourself.”

Let’s take a break!

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Break

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ANN LANDERS. Speaking of Ann Landers, we would like to introduce a new *“advice column”* segment to the show. According to Wikipedia: *An advice column is a column in a question-and-answer format. Typically, a reader (or in our case, a listener) writes to the media outlet with a problem in the form of a question, and the media outlet provides an answer or response. The responses are written by an advice columnist.*

The best way to write an advice column, according to dating (the term used for a female dog that I will not repeat here) dot.com offers this advice:

- 1 Write how you talk. Every advice columnist has a different voice.
- 2 Show Empathy.
- 3 Be honest.
- 4 Include a call to action.

What is a *“call to action?”*

According to the *Imperial College London website*, *When we talk about a call to action (CTA) online we are referring to a piece of content intended to prompt a user to perform a specific act, typically taking the form of an instruction or directive. It is, quite literally, a “call” to take an “action.”*

Our advice columnist prefers to go by the pen name, **“Mr. Beasley!”** If you would like to write “Mr. Beasley” with your question, please email your question to: carlosmichaelcommunications@gmail.com with the words, **“C/O Mr. Beasley”** in the subject line. Your questions will be forwarded to “Beasley” to be answered on a future episode or edition of *Coffee Break w/Carlos Michael* and *CarlosMichael360*.

Let me close with this quote from Ann Landers:

“At age 20 we worry about what others think of us. At age 40, we don’t care what they think of us. At age 60, we discover they have not been thinking of us at all.”

Live today as if you truly mean it. Love God with all your everything and remember to be a great neighbor, because GREAT is always better than good.

Adios!

Wednesday 051524 6:11 AM

Peace be with you!

Seventeen days, excluding today to June first, Gary moves to Utah. This will also be the final *First Saturday Devotion* under the guidance of Rev. *Leonardo Morales*. Fr. Leo has been reassigned to *St. Pius X* (Tulsa). We owe a great deal to him for all that he has done in service to Holy Mother Church while at *St. Thomas More*. Despite the small hiccup in our relationship, I, for one, will

miss him, especially his laughter and his *“When I was a little Mexican”* stories. With his energy, enthusiasm, sense of humor, and faith, I believe he will do much good for God and His Church. He will always be in my prayers and my friendship.

As for Gary, this is his fourth time moving into and out of this house. Whatever God has planned for him in the great state of Utah, I wish him well. I will pray for his continued success and good health in accordance with God’s will. In the end, that is all one can do.

I managed to work on my 2024 calendar (*which I failed to do when I prepared Mark’s calendar earlier in the year.*) I also drafted the complete 2025 calendar for myself and Mark. For both calendars I need to add birthdays. For Mark’s calendar, I need to add the *Oklahoma State University Cowboys* 2025 football schedule when it becomes available. I thought it might be nice to have a desk calendar again.

I posted a podcast Tuesday morning. My second for this week. I don’t know why I did. I suppose it is because I enjoy podcasting despite the meager number of listeners who listen to the show. Maybe instead of podcasting for the sake of gaining listeners, I should podcast for the sake of posterity. *Posterity* is a noun that means *future generations*. I have enough material I can use through these journal entries, short stories, past shows, etcetera in terms of *available content* to keep the shows entertaining if nothing else.

Mark mentioned on Tuesday evening that *Jerry Mather’s* mother, (*the actor who played Theodore “Beaver” Cleaver on the “Leave it to Beaver” show 1957-1963*) is still living. She is, as of today, 97 years old. Mathers is 76, which means his mother was born in 1927. Mathers was born in 1948, in Sioux City, Iowa. I thought I would mention that as a bit of trivia for any of you who are “Leave It To Beaver” fans like me.

Speaking of mom’s, I suddenly realized something my mother would often tell me relating to children— *“One day you are going to know what it feels like when your child hurts you.”* I don’t know why that came to mind but, it did. I never disregarded or ignored what mother said, however (at the time) I could not understand that statement completely because I had not yet had children of my own.

Okay, here is what made me think of mom’s comment. Fast forward to Monday afternoon and Tuesday morning, and on numerous previous occasions, mother was right. One cannot know the pain of a parent when caused by a son or daughter until said parent experiences that moment through his or her own children. Ouch! Not fun.

Since my last confession, I have been trying to keep myself guarded. Although I slip here and there, (*nothing mortal, I do not think*), my prayer is that I left the confessional contrite and committed to repentance.

However, I must remember that in and of myself I can do nothing. But with God, grace, and the intercession of the mother of my Lord, I pray to make it relatively unscathed where mortal sin is concerned by the time I revisit the confessional. I was sincere when I stated that I want to change my life from *who* I am (*with respect to sin*) to who I could be in my walk with Christ—a saint. Your prayers are always appreciated.

Father Leo informed me Tuesday afternoon (via text) that the canvas print of *Mother Theresa* he requested for the *Helping Hands Food Pantry* arrived. His exact words were, *“It looks amazing. Well, done.”* His text was a good way to end the day.

Thinking back to something my two youngest sons said in recent, separate conversations, I can see where I can do better as their father. It is still not too late to teach and learn from each other in order that we might become the family we are meant to be. That begins with me.

Is it possible that I pray too much? Can one pray too much? It was recently brought to my attention by a family member that I pray too much. At first, pride being what it is, I began to respond with a self-defensive comment, but then I thought about what Jesus would expect from me. I responded with love, patience, and understanding instead.

“My entire day is a prayer,” I responded. I found the whole exchange a bit jarring but always an opportunity to offer it to Christ. Enjoy the rest of your day.

CarlosMichael360

by Carlos Michael Padilla

“I don’t think a lot of people realize the influence TV has on our kids. Kids take a lot of their cues from it in their dress and their conduct.”

--Jerry Mathers (Leave It To Beaver)

CBWCM (Script)

Coffee Break w/Carlos Michael

Thursday, 051624

A theorem in writing, as I understand it is as follows: *If statement A is true, then it is most likely that statement B is true as well.*

For example, if statement A states that *Beasley likes Oklahoma State University, Stillwater*, then statement B which states that *Beasley supports all the sports programs available at OSU* is equally true.

Here is another example. If statement A states that *Beasley likes wearing white, old-school underwear that is not boxers*, then statement B is equally true which states that *Beasley likes wearing white underwear*.

You learn something new every day.

Let’s Coffee Break!

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Intro

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When I reflect on my life, which I often do each morning from the perspective of, “*What can I do better today that I did not do yesterday?*”—which includes the past, I tend to see myself as I truly was, am, and hope to be moving forward. The thought that came to mind this morning as I prepared to meet God through this day was the comment I have heard many times over my lifetime, “*You’re a good (guy, person, man, friend) Carlos!*” However, the real questions I found myself asking were these: “*Am I? Is being good even relevant? As a man, do I want to settle for just ‘good’ or do I want to take the next step forward into my personal and spiritual development by working to become a ‘godly’ man?*”

Looking back on my life, I may have done some 'good' for others, perhaps even for myself, but I don't believe I have ever considered myself to be a 'good' man, let alone a 'godly' man, especially not after the things I have done in that time. But I want to be more than just "good." I want to be the man that Christ is calling me to be. Being Roman Catholic, I searched out sources, hopefully credible sources—you know how the Internet can be—on the difference between a 'good' man and a 'godly' man.

While researching this topic, I came across an article written by a young man who lives in South Africa. His name is *Pieter van Deventer*. The article is dated: September 23, 2019, and is titled, "*What Defines A Godly Man.*"

A link to the article has been provided: <https://www.therebelution.com/blog/2019/09/what-defines-a-godly-man/>

According to Van Deventer, a Godly man is connected to **1 Corinthians 16:13**: "*Be watchful, stand firm in the faith, act like men, be strong. Let all that you do be done in love.*"

Van Deventer goes on to write: "*...the defining characteristic of a teenage guy shouldn't be his looks. It shouldn't be his charisma, sports achievements, or academic accomplishments and abilities. The defining characteristic of a teenage guy's life should be him as a mirror of Christ. In this time, when society is all about having a good time, we need to set an example. An example of the strength and discipline it takes to follow Jesus. An example of true strength and true love*"

Grant it, Van Deventer is talking to young men, but I suppose the same should be true for us aging men too. Naturally, I decided to write a local priest friend of mine whose intellect and wisdom I greatly respect to get his take on the Church's perspective of the difference between a "good" man and a "Godly" man and what one must do to achieve the latter. I am waiting for his response. In the meantime, I will continue to pray for guidance while remaining watchful, firm in faith, and strong all done in love. Let's take a break.

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Insert Break

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Here is a quote on wisdom from Nelson Mandela: "*It always seems impossible until it is done.*"

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A relative sent a graphic via email titled: *Seven Sentences I Wish I'd Read Sooner*, by *Steven Bartlett* of the *Mind Journal*. Those seven sentences are:

1 These hard times, this pain, these lessons one day, they will be your strength, your awareness, and your blessings.

2 Stop expecting honesty from people who lie to themselves.

3 You will never look good trying to make someone look bad.

4 Save your explanations for those that are determined to understand you – give your silence to those that are determined to misunderstand you.

5 Your life is too short to be unhappy 5 days a week in exchange for 2 days of freedom.

6 Do not be upset by people you do not respect.

7 Life is not tiring. Wanting life to be a certain way but not having the confidence to make it that way, is tiring.

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Sally Q. of somewhere in Oklahoma wants to know: *“Carlos, which four individuals who shared your life journey changed your life (positively) in a way you never thought possible?”*

My response: *“Michael, Kristina, Matthew, and Joshua! They are my children.”*

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Let me close today's show with advice from a tumbleweed: *“Sometimes you just gotta go where the wind carries you; Remember, not all those who wander are lost; Don't be afraid to show the world how you roll; Life can be a breeze if you just let it happen; Strong roots are important, but you eventually have to start your own journey; You're not always meant to know where you're going, and, It's not about how far you go in life, but how you get there.”*

Until next time ...



Friday 051724 5:53 AM

Peace be with you!

Praise God for the blessing of this day and the gift of life. I awoke late this morning, almost at 5:00 AM. I must have been very tired because I felt like I had awakened from a very deep sleep. It took a minute for me to gather my bearings, but as I look forward to doing each morning, I went straight into prayer mode as I stumbled about the house. I felt like a baby learning to walk for the first time (LOL).

Can I use (LOL: Laughing Out Loud) in a journal?

I watched *“The Sons of Katy Elder”* Thursday evening with Mark. The film stars John Wayne (1907-1979), Dean Martin (1917-1995), Earl Holliman, and Michael Anderson Jr. as the sons of Katy Elder. Entertaining movie. Not my first time seeing it.

According to Google, *“The Sons of Katy Elder” is about four ne'er-do-well sons who reunite in their Texas hometown to attend their mother's funeral. Led by older brothers John (John Wayne), a gunfighter, and Tom (Dean Martin), a gambler, the four soon learn that their father gambled away the family ranch, which was the cause of his murder. The brothers decide to avenge their father's death and win back the ranch, a situation that quickly leads to trouble with the local sheriff and violent conflict with the rival Hastings clan.*

Matthew asked if I could give him a loan. There are characters and other miscellaneous things he wants for his PlayStation 5. The total borrowed was **\$120.00** which he will pay back on the first. I do not like loaning him money. I would rather give it to him. Why not? He is my son, and I love him. I would like to save a portion of the rent he pays each month for him, using only what needed

Looking back on this week since going to confession on Sunday (051224), I certainly do understand Mother Teresa's quote: *“Be kind*

and merciful. Let no one ever come to you without coming away better and happier.”

I see where I can “do better” in that area—being *kind and merciful*. Be joyful to whomever stops to visit me, no matter how busy I think I am. Greet and receive them as if I have not seen them in many years, so that they leave feeling better and happier. Amen. Good advice. Thank you, Mother.

“My God! My God! I believe in, I adore in, I hope in, and I love Thee. I ask pardon for all those souls that do not believe, do not adore, do not hope in, and do not love Thee. Amen.”

I love reciting that prayer as well as this one: *“O Blood and Water, which gushed forth from the Heart of Jesus as a fountain of Mercy for us, I trust in You.”*

A prayer from the *Chaplet of Divine Mercy*. The prayer refers to the blood and water that gushed forth from Jesus's wounded heart after a soldier pierced him with a lance at the time of his death. *The blood represents the life of souls, and the water represents what makes souls righteous.*

My heart hurts for Mark. Despite repeated attempts to keep him active and purposeful, I fear that I am losing the battle. He laments his age. Bathing has become a chore. He eats less, which is good in terms of losing weight, something he has been wanting to do. What more can I do without crossing the threshold from serving, caring, and loving him as his brother in Christ to what we were pre-2017? That I will leave to my Lord. He knows my heart.

I know how tired I am, but this cannot be about me. It must be about God and those He has sent me to care for and love. I will pray to find the strength to step forward and serve better. Not for my sake, but for theirs and the love of God. Service is its own reward.

On Thursday morning, I sent *Fr. Elkin Gonzalez*, pastor at *Christ the King* (Tulsa) a question regarding the difference between being “good” versus “godly.” Here is his reply:

Jesus said, “Only God is good” (Mk 19:18). Therefore, all goodness comes from God and our ability to do good things is an emanation of divine goodness. However, men's arrogance and fallen state can make us think that excellence only requires human diligence, and divine assistance is not necessary. The man who is good in humanistic terms, will eventually be overcome by his shadow and unconscious capacity for evil. The Godly man will rely on God's grace, and even when he does evil things, his dependence on God will earn him the grace to restore, sustain, and solidify his commitment to goodness.

My understanding of what makes a “Godly” man was incorrect. I praise God for blessing me with the thought to check with Fr. Elkin. I like what Father said, *“The Godly man will rely on God's grace, and even when he does evil things, his dependence on God will earn him the grace to restore, sustain, and solidify his commitment to goodness.”*

That explains 1984, 2014, and 2017. Those three very important events on my life journey timeline were significant turning points in my life albeit to God's grace and love and not for any other reason. Well, perhaps the prayers of the blue-haired ladies, my own mother, and most importantly, the intercession of the greatest Mother of all, Our Lady, made the difference as well.

I sometimes wish that I had the intelligence of *Fr. Elkin Gonzalez*, the oratory skills of *Bishop Fulton Sheen*, the joyful spirit of *Fr. Mike Schmitz*, the business prowess of *Sam Walton*, the drawing talent off *Walt Disney*, the Leadership skills of *President Abraham Lincoln*, and stage talent of *Danny Kaye*. Still, I am thankful for what I do have and will not lament that which I do not have.

Relatives and friends who have passed on that I do not want to forget: *Frank Salcido Padilla, Mary Alice Padilla Flores, Carlos Cruz Padilla Sr, Benjamin Flores, Timoteo Padilla, Maria Cruz Padilla, Margaret Quihuis Salcido, Ralph Salcido Sr, Ralph Salcido Jr, Maxine Salcido, Ralph (Chacho) Salcido, Geanie Rodriguez, Robert Miano, Janice Truck, Diana Cano, Todd Musichans, Jerry Ferris, Terry Stephens, Wendy Rossler, Alex Di Carlo, Christine Romero, David Romero, Ernesto Romero, Pauline Romero, Victor Orona, Emily Orona, Cynthia Orona, Jess Flores, Lucia Flores, Kristina Flores, Linda Moody, Angie Del La Rosa, Anita Zavala, Lydia ?, Al Del La Rosa, Tommy Martinez, Adeline Martinez, Frank Martinez, Gilbert Rodriguez, Helen Rodriguez, Trinidad Salcido, Arthur Salcido, Edgar "Boga" Braunwalder, Ofelia Braunwalder, Gilbert Lopez, Jenny Lopez, Tubby ... Alex Castruita, Mary Castruita, Vivian ?, Tina Marie ?, John Cheverilla, Joe Castillo, Maria Castillo, Joe Padilla Sr, Dora Padilla, (Daughter ?), Pete Miranda, Lucy Miranda, Augustine Martinez, Sophia Martinez, Johnny Martinez, Henry Aguilera, Julia Aguilera, Carrie Moreno, Sara Padilla, Nadine Flores, Baby Gabriella Noel, Jess Luebano, Katy Luebano ...*

I realize not all are listed here and that is okay. They are still loved and remembered. *May their souls and the souls of all the faithful departed, through the Mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen.*

CarlosMichael360

by Carlos Michael Padilla

***“Be kind and merciful.
Let no one ever come to
you without coming
away better and
happier.”***

--Mother Teresa (1910-1997)

CBWCM (Script)

Coffee Break w/Carlos Michael
Friday, 051724

It occurred to me this morning that abandoning my worldly attachments and surrendering all that I am to the Lord through Mary, is a good thing. Yes, I am Roman Catholic, a believer in the true presence of Christ in the Holy Eucharist, a soldier of the message of The Divine Mercy and Our Lady of Fatima, a Marian devotee, a son of the Church, and a servant to God through my neighbors.

I choose this day of my own free will to spend the remainder of my life loving, knowing, and serving God through prayer and in service to Church and neighbor.

God's will be done. Amen.

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“Let’s Coffee Break!”

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You may be asking yourself, “What is up with Carlos and all that pontificating in the opening segment?”

Fair question. I appreciate your asking.

I do not view the opening segment as boasting or pontificating. It was shared with complete humility. It is more of a public surrender to who I have been and what I can be only by the grace of God. Nothing more. Nothing less.

Let’s just say that I am putting into practice what I confessed and consecrated last weekend. I truly desire to know, love, and serve God through prayer and service. Not for the intention of drawing any attention to myself, and I apologize if indeed that is what my opening statement suggested. I desire to be like the analogy I used a few years back, which I will repeat today with respect, of course, and not seeking to offend anyone.

I want to become your favorite underwear. Something you are comfortable with. Something you can depend on to be there for you, doing what it was created to do without necessarily giving it any thought, which is good, because it is the Creator, not the product (or individual) that our focus should be on. And once I have served my purpose, and lived out my years to the point that I can no longer serve, I can then be discarded and forgotten with joy, knowing that I did what I was created to do for the good of he, she, or they whom I served.

Crazy analogy, I know, but the only one that made sense to me. If you can come up with something better, I am open to hearing it.

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I have not decided if I am going to continue writing and podcasting. I will pray for guidance on

that end, however, those of you who are listening, I welcome your thoughts on these podcasts.

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Recently, one of my sons said to me, *“I know you do not even want me to go to Church with you because of ...”* (with that last part being inaudible.)

I know he did not mean what he said in the way it sounded, but his words weighed heavily upon my heart as a father just the same. I had to ask myself, *“Have I done or said something to give my son the impression or understanding, false though it is, that I do not wish him to attend Mass with me when that is the opposite of what I pray for daily?”*

If I have, then I ask his and God’s forgiveness because that was never my desire or intention.

I pray for the day when my adult children and grandchildren will come to know, love, and serve the Lord as I do. Where they are in their relationship with God, or lack thereof, although I believe they love God, has more to do with a lack of proper formation and education by their mother and me than it did with them in the past. While it is true that as adults, there comes a time when blaming others for whatever we are or are not must end and looking interiorly within ourselves to assess where we too are culpable. I am no exception. Watching the young families at Mass reminds me of when my children were young, when we would attend Mass together. Of course, there was much they did not understand and probably wanted more to be home playing with toys or watching television than to be at Mass. That was sometimes true for me as a young boy growing up as well. But one thing always remained true, *my love for God* even though I never understood God or the Church [then]. My earliest memory of loving God was at three years of age. I fell in love with God through His creation—through nature and then through His

people. I pray one day that my son will come to understand that I long for the day when I am present with them, or at the very least, in the knowledge of knowing that like me, they are at Mass loving God as I do.

Until next time.



Saturday 051824 6:58 AM

Peace be with you!

Praise God for the blessing of this day and the gift of life.

Dear Friends, effective immediately, this project, including any journal entries will be written in the third person, in journal format (*my preferred method of writing, especially short stories*), under the pen name: *Alejandro Armando Armand*. The reason for this is that it makes it easier for me to write or talk about myself, *something I am not always comfortable with doing contrary to popular belief*, when it is being told in the third person.

Alejandro, who in many ways is my alter ego, is a character I developed several years ago, who is not just my alter ego, but also a resident of the fictional town of *Friendship, Oklahoma*.

Alejandro is 30 years old, Roman Catholic, and single. He likes it that way. He is the youngest son of Armando and Debra Armand. Alejandro holds

a bachelor's degree in social services management and a master's degree in education.

In his early to mid-twenties, Alejandro worked as a model for a men's fashion magazine and as a part-time actor, primarily stage acting. His long-term goal is to finish medical school with the dream of going into private practice assisting the less fortunate of Friendship, Oklahoma.

The character of Alejandro is a combination of myself and certain friends I grew up with who were the Jonathan to my David (*a reference to the Old Testament friendship shared between David—the future King of Israel, and Jonathan—the son of King Saul*).

When I began this monthly project, this was the original intent I had—to *write these entries through the person of Alejandro*. It would be his journal that you are reading, discussing his friend *Carlos* and the friendship they shared.

Moving on ...

Whew! I have a tired but joyful body this morning. I had an opportunity to spend Friday 051724 with Mark (*aka Monsieur Man*) and his former wife (*Kathryn*) who I love dearly. The day was spent taking Mr. Man to the see his primary physician and to assist Katy with cleaning and organizing her garage. We scarcely made a dent, but we made progress. We will return soon to continue with the project until the objective has been met. Mark was thrilled after I went into the attic and retrieved the yearbooks he had been wanting (*and talking about*) for quite some time. It is those moments of joy that I saw on both faces of Mark and Katy for two different reasons that bring me the greatest joy.

CarlosMichael360

by Carlos Michael Padilla

“As Christians, we are different. We are a people who love even when it hurts. We know that our sorrow only brings us closer together in great empathy, and we know that a heart that feels is a heart that can heal and reconcile.”

--Casey Cole, OFM

Sunday 051924 6:13 AM

Peace be with you!

Praise God for the blessing of this day and the gift of life.

Hi friends, I know that I said I would write in the third person under the Nome de Plume of *Alejandro Armando Armand*. However, after giving that much thought, I feel it best to continue writing in the first person. Thank you for understanding.

Saturday started off with a prayer, and then a breakfast meeting with my friend *Diogo*. Diogo informed me that he has been accepted into religious life. He is joining the *Dominicans*. The order is based in St. Louis, Missouri. He is currently transitioning from his secular life to religious life.

The formation process is seven years, which will culminate with his ordination as a priest in 2031 if all goes as planned. I am happy for him. I intend, with God's grace, to visit him at least once while he is in Dallas (following the trip to St. Louis) and again on the day of his ordination. Following our meeting, I left feeling a bit sad for myself, which I quickly dismissed. This is due to my decision in 1984 to leave the seminary as an emotional response to the death of my brother seminarian, *Alex di Carlo*, who committed suicide three days after leaving the order.

How much different would my life have been these past 40 years had I not made that decision? 40 years!! Has it truly been that long?

The time is currently 4:22 PM. Since this morning, I have attended Mass at St. Benedict's Broken Arrow, went to confession, received Holy Communion, ate breakfast at the *First Watch* restaurant in Broken Arrow, saw a terrible movie *"I Saw The TV Glow"* (2024) at the Cinemark Theater with Brother G. I also picked up some last-minute items at Target. All in all, a blessed Sunday.

I asked Gary what time he plans to head out on Saturday, June 1st. He said at 7:00 AM. I suppose he has a good reason for leaving on the date and time selected, however, were it me, I would have left on Thursday to arrive on Friday so I could unpack and get settled before Monday. I also would have planned to hit the road at 5:00 AM— but that is me.

In the span of 8 years (2017-2024), Gary has moved in and out of this house on four separate occasions. I am inclined to believe that he will find his permanent landing spot in Utah (*at least I pray that is the case*) so he can move forward in whatever good God wishes for him to do.

I further believe that It is time for me to move forward in the service of my Father Creator. One goal is to work toward re-establishing a healthy relationship with my first neighbors (*my family*) while seeking to develop new friendships within the community.

CarlosMichael360

by Carlos Michael Padilla

“I am an all-or-nothing kind of person, and when I become interested in something, I give it my all.”

--Tom Cruise

Monday 052024 6:10 AM

Peace be with you.

Praise God for the blessing of this day and the gift of life.

I had a blessed weekend, with one exception—that terrible movie I saw at the Cinemark on Sunday with Brother G. The title of the film is “I Saw The TV Glow” (2024). I do not know which is worse, sitting through that movie or listening to “G” sing!?

I started the weekend on Friday by taking Mark to see his primary physician in the morning. Following that visit, we drove to his former wife’s house to assist her with organizing and cleaning her garage. Wow! That turned out to be an all-day project and we barely made a dent. Still, we made progress while spending the day together, which

was the best part. Mark was thrilled as well because I was able to retrieve his college yearbooks from the attic. Surprisingly, they are still in great condition.

Because of the amount of time and work spent in Katy’s garage on Friday, I had intended to rest on Saturday. But what did I do? I met my friend for breakfast at 8:00 AM at the *Neighborhood Jam* restaurant. Following breakfast, I went home, changed, and mowed the front and back lawn.

After mowing the lawns, I took a shower and together with Brother G., went to have the car washed, had lunch at the *Black Bear Diner*, stopped at Walmart to pick up a few items, and then headed to Home Depot to get some replacement plants for Mark before stopping at Sonic to pick up dinner for Mark.

By the time Sunday rolled around it took all I had to keep my eye open. I attended 9:00 AM Mass at St. Benedict’s in Broken Arrow where I had the opportunity to go to confession and receive Holy Communion.

Following Mass, my Brother G and I had breakfast at the “First Watch” restaurant in Broken Arrow. After ordering breakfast for Matt and Mark and dropping it off, Gary and I went to the Cinemark to watch that horrible film, “I Saw The TV Glow.” If this is what our young people are watching today, God help us all.

From the theater we stopped at Target to pick up the last few items that I did not pick up at Walmart on Saturday. From there we went home where I plopped myself on the sofa, watched a bit of lady college softball and a movie before finally calling it a day.

An exhausting weekend, yes. But it was a productive weekend.

CBWCM SCRIPT

Coffee Break w/Carlos Michael
Monday 052024

I Saw The TV Glow! After watching a film Sunday afternoon that I had difficulty making sense of; the title of the film being, “I Saw The TV Glow” (2024), I thought to myself— ‘...as children of God we are a mess.’ Here is the clincher, did I ask that of myself as if to imply there is no hope? No, I did not. To do so would make me a hypocrite with respect to the faith I profess to believe in each Sunday at Mass in the Nicene Creed.

I guess I just did not know what to think about the film.

Three thoughts came to mind as I exited the theater: 1) What a waste of money and time spent watching this film. Hard to believe ten million dollars was spent to produce this film. I looked it up! 2) Was it possible this was an abstract representation of mental or some other form of abuse experienced on the part of the two main characters “Owen” played by *Justice Smith*, and “Maddy” played by *Brigett Lundy-Paine*, and 3) I would do better to spend time in Adoration and prayer than to watch another film like this one.

While the joy of my Sunday was spent worshipping and loving God through Mass and a visit to the confessional at St. Benedict’s in Broken Arrow, that joy was thrown a sort of left curve by three things: 1) a couple who sat next to us at the restaurant where we ate breakfast, 2) a film whose rating on a scale of 1 to 10 with 10 being best would be one, and 3) a post I read on Facebook. However, instead of choosing to be

critical or judgmental, I opted to offer a prayer and to spend the remainder of the day being grateful for my blessings.

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Let’s Coffee Break!

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Jesus said in Mathew 7:3-5 ... *How can you say to your brother, ‘Let me take the speck out of your eye,’ when all the time there is a plank in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the plank out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother’s eye.*

Change begins with me.

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Social Acceptance. One lesson I learned many years ago is to love who I am, as I am, and not as I think I should be in imitation of others for the sake of social acceptance. To do so means that I am not being true to myself—and it shows.

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Quote. Here is a quote a relative once shared with me: *“There may not be an age limit to the things that we do, however, to do a certain thing at a certain age that clearly does not belong is obscene.”* –

Anonymous

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Humility. In a humble state, you learn better. What you think is humility could be pride. Pride is concerned with who is right. Humility is concerned with what is right. Seek first to

understand. Do not interrupt someone's expertise with your overconfidence. Spend more of your time observing, listening, and learning instead of wanting to be seen and heard. We learn by asking questions and absorbing information, not by talking. Suppressing your ego helps you grow. You are in the wrong place if you are the smartest person in the room. Always try to be the most inexperienced person in the room at something.

Credit to beyondmondays.com

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Friendship. A friend once said to me, *"Never assume the friendship you share with another is because of anything special about you. Rather, be humble and grateful to God for those friends who choose to walk with you despite all that they know about you, however, that does not mean one should continue to behave in such a way that, over time, will cause that friendship to become nothing more than a memory."*

I will close with this post shared on Pinterest.com. It is titled, [NOT EVERY FIGHT IS YOUR FIGHT!](#)

Some fights are worth ignoring, and some are worth losing. Some fights are too big to face, and some are for later. Some fights are personal, and some are won in prayer. No matter what your fight looks like now, remember to give it to the One who knows very well how to fight for you.

Until next time ...

CarlosMichael360

by Carlos Michael Padilla

"Good-looking people turn me off. Me included."

--Patrick Swayze (1952-2009)



CBWCM SCRIPT

Coffee Break w/Carlos Michael

Tuesday 052124 Time: 7:06

Peace be with you.

Praise God for the blessing of this day and the gift of life.

As I reflect on my life, I sometimes wonder if I did not misunderstand God's will from my own. Meaning, was it God's will that my life turned out exactly as it is in its current state or was, I supposed to have done something greater but dropped the ball because I did not have the confidence in His grace to believe that I could have the gravitas of Tom Cruise or John Cusack without losing my soul in the process?

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"Let's Coffee Break!"

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As with the question of whether I was born same sex attracted or made—not having the opportunity to truly know because that

“opportunity to know” was taken from me at the first instance of being sexually molested. Was I meant to be more in the service of God than I am today?

I do not believe for a moment that God willed the bad, the failures, nor the brokenness in my life. Did I miss the opportunity to be better at whatever I was supposed to be because I was too busy being angry, hanging my head down in obedience to children of God who behaved incorrectly?

How different would my life have turned out had I graduated from high school instead of dropping out in my senior year. Had I married Deborah rather than the mother of my children. Had I finished acting school rather than running from what I clearly had a talent for because I had no confidence in my skills. Had I not dropped out of the seminary or befriended that person over another, worked for that employer rather than the other, not become ill after obtaining my dream job to work at Disneyland and getting terminated not even a month into the job, had I not met Stephen (my former roommate) or Ron, Terry, or Mark, had I not moved to Oklahoma...the list is endless.

I ask this question because of a quote I read by Tom Cruise. The other reason is related to the time I was having breakfast with a friend at *Mom’s Diner* in Tulsa on a Sunday after Mass. Naturally, I was well dressed because I had just attended Mass.

While we were eating and talking one of the food servers walked past but not before stopping, looked at me and asked, “*Are you someone important?*” Before I could respond, I noticed my friend quickly shaking his head “no” as if to let her know that I was not important.

Being *important* is not the focus of this writing. Understanding this, I immediately said to the food server after thanking her for question, “*No, I am not important.*”--the “what if” is.

What if I had ... *you fill in the blank* ... become that actor, speaker, or CEO—that *someone important* as that food server thought she saw in me that morning?

I ask because of something Chris Stefanick, founder of “Real Life Catholic” recently said in one of his videos. He said, “*We are created for greatness!*” We are also created for love, from love, but what does Chris mean by “*...created for greatness?*”

Since I am a relatively unknown in the world of Catholic Social Media and podcasting, meaning, Chris would not know me from Adam therefore I cannot ask him directly what he meant by his “greatness” statement, I decided to do some digging of my own.

According to an article posted on the *thosecatholicmen.com* website titled: *Made For Greatness* by Jason Craig, Craig writes: *The quote to greatness is attributed to Pope Benedict XVI who is quoted as having said, “The world offers you comfort, but you were not made for comfort. You were made for greatness!”*

According to Craig, that is not exactly what Benedict said. You know how things become fumbled in the translation. What Benedict did say according to Craig in his encyclical letter *Spi Spalvi* – “*Man was created for greatness—for God himself; he was created to be filled by God. But his heart is too small for the greatness to which it is destined. It must be stretched...*”

Craig goes on to write: “*In the humility of the cross, Jesus, who reigns as King, shows us the path to greatness – humility and full submission to*

God's will. The virtue of greatness is called magnanimity. It means loosely to have a great soul, or a soul capable and eager for great things. St. Thomas Aquinas puts this virtue under the virtue of hope."

Hope is not just wishing – "I hope I make it to graduation", "I hope Mr. Slife where's the green blazer today" – but an expectation that God will complete the work begun in us, and that even at this very moment He is drawing us to Himself in heaven. We were made for Him after all, for the great, God Himself. Your life will be great when live in a culture of love, of gifts, of reception. The more frenzied for greatness you become, the more like the tower of babel you will be. Greatness is begotten, not made. It is born from a life submitted to God and stretched to have an even greater capacity for love.

Greatness is not measured by status, wealth, or accomplishment. It is begotten, not made. **Magnanimity** means to be *generous or forgiving, especially toward a rival or less powerful person*. **Magnanimous** comes from the Latin word "great" and **animus** which means "soul," so it literally describes someone who is big hearted.

So, to the food servers' question, "Am I someone important?" No, I am not in the context that she was asking. My friend was correct in shaking his head "no" although he should have known me well enough to know that shaking his head "no" was not necessary. *Am I someone great?* Yes, and so are you.

Until next time ...

Link: Jason Craig Article, "Made For Greatness," <https://thosecatholicmen.com/articles/made-for-greatness/#:~:text=%E2%80%9CMan%20was%20created%20for%20greatness,is%20not%20ambiguous%20at%20all>

CarlosMichael360

by Carlos Michael Padilla

"When I was a teenager, I wanted to be a portrait painter. As I got to be older, I realized that as a portrait painter, I wouldn't be able to support a goldfish!"

--Fred Gwynne (1926-1993)

CBWCM SCRIPT

Coffee Break w/Carlos Michael
Wednesday 052224 (7m, 23s)

It's Just A Storm.

Today on Coffee Break: Paying Attention. Question. Belief. Regret. Storms. Misery. A Short Story.

Sometimes my greatest challenge on any given day is not which color, brand, or style of underwear I am going to wear because I am punctual when it comes to pulling the drawers from the drawer if you will pardon the pun. What is sometimes my greatest challenge, is getting through the day accomplishing three tasks: 1 God's will, 2 Being better in terms of service and neighborliness than I was the day before, especially in sin and charity, and 3 Not losing my joy.

How about you?

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Let's Coffee Break!

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Paying Attention. I noticed after reviewing the script from Tuesday's show that I need to do a better job at paying attention to the details—everything that brings the show together. Am I paying attention to my grammar, sentence structure, emotions, personality, delivery, what I am presenting, who I am presenting to, etcetera.

The same is true with life and the person I am, rather than the person I am perceived to be. What does that mean?

It means, am I paying attention to the details to make the necessary adjustments with respect to character, habits, actions, and behavior so that I am true to the person that **God** wants me to be? I pray that I am. Your prayers in that area are appreciated as well.

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Question: What one true act of charity or mercy did you perform yesterday for one of your first neighbors? By first neighbor, the reference means a family member, close friend, or roommate—anyone that you share your living space with. By act, we don't mean a cursory act: which means *rapidly and often superficially performed or produced*. Let's put this way, how often do you go to bed physically exhausted at the end of the day because you gave all of yourself that you could to the service of your first neighbors—plural, not singular.

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How much do I believe God loves me? Enough to have created me.

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Regret. Do I regret that the marriage to the mother of my children was performed outside of the Church and ended in divorce? I do. However, what I grieve, rather than regret, is the pain that our union and subsequent divorce caused to all six children and to my former wife: the loss of

family, not fully raising the children in the faith, failing as a father, etcetera. However, my joy is in the friendship I now share with my former wife and the love that the children have for me in whichever way they freely choose to love me. Word of advice, fight for your marriage. You said "I do" for a reason.

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Storms. A friend once asked, "Carlos, do you think storms are a bad thing?" My response: "Nothing that comes from or has been created or permitted by God is a bad thing. Storms can be dangerous, destructive, and sometimes deadly. But what is a storm but a means to correct, heal, or nourish the earth? The same is true for my soul with every storm I have experienced and most likely will or have encountered throughout my lifetime. The good part is that no storm lasts forever, and if I am blessed to come out on the other side of the storm, I like to believe that I am made all the better because of weathering said storm. No, I don't view storms as a bad thing, no more than I view a cloudy day as a reason to be depressed. Eventually, the sun will shine again and that is good enough for me."

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If you are as good, content, and secure as you believe yourself to be, why then are you so miserable?

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Short Story: Two Toe B. Bank. Two-Toe B. Bank was walking to school one stormy morning without incident, well, sort of. To reach the school, he had one more street to cross.

As he was preparing to step off the curb onto the street, a car full of students turned left onto the street from the opposing street. Seeing that Two-Toe was about to cross the street, the driver of the car purposely steered the vehicle toward a large puddle of water that had pooled up next to the curb, causing a large splash of water to soak Two-Toe from head to foot. The driver and the

other three passengers in the car laughed hysterically at Toe-Toe as they drove off.

A woman who was driving behind the boys and had seen what occurred immediately pulled over and asked Two-Toe if he was okay. She was outraged by what the boys had done and suggested that Two-Toe report the boys to the school administration. What do you think Two-Toe did?

I'll tell you after the break.

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Insert Break

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So, what do you think Two-Toe did? He forgave the boys, dismissed the incident as boys being boys and proceeded with his day. Because of this, one of the boys later apologized for his part in the incident. To this day they remain the best of friends. **The moral of the story ... forgive as an act of love and trust because of love. God will take care of the rest. If only one person is made better because of love, God is glorified, and a soul is redeemed.**

Until next time ...



Bishop David Konderla. Tulsa Diocese

CBWCM SCRIPT

Coffee Break w/Carlos Michael
Friday, 052424 (8m, 41s)

WALKING IN YOUR SHOES

Today on Coffee Break: Empathy. The Mailbag. Quote. Work Ethic. Imitation. Forgiveness. Disneyland.

What is empathy? According to the wholeheartedschoolcounseling.com website, empathy is not *feeling sorry for someone, trying to change someone else's emotions, giving advice, or putting the spotlight or attention on you*. Let's learn what empathy is, but first ... Let's Coffee Break!

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Insert Break

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We learned what empathy is not. Now let's understand what it is. *Empathy means putting yourself in someone else's shoes. Empathy means really listening without judgment. Empathy involves sensing someone else's emotions that you have, perhaps, experienced before. Empathy lets someone know that you understand and see or "get" their feelings. Empathy allows you to share that you care and are walking with them. Lastly, empathy is saying something like, 'What has this been like for you?' 'This must be hard.' 'Thank you for sharing with me,' and 'I am here with you.'*

Thank Divine Providence for two cousins and a best friend who chose to walk with me with empathy and the love of Christian friendship during the most difficult time of my young life all those years ago, rather than judge me. That walk together made a great difference in how I responded to the challenges at the time.

The Takeaway ... what you do (as a friend) may positively rather than negatively impact a person's response to a challenging situation.

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The Mailbag. CCC of somewhere in Colorado wants clarification from Wednesday's show. Three C's asks, *"What did you mean on Wednesday's show by 'punctual' when it comes to the color, brand, or style of underwear you wear?"*

Thanks for the question and for listening to the show Three C's of somewhere in Colorado. My statement meant that I wear the same color, brand, and style of underwear daily: white, Fruit of the Loom, and brief or what the kids today call, "tighty whities." By punctual, I mean that you can set your time by my "sameness" because my unmentionable preference has not changed since childhood, and I am okay with that. Thanks again for asking.

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Here is a quote from the late Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., that is just as relevant today as it was the day he said it: *"The time is always right, to do what is right."*

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Work Ethic. File this under "work ethic" courtesy of the helpfulprofessor.com. A person with a strong work ethic is diligent, self-disciplined, and virtuous. He or she tries their hardest at work (and in their personal life) to do their best. A work ethic is about holding oneself to a higher standard.

One who strives to do their best, act morally, and do the right thing through employers, employees, and customers. *Doing your best is not about being the best.* It is about trying your personal best every day to be better than the person you were the day before.

When I was working, my work ethic revolved around punctuality, respect for authority, respect for what I did not know, accountability, asking questions when I did not understand or required more clarification, performing the job with pride,

respecting my colleagues, coworkers, and associates, respecting the fact that my position with the company could end at any time, listening well to instructions, and taking criticism constructively were just a few of the ethical standards I held myself to.

Why? Two reasons:

1) It was the right thing to do.

2) It was how I was raised. Dad would sometimes say, *"No one owes you anything and you are not entitled to anything that has not been earned, except for the air you breathe--and even that is a gift."*

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Someone once said to me, *"I want to be like you."* Flattering though that was, I said, *"No, you want to be exactly as God created you to be—which is YOU in capital letters. He loves you as you, not as me. That makes you unique and special if you are being you and not as someone else."*

I went on to explain that we can *imitate* certain traits or ways of being that we find admirable in others, with the understanding that a) what we imitate is merged or married to ourselves as we are in the pursuit of enhancing or bettering it—whatever it is, that it, may be used in the service of God's will and good neighborliness, and b) that it does not subjugate our identity to theirs, because try though we might, we will never be "that person" but "the person God created us to be."

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Total steps for Thursday, May 23, 2024: 15,018. Hmmm, mowing the lawns has its advantages!

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Got sin on your heart that you are sorry for? 1) Examine your conscience. 2) Ask God's forgiveness and "intend" to go and sin no more. Read Psalm 51. 3) If you're Roman Catholic, examine your conscience, be sorry, and go to confession at your first opportunity. Jesus is

always waiting to receive us, to listen to us, and to forgive us through His priest. His Mercy and love are far greater than any sin we can commit but one, *believing that we can never be forgiven for that is not the truth*. There is a place for all of us at His table. He will take you as you are. The change will come later. It always does. It did for me.

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Question. Let's close with this question about Anaheim, Disneyland by CH of Chino, California. *"Carlos, of all the times you visited Disneyland back in the day, what would you say were your top five favorite attractions at the time?"*

Great question, CH. Thanks for asking. My top five favorite attractions at that time were: 1 The Haunted Mansion, 2 It's A Small World, 3 Adventures Through Inner-Space (which is no longer there), 4 Great Moments with Mr. Lincoln, and 5) The Pirates of the Caribbean.

What was not to like about Disneyland back then? Perhaps I can discuss that on another show. Thanks for the question.

Until next time ...



Saturday 052524 5:43 AM

Peace be with you.

Praise God for the blessing of this day and the gift of life.

YouTube Analytics. After reviewing the YouTube analytics from Wednesday's show (052224), 18 views as of this writing (praise God), it seems that the standard watch rate for a show that ran 7 minutes, 24 seconds was 1 minute, 14 seconds. If that is indeed the standard, how does one produce a 60-second show that does what one could not do in a 7-minute show?

Good question. Tough crowd. I have some work to do!

Blessed Carlo Acutis. Congratulations to the family of Blessed Carlo Acutis (*and to the whole Church*). This young man will be canonized a saint in 2025. This is a great joy, especially for the young people of today.

"Bl. Carlo Acutis, please pray for all the young people in the world today, especially for the youth of America and my own children. Amen."

"Not me, but God"

—Bl. Carlo Acutis, 1991-2006.

Oklahoma State Cowboys.

Congratulations to the Oklahoma State University Cowboys men's baseball team for snatching two victories on Friday (052424).

The No. 2 seed Pokes defeated the Texas Tech Red Raiders in the first game 4-0 and crushed the No. 8 seed UCF Knights 10-1 in the second game.

Next up? Bedlam!

According to Big 12 Sports (dot) com, the Cowboys will match up with top-seeded Oklahoma on Saturday for the Phillips 66 Big 12 Championship title at Globe Life Field in Arlington, Texas. This will be the fifth meeting of

the No. 1 and No. 2 seeds in the Championship final and the first since 2014.

Go Pokes!

George Casual Slacks. I almost hate to admit this, however, I shall put my pride aside and share that the two pairs of George brand beige slacks I purchased at Walmart Friday afternoon for \$13 per pair are a great buy.

I did not think so, lack of humility being what it is. Shame on me! That is what I believed when I first purchased the pants, however, after trying them on the slacks fit well, look great, and are extremely comfortable.

Turns out this was a good purchase after all. The reason for purchasing new pants in beige is because I grew tired of seeing white lint on my darker dress slacks. It seems no matter what I do, including using a lint brush, I can never remove the lint from the trousers to my satisfaction.

I don't mind an occasional speck of lint, but when you begin to feel like a lint magnet, that is when it tends to become an issue. At least for me it did.

Okay...moving on.

Adoration. Speaking of Friday, I had an opportunity to stop at the Adoration Chapel at St. Benedict's in Broken Arrow. I cannot say with certainty that it was my finest hour spent with the Lord (due to internal distraction), but I was happy to be there just the same. I plan to make this a weekly visit.

To everyone and anyone who has been praying for me and for my son, thank you. Although not quite out of the woods yet, he seems to be feeling better. He was struggling with that kidney stone earlier in the week. He is scheduled for surgery on

June 13th, providing he has not passed the stone by then. Prayers! Prayers!

Text Message. I received a text Friday afternoon which I noticed just before leaving St. Benedict's. At the time I first read the text, I thought it was rather scathing, judgmental, and pointless. However, rather than allow pride to dictate my response, I, through the grace of Christ for on my own I am capable of nothing, made the decision to respond to the text with charity, and that is what I did.

I feel blessed and joyful. Peaceful too. O sure, our peace and joy might get interrupted on occasion. However, God is always with us and what is but a ripple in the water of time, becomes a calm, serene, lake once more. With God, one can count on that—ripple and peace: peace and ripple. It's all good.

Have a great weekend.

CarlosMichael360

by Carlos Michael Padilla

“Not me, but God.”

--Bl. Carlo Acutis (1991-2006)

CBWCM SCRIPT

Coffee Break w/Carlos Michael
Monday, 052724 (5m, 24s)

TOUGH CROWD!

Today on Coffee Break: YouTube, Oklahoma State, Carlo Acutis, Wisdom, Pinterest, Charisma, Esculent, I Remember, Oldest Computer.

YouTube. After reviewing the analytics on YouTube from Wednesday's show (052224), I learned that 18 YouTuber's have viewed the show (to date) with an average viewing time of one minute, fourteen seconds. Wow! Tough crowd. Let's see if we can get those viewers to hang around just a bit longer or to the end of the show. Let's Coffee Break!

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Drive-Thru Version. Hello. Welcome back. Okay, here is the drive-thru version of the show: Complicated but great Weekend. Friday included adoration at St. Benedict's, Broken Arrow, and a stop at Walmart. Did the unthinkable. Bought two pairs of George dress pants. The verdict? Impressed!! I can start working in the back bedroom after June 1st.

Office Space/St. B's! I move into the new office space July 1st. I plan to bounce back and forth between St. Benedict's and St. Thomas More. I enjoy seeing all the young families and individuals at St. B's. They give me hope. Had an unexpected challenge Saturday evening, but it worked itself out, praise God.

Oklahoma State Cowboys. I watched the **Oklahoma State** Cowboy men's baseball team take down Texas Tech, 4 to 0, Friday afternoon, but fell asleep on the second game where the Pokes defeated UCF, 10 to 1. Next up? Bedlam versus Oklahoma. The Pokes sent the Sooners packing to the SEC, by defeating OU 9-3 winning the 2024 Phillips 66 Big XII Tournament Championship on Saturday. Go Pokes!

Bl. Carlo Acutis. Blessed **Carlo Acutis** will be canonized as a saint in 2025. So, happy for his family and the Church. We need more young saints.

Quote (Wisdom). Today's quote: The greatest wisdom is in simplicity. *Wisdom is not*

complex or elaborate, but rather simple things like love, respect, tolerance, sharing, gratitude, and forgiveness.

Pinterest. I came across this post on Pinterest. Thought I would share it with you. *Discussions are always better than arguments because an argument is to find out WHO is right, and a discussion is to find out WHAT is right.*

Being Charismatic. How about a tip on being charismatic? **How To Be More Charismatic (22 Rules)**, by Rafal Razer, Oct. 5, 2023, tip number 5: **Have an intention before any human interaction. Before any call, conversation, or presentation, ask:**

What's my true purpose here? How do I want this situation to play out? How can I help the other person? This will set your mind on the desired outcome. It's much more productive than rambling about whatever comes to mind.

Word of the Day (Esculent). Today's word of the day: *Esculent*. It means *fit to be eaten. Edible*. Example: *It is important to know which berries and mushrooms are esculent if you forge for them.* Wait! What? Seriously, other than academia, who uses words like *esculent* in everyday conversation?

I Remember. Let's file this under "I remember..." Ashley W. of Monrovia, California sent this in: *Carlos, close your eyes, clear your mind, and think back to when you were younger. What do you see? Where are you? What are you doing? And what are you thinking?*

'I am in seventh grade. I am in the boy's locker room dressing for P.E. Coach asked us to fill out a card. Date of birth is one of the questions on the card. December 28, 1961, is what I write. I am thinking to myself, 'Wow, I can't believe I was born

14 years ago.' Now I am thinking, 'Wow, I was born 62 years ago, and this is 48 years later from when that situation I described occurred.'

Let's close with this: *Did you know the oldest computer was owned by Adam and Eve? It was an apple with very limited memory. Just one byte and everything crashed.*

Love God, neighbor, and self. Do something nice for someone then do something nice for you.

Until next time...

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Tuesday 052924 5:56 AM

Peace be with you.

Praise God for the blessing of this day and the gift of life.

There are days when all I desire is God—to be alone with God. To be removed from all the noise, the distractions, the conveniences of modernity. Is that a selfish desire? In desiring that am I removing myself from my obligation to go among my neighbors and serve Him through His people?

If that is indeed the case, then I renounce that desire if the reason is more about me than God. Rather, I must find my peace and communion with God through that which He has called me to—*service to others*.

I am holding back how I really feel about a multitude of things for the sake of charity and love, but at what cost?

Still, I must not think of myself nor about what I want. This life is not about me, but about the Father who created me, and it is

upon Him that I must cast my gaze. It is He who I must know, love, and serve by knowing, loving, and serving my neighbors regardless of the cost to myself.

Like Paul, I beg for the *thorn* (e.g., sin, sorrow, and hardship) to be removed from my flesh. However, not my will but His be done. *"I would rather serve the Lord in hardship, than to not be with Him in paradise."*

If I cannot get to my office. If I cannot have a peaceful morning. If I am nothing more than a prisoner of my own home, that is okay. I will see the good in all of that and be thankful that God loves me. His grace is enough for me.

Two full days and a morning and we will be one less occupant in the house. All is good. I am certain all of this is in accordance with God's will. I am content with knowing that. I hope to go to confession at St. Benedict's this afternoon between 4 and 5:00 PM, after taking Mark to the dentist. If I do not make it, then I will go Saturday morning prior to the start of First Saturday.

Shelter Insurance: I contacted Trenton Hamilton of Shelter Insurance Tuesday morning regarding the *Certificate of Insurance for Tenant Liability Insurance* as requested by Leslie Kirkpatrick of TR Office Park, LLC. This *certificate* is required prior to occupying the space.

Hamilton informed me that the \$2,000,000 requirement, and the \$5,000,000 umbrella is a little out of Shelter's limit, but he has a commercial insurer that he regularly partners

with. His partner will investigate pricing. Trent will get back to me. God's will be done.

Navient: Sometime last week (or perhaps earlier) I received an email from Navient informing me that my IDR (Income Driven Repayment) Plan had expired in January.

Tuesday afternoon, I called Navient and spoke with Tamika. She was very helpful. After explaining and, of course, apologizing for not following through Tamika assisted me with the IDR. God is good!!

CarlosMichael360: Beginning last week, I have been producing short, drive-thru Coffee Break shows. I have been posting the shows on Facebook and YouTube. The average length of the show is between 3 and 7 minutes. According to the YouTube analytics based on the 052224 Wednesday show, 18 people viewed or listened to the show with an average viewing time of one minute, fourteen seconds.

Question: How do I capture that one-minute viewing audience? **Answer:** Make the first 60 seconds of the show interesting enough that the one-minute viewers will continue to listen following the Coffee Break intro. Sounds like a good plan.

Around the house: Matt made a delicious fruit smoothie this morning. Josh has informed me that the coffee I like from QuikTrip is no longer available. Bummer! The deposit I received from St. Thomas More for the Food Pantry Canvas Print was deposited.

I transferred the deposit to Mark's checking account to cover the charge on the credit card. Took Mark to his dental appointment this afternoon. We stopped at Cracker Barrel afterward for an early dinner. I ordered Southern Grilled Chicken and double mashed potatoes and coffee.

Regus: I sent an email to Regus to get a quote on an office space. I also want to learn what the requirements are to lease a space for one year month-to-month.

I will close here for now.



Friday 053124 5:00 AM

Peace be with you!

Praise God for the blessing of this day and the gift of life.

Hard to believe the end of the month is here. That also means today is Gary's last full day in the house before moving to Utah on Saturday. I would like to confess that I will miss him. I wish him Godspeed, good health, and success in accordance with God's will.

I am grateful to God for blessing me with the grace to find the strength to accomplish what needed to be accomplished today, including the

preparation for the First Saturday Devotion. I even had time to watch a few episodes of "Leave It To Beaver" and a college softball and baseball game.

Looking back on this month I see where I failed and where I can do better. I want to do better. That has become important to me.

My son continues to challenge me. I love him. Because of that love I will do all within the ability that God's grace provides to assist him. How much of that I can do alone, I do not know.

I want to ask for help, but I do not know where to begin. That is the most difficult challenge of all, not knowing where to begin. I suppose the best place to start is to ask questions.

Until next time...



CARLOS
MICHAEL



COMMUNICATIONS MEDIA

Sunday 060924 6:31 AM

Peace be with you!

Here we are nine days into the new month, and I have only now just begun my first entry. Makes sense when you consider how challenging the first nine days have been.

Gary left Saturday morning [moved to Utah]. After sending him off and making last-minute preparations, my son Matthew and I were in the car heading to St. Thomas More Catholic Church (Tulsa) for the June [First Saturday Devotion](#). I expected with this being our last FSD together that Fr. Leo would hear confessions and celebrate Mass. Sadly, he was unavailable, however, [Fr. Daniel Gormley](#), Associate Pastor at St. Anne's, Broken Arrow filled in for Fr. Leo, as he did in April. We are grateful that he did.

Sunday morning, Matthew and I attended Mass at St. Thomas More. I sang with the choir while Matthew sat in the pew next to Joni. I am glad that Joni sat next to him and that he did not sit alone. After Mass, we spent time with the community in the coffee room. At one point I looked up and watched Matthew serve himself some fruit and a donut while smiling. It was nice to see him [*in that moment*] at peace.

Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday ... three days I wish we could get back with a different outcome. The events that occurred were a difficult, heart wrenching experience. I saw Matthew fall into a mental disorder of the mind in a way I would never want to see him experience again. Not for myself, but for him. No person should have such an experience.

As was the case in 2021, when, after a month of moving to Oklahoma, Matthew began to hear a voice. A woman's voice. He said this occurred after attending Sunday Mass with me at St.

Thomas More. He said, "*She or 'it' followed us home.*"

During the 2021 event, Matthew began to surround himself with crosses. I am ashamed to admit that I did not respond well to this first event. Not in the way that I did this second time around. The main reason for the way I responded in 2021 was because I did not understand what was going on. Hearing voices? Surrounding himself with crosses? Saying, which was the final straw, that the voice wanted him to hurt himself? That is when I drew the line and sought outside professional assistance.

Since Matt was already seeing a therapist, after contacting this individual and explaining what was taking place, he advised me to take Matt to [Laureate Psychiatric Clinic](#). I did as I was advised, however, Laureate could not help Matthew. No beds were available. The Laureate representative suggested that we [Joshua and me] take Matt to a facility in Oklahoma City.

I remember thinking to myself, "*Are you nuts!?*" [No pun intended]. *Take him to Oklahoma City? We don't live in Oklahoma City!*"

Naturally, I was visibly upset but remained courteous and respectful to the Laureate representative. I did not want to risk upsetting her and receiving no assistance for Matthew. This was a situation where my stress level was off the chart. Mainly because I was concerned for Matthew.

Finally, my youngest son [Joshua] said, "*Dad, let's call [Parkside](#) and see what they say!*" Parkside was the other local facility that the representative from Laureate had recommended. After speaking with a Parkside representative who consulted with the attending physician based on what we described was taking place with Matthew, Parkside advised us to bring Matthew in for an evaluation. Matthew was 29 years old at the time

this first event occurred in 2021. Long story short, Matthew received the help he needed from Parkside. He was put on medication, **Risperidone** being one of the medications. The voice stopped and Matt was back to being himself.

Fast forward to six months to a year ago. At that time Matthew decided that he no longer required his medication and stopped taking it. Because he is an adult, there was not much I could do to get him to take the medication. However, I made it clear to Matthew that he should not stop taking his medication without first consulting with his doctor. Matthew did not agree. That made me wonder who he was speaking with at this time on the timeline.

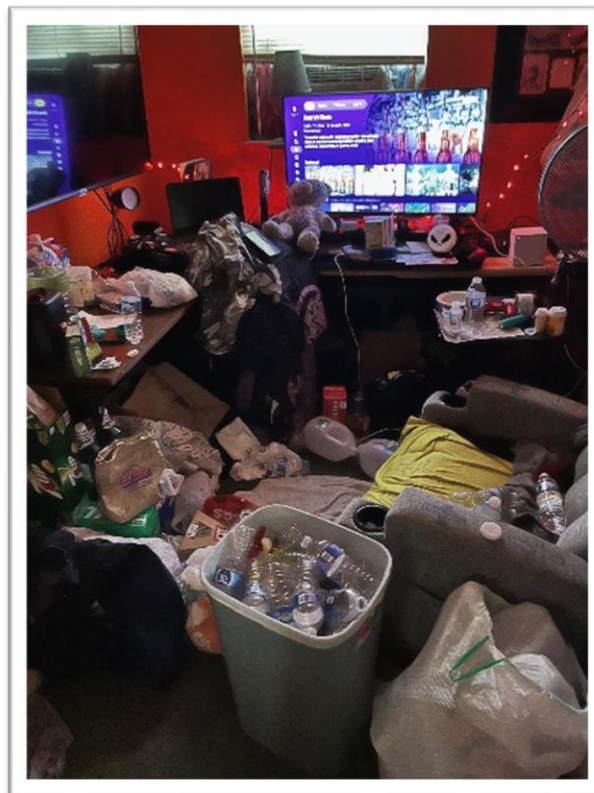
About a week to a week and half prior to Monday, June 3, 2024, I noticed some peculiarities with Matthew. He was no longer watching movies or playing games on his PlayStation 5. He began to withdraw and kept his room dark. He mentioned that "it" was back. He then started watching **religious** movies and listening to **Christian** music, mainly because "Jesus" according to Matthew, instructed him to do so. At that point, Matthew began to draw crosses on himself, his clothing and the furniture. Of course, I became concerned.

The situation escalated Monday morning, June 3rd. According to Matthew, the **voices** were becoming louder. It was clear that whatever was going on with my son, in his mind, was

represented [his mind I mean] by the condition of his bedroom [see image].

According to Matthew, he had not slept for **three days**. The bad voice would not let him sleep. That is not good. Lack of sleep is not good for any of us.

In addition to all of that, Matthew began to **baptize** himself. According to Matthew, Jesus had told him that he needed to baptize himself and induce **vomiting** to protect himself and expel the darkness that he was convinced was within him.



At this point, as was the case in 2021, I knew that I was going to have to get Matthew some help.

This was far beyond my ability to help him [as his father] without professional assistance.

At 6:00 AM Monday morning, I knocked on Joshua's door, informed him of the situation with his brother and asked for his help with Matthew. With all the commotion, I forgot that it was Monday and Josh was supposed to be at work.

Josh was kind enough to call into work so he could assist me with his brother. After contacting and speaking with his supervisor, Josh sent a text to Michael, my eldest son, informing him of the situation. Joshua then suggested that I send a follow-up text message to Michael so that he would be aware of the severity of the situation. Michael responded stating that he would be by around 11:00 AM.

At the time of Michael's arrival, Matthew had locked himself in the bathroom. For the next 4 to 5 hours, he proceeded to run the bath water and baptize himself as instructed by Jesus. In his mind, Matthew really believed that he was speaking with Jesus and that this was what he was supposed to do. It wasn't until he began his attempts to induce vomiting that the decision was made to take Matt to Parkside. I called Parkside while Michael was in the restroom with Matthew and explained the situation. Parkside recommended that we bring Matt in for an evaluation.

When the boys [Michael and Joshua] explained to Matthew that he had two choices: go voluntarily to Parkside with us, or we call another agency that would send strangers to the house to remove Matthew from the home to get him the care he needed, which would have been involuntary, he decided on the Parkside option.

However, Matthew stated that he could not leave the house unless he is wearing all white clothing because that is what Jesus had told him. So, off we went, searching the house for any piece of white clothing we could locate. Once outside, Matthew would not enter Michael's vehicle until both the seat and floor were covered by something white. At that point I ran into the house and located both a white sheet and towel, the sheet for the car seat and the towel for the floor. It was only after that when Matthew entered the vehicle.

Joshua rode with me. Matthew rode with Michael. Michael stopped at McDonald's enroute to Parkside to get Matthew something to eat. All Matt wanted was some fruit. Joshua and I arrived ahead of Michael and Matt at Parkside.

When we arrived at Parkside, we got Matthew checked in. It was at that time that I was informed that due to a policy change, Parkside would not be able to provide Matthew with a bed or care because he was now over the age of thirty years old. However, they said that they could evaluate him and based upon that assessment, provide a referral.

Now the wait was on.

We arrived at Parkside sometime after or before 4:00 PM. Matthew did not get called back for the assessment until sometime after 8:00 PM. Michael had already left due to another obligation. I could be off on the timing. So much was going on at the time.

Following the assessment, it was determined by the attending physician, according to the intake representative, that

Matthew should NOT go home. However, because Parkside could not admit Matthew, we were presented with two options: 1) Sit and wait for a bed at another facility, or 2) Take Matthew to the ER. "The ER?" I thought to myself.

Taking Matthew to the emergency room did not make any sense to me, however, at the time, I was willing to do whatever was necessary to get him



the help he needed, and more importantly some sleep.

After discussing the situation with Joshua, and the Parkside Intake Representative who conducted the evaluation who had informed me that after calling around no beds were available elsewhere and that we could possibly have a long wait, I opted, at her recommendation to take Matt to the ER. By this time, he was falling asleep in the chair he was sitting in. I was concerned about his comfort.

I let the woman at Parkside know my decision. When she asked which emergency room, I was taking him to, I said, *“St. John’s, Broken Arrow since that is where I recently took him (twice) because of his kidney stone incident.”* The Parkside representative gave me Matthew’s paperwork and informed me that she would call St. John’s ER, Broken Arrow to give them a heads up that we were on our way. We then left for St. John’s.

Sometimes all you can do is retreat to your quiet place to see where God has been in all the chaos [*for He is present*] and to be grateful to Him for His love, mercy, and presence. Having both sons present to assist their brother throughout this experience meant everything to me. But even more importantly, knowing the presence of God was touching the fabric of the chaos put my heart and mind at peace. Thinking of God’s presence causes me to consider the following Scripture passage: *“Be still and know that I am God!”* – Psalm 46:10. He truly is God, indeed! Amen.

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Wednesday 061224 9:57 AM

Peace be with you!

Today is Wednesday. It has been a week yesterday that Matt was sent to Laureate from Ascension St. John’s Broken Arrow. Last Tuesday afternoon was the last time I spoke with Matthew. My prayer is

that he will be well enough soon to at least talk with me by telephone.

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Saturday 061524 9:23 AM

Peace be with you!

Life has been so busy these last few weeks since the month of May ended (of which I am grateful), I scarcely have had a moment to keep up with the June journal. I suspect life will soon quiet down and I will be able to resume this monthly project which I dearly enjoy—journaling and documenting.

I spoke with Matthew Friday afternoon. I could not get over how well he sounded on the phone in contrast to Wednesday afternoon. He sounded much like his old self on Friday—positive, upbeat, a smile in his voice. He even told me that he loves me. That set my heart on fire in a joyful way. I am so profoundly grateful to God on behalf of my son and to the many loving souls in my Church family and beyond who have been praying for Matthew. I cannot help but believe those prayers are being answered.

I will be leaving shortly for Leda’s house. We, along with other members of the St. Thomas More choir have been invited by Dave and Joye Hawkins to view their new home and ranch. I intend to have a good time in the company of my dear friends.

I was happy to receive Teresa’s response to my text on Friday morning. She recently lost her son Jeffrey who passed in his sleep. He was 40 years old. He had such a beautiful funeral. The Mass and burial took place at St. Therese Catholic Church in Collinsville on Thursday morning. I was happy to see a contingent of St. Thomas More family present to honor Teresa, her son, and family during that difficult time. She is such a special member of the St. Thomas More family.

Wednesday 061924 6:46 AM

Peace be with you!

Here I am four days past the halfway mark for the month and am only on page 10 of this month's publication. I suppose that validates why I am exhausted; I have put more time into personal endeavors than expected. That's okay, all part of God's will. At least, that is how I prefer to look at it because that makes it good!

Matthew. No word from Matthew since last Friday. I have been keeping my phone close to the hip and not on silence, except when at Church or a meeting and only when I remember to put it back on silent.

Still no word from Matt's doctor. Also, my voicemail messages to Kelsey Allen have gone unanswered as well. My gut feeling tells me to trust in the Lord and the process. Matthew will be home soon. At worst, I can try calling him again. I wish none of this had occurred.

Middle Bedroom. I am thinking maybe I should move one of the two desks in the middle bedroom into the living room and leave one desk and computer in this room (the middle bedroom), or just a desk with no computer. I will have to think more about this.

Guam. I learned through a recent text that my sister and her daughter will be living in Guam for a while. My niece is in service. That most likely is where her reassignment from Montana will be. That means my sister will be the second member of the family to travel internationally. My goddaughter, Geanine, is the first, having spent time in Europe because of work. Does not look as if Mark and I will make that trip to Montana after all.

Food Pantry. I hope I came through for the food pantry gals (Pamela, Millie, and Joni) at St. Thomas More. They asked if I could order a canvas print of Fr. Leo and Fr. Briones and write a short tribute message on a wall placard in gratitude for what both priests contributed to the food pantry mission. I ordered the canvas print from *Easy Canvas Print* and the two wall placards from *Office Sign Company*.

Good Neighbor Awards. I need to hurry and decide if I wish to proceed with the Good Neighbor Awards this year. I would like to host a fundraiser this year and award one (1) award, this time honoring Fr. Jose Maria Briones, pastor at St. Thomas More Catholic Church, Tulsa. I am amazed by his love for God, Church, and community. He cares very much about the parish community, and it shows. That deserves to be recognized.

Book. Several good friends have been asking me to write a follow-up or rewrite of my first book, *Baltimore Monday: A Celebration of Life Beyond Sexual Abuse*. I can't believe it has been almost 20 years (2006) since I wrote that book. I suppose my friends are right. I believe the time is right for that. I feel it in my heart. I will do that.

Well, I better get on with today's tasks. God has blessed the day, and I am feeling great. Have a blessed day. Love God with all your everything and be a great neighbor because great is always better than good. **-CM**

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Thursday 062024 7:17 AM

Peace be with you!

Happy Birthday to my goddaughter and eldest niece, Geanine. I just learned today that she will be living in Michigan for the next five years. She is near the Canadian border. How exciting. I am so proud of her.

I thank my Lord, St. Benedict Catholic Church (Broken Arrow), and Fr. Alessandro for the opportunity to confess my sins Wednesday evening. If only a certain individual would understand how important this Sacrament is to me and my desire to remain faithful to Church teaching.

I will not complain. It is my cross to carry and to the Father, I say, *“Use this Father where it will serve the greater good.”*

I have not heard from my friend Teresa. I pray that everything is okay. I cannot begin to imagine the grief she is experiencing. She lost her son Jeffrey, who passed away in his sleep at age 40. I wish I had been able to know and form a friendship with him.

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Friday 062124 5:29 AM

Peace be with you!

UPDATE! I attended Thursday’s “Becoming A Disciple” meeting at St. Thomas More and saw my friend Teresa. She, of course, is still grieving the loss of her son Jeffrey, but she also appeared to be in good spirits and for that I am grateful to God. On a side note, Joni did a great job facilitating the meeting. I truly enjoyed spending the evening with members of my Church family. Thank you for your faith, love, and friendship.

Today has been another busy day in the service of the Lord. While mowing the lawns, I was blessed through my neighbor who hammered out the noise coming from the lawnmower. Not long after that Josh brought me something to drink and offered to mow the back. I thanked him but mentioned that I wanted to complete the mowing to get my steps in. Steps to date: 12,829.

After taking a shower, I ran an errand to **Catholic Book & Gifts Store** located on Yale Avenue. I purchased a beautiful white beaded Rosary, Scapulars, and items related to St. Benedict.

I spent the remainder of the day praying, attending to small tasks that needed to be completed, reflecting, and just being grateful for this moment in God’s never-ending love for us despite our brokenness. Thank you, Father. **—CM**



Saturday 062224 6:39 AM

Peace be with you!

How far, it seems that I have come since receiving that *invitation* to return to the Lord through *His Mother and His Church* in 2017. How much has changed? How much have I changed? What has become important? What has become unimportant? All the new people I have met because of saying, “Yes” to that invitation—too many to name.

I never would have imagined that I would be living and experiencing God’s love, once more, in this way, through His Church in the way that I have since 2017. Not when I consider how I was living life to that point. If that is not a testimony to the power of God’s love [*for an undeserving sinner*], then I do not know what is.

Has it been a cake walk? Not by any stretch of the imagination, let me tell you. Then again, it isn’t supposed to be. It is called “the cross” for a

reason. Love does hurt—and it should, otherwise I am not certain that it is true love; unconditional love, the love where one is willing to lay down one's life for their neighbor.

That does not necessarily mean a physical death inasmuch as it means that one is willing to sacrifice what is important to them for the good of others. Now that I think back on that; think back on my life, I can see where that has been true for me all along. I willingly, sometimes reluctantly, in the end, was ready to sacrifice my happiness for the good of others. Although, admittedly, left up to me, I always seemed to mess things up. For my sake, I am fortunate to know that God was always close by, never too far away, always present. I think I have known that my entire life—that He was always present [*in my life*].

While it is true that God does not abide by sin, He sometimes allows us to stumble or fall for the greater good. Knowing this makes my move to Oklahoma in 2002 [*15 years before my reversion in 2017*], more meaningful in accordance with God's will.

How else would I be where I am had that not been the case?

When I moved to Oklahoma in 2002, I was 41 years old. I had a 38" waist and was a smoker [since 1976]. I had every intention of living out my life in a same sex attracted relationship with a divorced Presbyterian who is 17 years my senior. I was finally going to put an end to that lifelong war between myself and the ghosts of my past.

The problem with all of that is the "I" part. How does that one saying go, "*There is no 'I' in team!*" In my case, none of this had anything to do with me and EVERYTHING TO DO WITH GOD!

Please don't get me wrong. Making the decision to act on my same sex attraction was my fault, not God's. As is the case with all of us, I have *free will*. Albeit, reluctantly for a variety of reasons including God, I acted on that attraction with hesitancy, but only because I thought, as was the case in my life, that the situation would end after a year or two and I would be right back in California licking my wounds, picking myself up and finding another way, hopefully God's way.

In fact, that is what I told my mother. A few days before leaving, mother and I met for lunch at **Millie's Restaurant & Bakery** [403 S. Citrus Avenue, Covina, CA 91723]. Mom begged me not to move. We were very close, like friends, at that time. I told mom not to be concerned because, as has been the case in my life to that point, nothing ever worked out and I would most likely return in a year or two.

That was twenty-two years ago! Mom is gone (2018), along with dad (2021), and my eldest brother Frank (2013), as well as three friends: Terry, Todd, and Jerry and several relatives.

It is amazing how much occurs in the span of twenty years. That really does put life into perspective. What we mistakenly believe to be a long life lived is, in relative comparison to the bigger picture, a short life. A blip on the map. A blink of an eye. A snap of a finger. Here today. Gone tomorrow.

It is time that I make the most of each day gifted to me with gratitude to the Father Creator who loves me. —CM

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Sunday 062324 7:28 AM

Peace be with you!

I did not take long [this morning] as I was getting ready for Mass for me to realize that I need to lose

weight [for all the right reasons] and take better care of myself. First on the list is watching HOW I eat, WHAT I eat, and how MUCH I eat.

When I lost weight in 2022, getting down to 214 lbs., I did it by using the *how, what, much* method and exercising [walking] in the garage. I would pull the car into the driveway, bring the garage door down cracking it just a bit to allow sunlight and air to enter the garage, and would walk as if I were on a track while praying the Rosary or listening to music.

For breakfast I would eat some fruit, usually a banana or orange with some healthy nuts and coffee with no creamer.

I cut way back on the carbs and sugars and stayed away from sweets. Although I did not reach my goal of getting down to 200, I came close, but NOT close enough.

My daily prayer for myself, although I do not like asking for anything for myself without asking for my neighbors first, will be to ask for the grace to pray well, love God more, faith well, lose weight [specifically, whatever amount I need to lose to get me to a 38" waist], and eat well. The rest I will leave to the Father. Keep me in your prayers. –
CM.

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Wednesday 062624 6:26 AM

Peace be with you!

I think I finally managed to get this newsletter journal into a semblance of balance and order. Prayerfully, with all humility, in cooperation with God's grace and mercy, I will be able to do the same with my life. I truly desire to repent, change, and grow in, through, and with God in accordance with His will so that I may spend my time on earth loving, knowing, and serving Him through my

neighbors, and spending eternity with Him in heaven. That truly is important to me.

Here is an update on Matthew. I posted a brief mention of this on Facebook Tuesday afternoon.

I received a telephone call Tuesday afternoon from a representative of the *Tulsa Center for Behavioral Health*. I failed to write her name down. She informed me that Matthew will be released on Thursday or Friday of this week. That is great news. Glory to God! She is going to phone back to let me know the day and time that I can pick him up. She also informed me that we will need to follow up with *Family & Children's Services* and that he will have approximately a two-week supply of medication.

I realize this is not going to be easy by any stretch of the imagination, but working together with family, listening to the wisdom of others with far more experience than myself, and with prayer, I believe that God will bless Matthew through our efforts in cooperation with His grace.

Through the grace of God, though I am underserving, the desk space I sought to lease through Regus has been completed. The office address will be Executive Tower, [7136 S. Yale Ave., Suite 300, Tulsa](#). I intended originally to select a space downtown. However, after seizing upon a situation that occurred over the weekend, and speaking with the Regus representative (Kristy), I was able by the grace of God to change locations.

As much as I enjoy being downtown, I thought it would be easier to select a location that is closer to the house and would not require visitors to find and pay for parking, including myself. An appointment was set for today to meet with the Regus representative at the location (Kayla) to tour the facility. I look forward with great joy to seeing where we go from here. Side note: I would

not be where I am if not for the Lord, Mark, Gary, and Matthew. I am truly humbled and grateful.



Saturday 062924 7:16 AM

Peace be with you!

I have been so busy that I cannot seem to settle down long enough to “catch my breath” and figure out where I am.

I was on the “classmates.com” website this morning and noticed that I did not respond to a message from my boyhood friend (Stephen Solomon) that was sent in 2008. That was 16 years ago! Shame on me. I sent Steve a response. I also apologized for not responding in 2008. I hope he is still around, sees the message, reads it, and responds. Stephen is the friend I attempted to run away with because of a story we read in a book, which I have a copy of, that ended with us returning home (thank God!).

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Matthew (middle son) is home. He spent three weeks at the **Tulsa Center for Behavioral Health**, following a psychosis (Schizophrenia) episode he experienced on June 3rd. He is still recovering from the event and is still experiencing the aftereffects of the event. I will continue to care for him to the best of my ability, making his care my priority. When I mentioned to a friend that Matthew is still insistent on wearing white, the

response was, “Is he still on that kick!?” With charity, I said in response, “He is sick! He is sick.”

Matthew continues to believe that his “right hand” is Abraham—the Father of Israel from the Old Testament. He speaks to that hand as if he is talking to Abraham in the flesh. He stated that he continues to hear “the voices” but the pills seem to be helping with that.

I sometimes wish people would stop giving me advice or telling me what I need to do for Matt and myself. I would appreciate it if they would just roll up their sleeves and help without any thought to themselves. I am tired. I am very tired. However, for the love of my son and neighbor, I will continue to “fight the good fight” seeking only their ultimate good.



Contrition, what is it? According to Google, contrition is deeply felt remorse, penitence. Christianity detestation of past sins and a resolve to make amends, either from love of God (perfect contrition) or from hope of heaven (imperfect contrition).

I am currently in a state of contrition, mourning if you will. Why? For I have sinned against my God (whom I dearly love) and for He and He alone, am I contrite. Yes, I want to go to Heaven. I want to be with God forever. I want to love Him forever, but more than Heaven itself, it is God whom I love, and desire and it is for that reason, for Him, that I am contrite for my recent sins. I pray that through the Sacrament of Reconciliation which I

will avail myself to this afternoon, I will be restored in His grace and try again.

Merciful Jesus, Son of the Living God. Have mercy on me, a sinner!

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I have an appointment Monday morning, 10:00 AM with Kristy Rice to tour the third floor of the Kennedy Building (Downtown). Before or after the tour, I will select the desk space I would like to occupy and finalize the one-year contract with Regus. This space and parking is only made possible due to the generosity of Gary Christensen, of whom I am deeply indebted and grateful.

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I feel as though I am in a fog. I feel lost. I don't know what I am supposed to be working on. I need to work on the July 7th St. Thomas More newsletter and bulletin inserts. I also need to meet with "Deacon Ken," the new deacon who was recently assigned by Bishop Konderla from St. Benedict's in Broken Arrow to St. Thomas More, Tulsa. He will be assisting the English-speaking community. Deacon Ken has some ideas about the newsletter that he would like to share as well as seeking answers on submission of material for the Newsletter and Bulletin, who provides the graphics, etc. I will respond to his email today and get something scheduled.

--

I guess I will stop here. I intend to go outside and mow the lawns. It helps me to think, plus I always enjoy loving God through His creation. Until next time.



Sunday 063024 7:16 AM

Peace be with you!

Today is the last day of the month. Today is also Fr. Leo's last Mass as the associate Pastor at St. Thomas More. The transition is complete. He officially takes the reign as associate Pastor at Pius X at midnight, Monday, July 1st. My love and prayers go with him. I know he will do a lot of good for the Church.

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Just an observation: I noticed my son's closet light was off, after I left it on for him. I wonder if something was said to him or if he decided to turn it off himself?

--

Regarding the image above, as warm and humid as it has been, how nice would it be to be in that Christmas setting right now?

--

This will most likely be the shortest CM360 to be published. Here we are at the end of the month, and I am only on page 15. That should demonstrate how challenging this month of June has been right from the beginning. Many mistakes have been made. Stupid sins committed. Tears have been shed. Anxiety attempted to take hold while fear attempted to thwart me from the path to God.

Ugh!

Okay, that felt good putting that out there. My next step will be to avail myself to the Sacrament

of Reconciliation, the Holy Eucharist, Adoration, fasting, and prayer. Not only do I desire to love God with all my everything, I also want to be obedient to His word, be a joyful servant, and, when possible, continue to enjoy this beautiful life He has blessed this undeserving, broken, sinful servant with.

O, how I do love my God!

--

There is a part of me that wants to be angry at the world and with certain individuals, but I also know in my heart that what the world needs now is love, not anger.

Sin, injustice, poverty, war, unnecessary suffering, not respecting life, abuse of any kind, these are just a few of what tugs at my heart strings. I can choose to sit on my back side and complain but do nothing, or, I can do something beginning with prayer, I choose the latter.

Let me close this edition by thanking God for the opportunities presented to me during this month to know, love, and serve God by knowing, loving, and serving my neighbors. It is a wonderful life indeed!





Tuesday 070224 8:11 AM

Peace be with you!

The more I follow and immerse myself in my faith as a Roman Catholic, the more I want to shed myself of this world in preparation for the next. I want to order my life in such a way that I am in, rather than out of, God's grace. I want to become a saint only in as much as my God wills it, for I desire to live in accordance with His will, not mine.

--

I was privileged to break bread this morning with our new Deacon. I look forward to working with him.

--

Matthew is trying to get well. That is all we can ask for. God's will be done!

--

I am a bit behind with my writings but am always grateful for any time God blesses to me to know, love, and serve Him by knowing, loving, and serving my neighbors. I also understand why rest, exercise, eating well and more importantly, quiet time and prayer are important too. How else can we hear the voice of the Lord but in the sacred stillness of *quiet*?

--

Growing old is not a curse, it is a blessing. God does not see wrinkles, thinning hair, or droopy stomachs. He sees me and loves me (and YOU). He loves us just as much today as the day He first loved us. Don't curse your oldness. Love it. Embrace it. Be grateful to God for it. There are many in today's world who won't make it to be your age.

--

Often over the years I have been asked, "*Carlos, if you could change one thing about yourself that occurred in life, what would you change?*"

My response: "*Why seek to change what has already occurred. Rather, I seek to change what I can in this moment. To answer your question, at this moment, I would choose to change what I read and how much I read. Books on a bookshelf serve no purpose that remain unread. Imagine what I would learn by reading! That is what I would change.*"

--

If anything, I do is not done in love then I beg God to not let me do anything at all. If it does not serve His purpose, nor is in accordance with His will, is not for the good of he or she or they whom I serve, that is not performed with love, what good is it?

--



I wish it were Autumn already!

Thursday 070424 6:51 AM

Peace be with you! Independence Day.

Happy Independence Day, America! Today we celebrate America's 248th birthday as a nation. In God we trust. Amen.



I took Matthew to his appointment at *Family & Children's Services*. Two appointments have been scheduled on Monday 070824 at 11:30 AM and 2:40 PM. Matthew continues to remain in good spirits despite the voices. He desires to heal. That is my prayer for him.

--

I seem to be having trouble finding my way. I sometimes feel as if I am in a constant state of "stuck." What do you do? "You find a way!" That way starts with God through prayer. Life is too precious to waste it feeling stuck. Honor God by honoring life, beginning with your own.

--

Timeline Memory (1980): The Presidential elections were in full swing. Until this time, I followed the tradition of the family as a *Democrat*. The clear front runners were Ronald Reagan and

incumbent President Jimmy Carter. While I personally liked President Carter, I was unhappy about Iran seizing the U.S. Embassy and taking Americans hostage. The failed attempt to rescue the hostages was what caused me to switch political affiliation. Dad was not happy with my decision. While I did not want to disappoint my father, I did what I thought was in the best interest of the country. Where is that same courage of conviction today?

CarlosMichael360

by Carlos Michael Padilla

"Guard against the imposters of pretended patriotism."

--George Washington

It seems as if only yesterday I was sitting on a large boulder looking toward the southern California desert on my 30th birthday weeping at the loss of my youth. Here I am 32 years later rejoicing my current age (62). God is good indeed.



Postponed but not ending. By the grace of God, the Carlos Michael Teresa-Rogers Good Neighbor Awards will be back in full swing in 2025.

Friday 070524 7:03 AM

Peace be with you!

I learned this morning that there is such a thing called *soul ties*. What are “soul ties?” According to EWTN’s *Women of Grace*, Blog Post: [What Are Soul Ties](#), Oct. 12, 2023, Susan Brinkman:

“According to Fr. Edmund Sylvia C.S.C., ‘Soul ties have to do with what St. Paul speaks of in 1 Corinthians 6:15 where illicit sexual unions established ties that should be renounced and broken spiritually.’”

Brinkman goes on to write *“Soul ties are explained as being formed through intense relationships or inordinate affections with spouses, close friends, sexual partners, business partners, cults, religious denominations and lodges. Soul ties resemble a kind of spiritual umbilical cord that connects one person to another in the spiritual realm.”*

“When these relationships are ungodly, such as those forged in sexual sin (adultery/premarital sex), or for purposes of control, manipulation or domination (controlling parents, friends, bosses, etc.) they can have a toxic effect on our life in Christ. For this reason, soul ties should be properly severed for a person to free themselves from any spiritual bondage.”

Interesting!

I cannot help but feel that God has been opening my eyes, ears, heart, mind, and soul to teaching moments these past couple of days. YouTube videos from Fr. Mike Schmitz, Fr. Casey Cole, and others, including Brinkman’s article on “Soul Ties” are doing my soul a great good.

I am going to study more about “soul ties,” however, in the meantime, here is a prayer among several prayers that we can pray daily with respect to “soul ties:”

“I cut, sever, disconnect and separate any and all soul ties, their attachments, hooks, lines, tentacles, roots and attenuations with the Sword of the Holy Spirit and the Blood of Jesus Christ.*

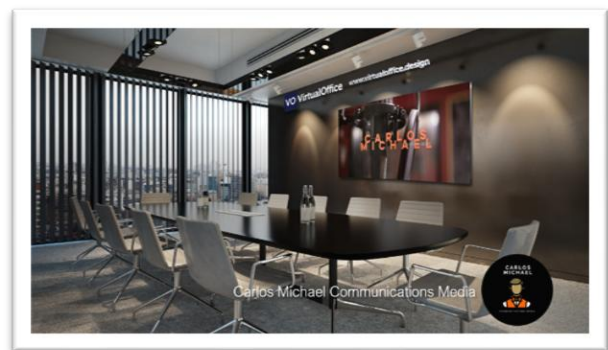
*Attenuation: *the reduction of the force, effect, or value of something.*

On Wednesday afternoon, after watching a video interview between Ken Yasinski (a Catholic speaker) and a guest priest whose name I did not get, I learned that some of our sins, primarily *habitual sins* may be the result of an *unresolved issue* from our past. Of course, that never excuses sin, nor does it preclude us from doing our best to avoid said sin. However, knowing this allows the penitent to properly *name* said sin, understand its genesis, and prayerfully deal with it in cooperation with God’s grace moving forward.

That knowledge is so liberating for me. It places certain aspects of my life in proper perspective and that gives my soul peace.

Despite how I have been feeling as of late, God continues to show me His love through others. That gives me peace.

Until next time! -CM



Sunday 070724 7:25 AM

Peace be with you!



I went to confession Saturday and received Holy Communion Sunday morning. Those two sacraments alone are reason enough to be grateful and joyful.

--

I learned this morning that *Ignacio*, whose last name escapes me whom I met through our mutual affiliation with *St. Thomas More Catholic Church, Tulsa*, was recently ordained a priest. He was the celebrant at Mass this morning. A blessing for the Church. I will pray for him and the Church.

--

My intentions for the July First Saturday Devotion were completed at Mass this morning. I pray that Our Lady is pleased. We must continue to pray for each other.

--

Matt continues to struggle with the healing process but is making small steps of progress. He will be okay. I believe that.

--

I continue to be told by others to *slow down, take it easy, stop doing so much*. Fair enough. I agree. Got any suggestions!? I am listening.

Monday 070824 4:25 AM

Peace be with you!



Cosmetology Student Appreciation Day, Keynote Speaker (2007)

I watched an entertaining movie on *Hallmark* Sunday evening. The title of the film is *Three Wise Men and A Baby*, starring *Margaret Colin, Tyler Hines, Andrew Walker, and Paul Campbell*. I recommend watching it. Very entertaining!

--

I spent the day with Matthew at *Family & Children's Services*. Two appointments were scheduled for the same day. It was a long day, but one spent with God in the company of my son. **Observation:** *Too many young people requiring mental services.*

--

I paid \$25 to run the car through *Okie Car Wash* Monday afternoon. What happens later in the day? It rains. And they say that God does not have a sense of humor.

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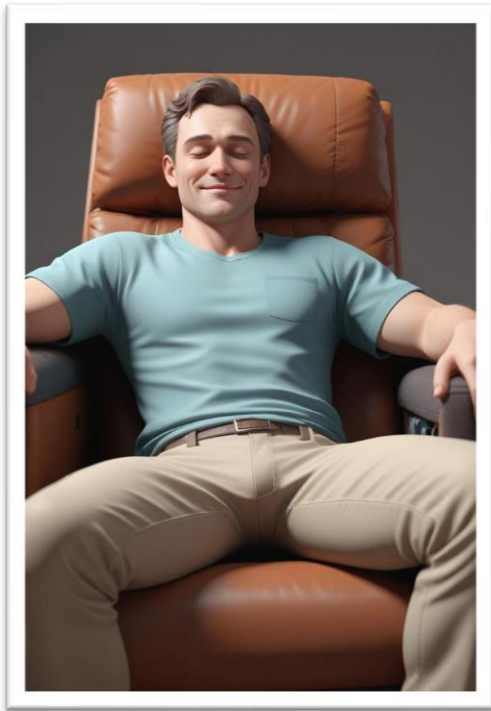
I stopped at KFC on our way home. A 16-piece bucket of chicken and sides ran almost \$60. Probably cheaper to raise our own chickens!

--

I shall take my rest and remain grateful for the blessings [and challenges] of today. God is good.

Tuesday 070924 7:55 AM

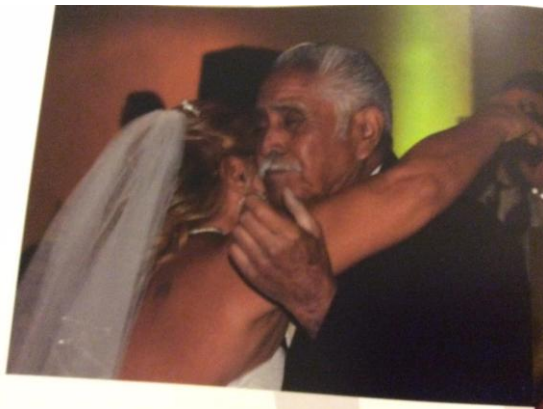
Peace be with you!



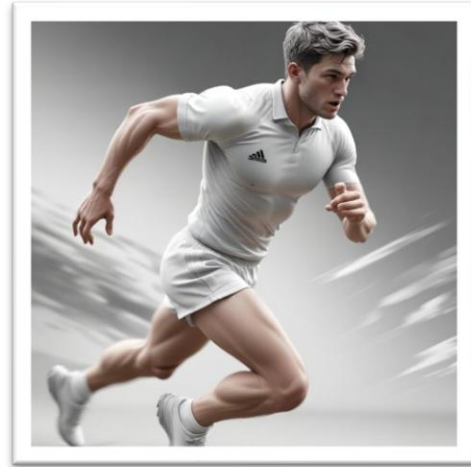
If I had to describe how I felt when I returned home Monday evening from Family & Children's Services, the image above says it all.

--

My aging short list of how to conduct myself moving forward: *practice and live what I profess and believe, pray, meditate, delegate, lose weight, exercise, read, and enjoy life.*



Dad and sister dancing. (2014).



Monday 071524 6:25 AM

Peace be with you!

Something was said to me Sunday evening that gave me pause to meditate upon as I drifted off to sleep. I also meditated on that thought this morning as I began the day.

The idea that I may have acted in any way that is not as God would have me act brings horror to my soul and discomfort to my mind and rightly so. It is time for me to fully assess my life and make the necessary course corrections needed through grace, prayer, the Sacraments, and Christ-centered relationships/friendships.

Physical exhaustion and sin seem to be my current nemesis. The definition of *nemesis* is: *Someone's nemesis is a person or thing that is very difficult for them to defeat; (a cause of) punishment or defeat that is deserved and cannot be avoided.*

--

Timeline Memory: 1981

California to Missouri. Trailways Bus Lines.

Destination: *Missionaries of the Holy Family*

This was my first trip out of state away from home. My first time riding a professional bus line across the country. The states we traveled through were: *Nevada, Arizona, New Mexico, Texas, Oklahoma, and Missouri.*

What thoughts were on my mind as I traveled?

“Am I doing the right thing? Do I really want to be a priest? Northern Arizona is beautiful. Really, this is Oklahoma!? I miss my mom.”

--

Monday 071724 8:18 AM

Peace be with you!

The reason I ended Monday’s entry abruptly was due to the onset of sudden illness. Credit to Mark (aka Mr. Man) who believes the illness was due to *food poisoning*. That makes sense when I think back on that now.

On Saturday, Mark, Katy, and I spent time in Stillwater. While there, we ate an early dinner at [Mexico Joe’s](#). I ordered three chicken enchiladas but only ate two. I decided to bring the last enchilada home. My mistake? It was a hot and humid day, and I placed the leftover enchilada in the trunk where it remained until we arrived home.

I placed the enchilada in the refrigerator and did not think about it until this morning when I ate it for breakfast. Bad move. 2.5 hours later the diarrhea began. I made three trips to the restroom before heading to the eye doctor for mine and Matthew’s appointment.

While at the *eye doctor*, it hit me! I had to halt the last part of the examination for a trip to the restroom. While there, I began to sweat profusely. You would have thought I had just run

a mile in under one minute by the amount of sweat pouring through my pores. That was an awful feeling. Once that stopped, I made my way back to the examination room but was feeling much weaker and a bit nauseated than when I entered the restroom.

Upon our return home, I drank some water and Gatorade and rested the remainder of the day. I hope I never have that experience again.



Timeline Memory: 1980 something.

Topic: *Dared to be different. Underwear.*

Location: *West Covina, California.*

The one time I mustered the courage to break from tradition in response to an advertisement I saw in the local newspaper that solid color underwear was now available for men by designer, *Bill Blass*, I thought to myself, “Why not give them a try?” No sooner did I arrive home excited to try on a pair, when my goofball brother enters the room, catches me pulling a pair out of the package and proceeds to laugh. This caught the attention of certain other family members who also laughed. Although my family did not mean to embarrass me, I was beyond embarrassed. It would be another 20 years before I found the courage to break from tradition once more. Of course, that trend did not last.

--

Timeline Memory: Early 1960s.

Topic: *Moving to a new house.*

Location: *Irwindale, California*

I remember standing outside our duplex looking toward Irwindale Park with my best friend Dennis. We were sad because our family was moving to a new house on Francisquito Ave. Dennis and his family lived in a beautiful home around the corner from our duplex. We were 3-4 years old at the time.

--

Sunday 072124 7:59 AM

Peace be with you!

The more I reflect, the more I pray. The more I pray, the more I come into a better understanding of how best to move forward with Christ as opposed to doing the opposite—*going against the Lord*. Not so much *going against the Lord* on purpose in as much as doing so through *ignorance*.

--

Monday 072224 7:37 AM

Peace be with you!

I didn't have much to say on Sunday, did I? After returning home from Mass, I decided to take it easy and rest. The only question I have for myself is this: *'Did I rest well in the Lord?'* If not, I would like to improve on that.

--

No word as of Sunday evening on when I can expect Matthew to return home. I may call later today to see what, if anything, I can learn unless they call me first—*they*, being Family and Children's Services Crisis Center.

--

I believe I have figured out (thanks to grace) how to reconfigure the desk space in the room I am

currently occupying should I decide to move forward with recording shows "on camera."

--

Honestly, the *auto-correct* on Word that corrects grammar and punctuation, while helpful, drives me crazy. What I don't like about it is when I want to use a certain word that I am accustomed to using that was considered generational speak for my generation. Word insists that I use politically correct verbiage.

PUH-leeze!

Serves me write for using my computer to write my journal rather than using a bound page journal and writing freehand.

--

I have decided that the only way I am going to get certain things done is to stop acting like I cannot do something and just learn by doing it, mistakes notwithstanding. Doing so may save money in the long run as well.

I will start by putting together the *corner rack* I purchased for the bathroom. Next, I will learn *Spanish* by *immersing* myself in *Spanish programming*. It will be the equivalent of moving to Mexico for a year and being forced to speak the language. I am determined to learn. I also plan to polish up my *singing* and get back to writing and reading *books*. There is the plan:

- Learn by doing.
- Spanish
- Singing.
- Books.

My first book will be the book that Deacon Ken recommended, *Why They Follow: Lessons in Church Communication From That One Lost Sheep*. I will read this on my *Kindle Reader*.

I also need to reign in the **finances** and be a better steward of my financial blessings. DON'T JUST TALK ABOUT IT, Carlos, DO IT!!

Add to that *losing weight, eating healthy, exercising, read the Bible, change my disposition, be all the things that love says I should be.*

It's never too late to become the best version of yourself that God has called us to be.

Do I truly believe that? You bet I do. Just as I truly BELIEVE that JESUS is present in the Holy Eucharist and my *sins* are FORGIVEN in the confessional.

--

I am looking forward to the kickoff of college football in late August. My primary interest is in the Big 12 Conference and Oklahoma State, although I plan to *immerse*, there is that word again, myself with the sport and the other Power 4 Conferences: Big 10, ACC, and the SEC with the hope of educating myself enough to include a new show or segment as part of the *Coffee Break* series.

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Timeline Memory: 1960s and 70s.

Topic: *School Bullies.*

Location: *West Covina, California*

School bullies are synonymous with surprise quizzes and sometimes acting like idiots in school. I too, was not spared from the occasional "*school bully on the playground.*"

In elementary school, I was bullied by a male classmate and, embarrassingly enough, a small band of girls. The former (the male classmate) occurred between first and second grade. The latter (the girls) occurred between fourth and fifth grade. I don't know which was worse, having my pants pulled down and receiving an almost daily customary punch in the gut (the former), or being constantly followed, called names, and harassed, sometimes physically by the latter (the girls).

In junior high school, I was bullied by two males and another group of females. In fact, at one point, the two males pushed me headfirst into my locker, dumped me headfirst into a bathroom trash can, and although unsuccessful, attempted to force me headfirst into an unclean toilet among other things.

The girls on the other hand were like the girls I encountered in elementary school. They would constantly follow me around, call me names, and harass me. The leader of the group was a large girl who seemed to have it out for me for some reason. It wasn't until I decided to fight back by throwing a dead bird at the ringleader, which cost me a trip to the Vice-Principal's office and a stern warning from my older brother that they finally left me alone.

I cannot recall how many bullies I encountered in high school, but a few come to mind. One incident involved being pushed aside from the drinking fountain that was located just outside the boy's locker room. He then challenged me to fight for my right to drink from the fountain. I declined.

There was another bully who would follow me after school while walking home. One day he went too far, although I will not disclose what he did. I remember going home after the incident with tears running down my face. After explaining to my big brother what had occurred, that bully never bothered me again.

It's funny the things we think about when we aren't really thinking about them.

Have a great day. Until next time. --CM



Tuesday 072324 7:51 AM

Peace be with you!

The Key to Podcasting. The key to pulling off a halfway decent podcast or video blog is to go unscripted. The goal of the show is to give the audience the feel that you are truly present at the local coffee shop, giving the impression that we are having an unscripted, casual conversation about whatever comes to mind. I hope that is what I am conveying on the Coffee Break shows.

--

Toxicity and Negativity. During a recent conversation with a young person, three words were mentioned, two directed at me: toxic, negative, and gaslighting. At the time of the conversation, I didn't realize that I was both toxic and negative. As for gaslighting, until this morning I didn't even know what gaslighting meant.

So, what is gaslighting?

According to the *Newport Institute* (dot) com website: *Gaslighting is a form of psychological abuse or manipulation in which the abuser attempts to sow self-doubt and confusion in their victim's mind. Typically, gaslighters are seeking to gain power and control over the other person, by distorting reality and forcing them to question their own judgment or intuition.*

Based on what I read on the website, I suppose I am guilty of *gaslighting*. If it is that easy to offend someone through this behavior, what is the point of developing relationships for fear I might use the wrong tone or say the wrong thing and offend someone. I might as well be a hermit.

Ugh! I have work to do. Time to pray for grace.

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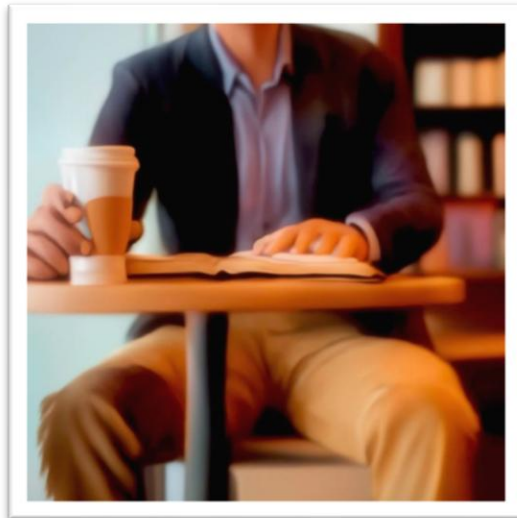
Until next time. God Bless. **—CM**



When I was a boy and I was being molested, I thought I was being loved. I thought I was being accepted. I thought I was part of something special. I thought I was being valued. What I did not know until years later, is that I was being *used*. Nothing more. Nothing less. A number on a wall. Just another spike in the wheel. A number on the abuser's list. Here today, gone tomorrow.

When I think about all the children in the world, past and present, who were/are victims of one atrocity after another, I grieve. I mourn for and pray for them. I beg their forgiveness on behalf of those who wronged them and those of us who failed to act or pray for them.

The first time I heard that the beautiful Lady in white said to the three shepherd children at Fatima (1917) *to pray for those who have no one praying for them*, those children whose names I will never know, and their accusers, abusers, and assailants will always be at the forefront of my prayers. God is merciful. He will hear my prayers.



Friday 072624 6:30 AM

Peace be with you!

Faith is Not A Four-Letter Word! There are misguided family members (*if we are members of the body of Christ, we are family members*), who mistakenly believe that *faith* is a four-letter word.

It is sad to think that members of our earthly family in the world today would rather *not* believe in God than *to* believe in Him. They are more apt to place *false beliefs* in a world that offers them nothing, and that is *temporary*—temporary in that one day our number will be called, and we will no longer be in this world.

Faith for me IS a four-letter word, however, not in the way that one would think that four-letter word to mean. For me, *faith is love*. I believe in that which remains unseen but do see every day in His creation. This includes all the members of my earthly family.

We were created in love for love. Our mission is to love...God first, neighbor second, and self, third.

I cannot look at the universe with all the beauty, marvel, and dangers it holds and believe that it (the universe) simply created itself. Something cannot create itself from nothing. *Only God can create something from nothing.*

Can I prove that? No, but I don't need to. I believe that truth is imprinted on our hearts. Something or someone created all that we see, and it and we were created in love to love.

“Faith is taking the first step, even when you don't see the whole staircase.” —Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

I have never needed to see God to believe that He exists. That is because, since childhood, I have always seen Him through His creation and that has always been enough for me.

The same is true with the true presence of Christ in the Holy Eucharist. I have never needed *proof* to believe that Christ becomes present in the Eucharist at the time of the consecration. *I accept that truth on faith.* If anything is possible with God, then the true presence of Christ in the Holy Eucharist is possible—and that is enough for me.

Believing or having *faith* is my source of strength in every storm. Faith is my hope that each storm will pass as the one before it. Faith comforts my soul and helps me to know that a family member who has passed away is not truly dead but merely in their eternal sleep. One day, as God has promised, they will return. How awesome is that?

“It is important to have a strong faith, but more important is to take that faith and act on it.” —Elijah Notes.

How do I choose to *act on faith*? I will know, love, and serve God, by knowing, loving, and serving

my neighbor. I will pray for their ultimate good. The rest, I leave to the Father Creator.

“Pray, hope, and don’t worry. Worry is useless. God is merciful and will hear your prayer.” –St. Padre Pio

Have faith. God is with you, and He loves you. There is always a place for you at His table.



“My past, O Lord, to Your mercy; my present, to Your love; my future to Your providence.”

Saint Padre Pio

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Wednesday 073124 5:00 AM

Peace be with you!

It is hard to believe the end of July has come and off to the month of August we go! God is good.

The months of June and July have been challenging to say the least but to God goes all the glory. I can choose to reflect on the past two months and complain, or I can look back at the past two months and rejoice. I choose to rejoice.

The recent death of my nephew *Nikolas* was a tragic blow to the family. This on the heels of the death of my nephew *Anthony* (d.2022), both of whom died by suicide.

Suicide, sadly, is on the rise. People ask why? Mental instability and other reasons aside, I believe our attempts to push God out of the equation plays into this unfortunate reality. Having God in our lives doesn’t necessarily negate one from taking their life, but there is the hope that when God is in our life, we are less likely to bring an end to a life that has been created by God from love.

Until next time. –CM



Notes Between Friends ...

Hey Carlos! I must know. Is it true that Mr. Roy asked you to join a group of other students to record a voiceover in a recording studio that was narrated by Hal Smith? If yes, what did you think about meeting Hal Smith and recording a voiceover? –Elizabeth

Hi Elizabeth. Yes, it is true. Mr. Roy asked me to meet him at his office after class. At first, I was nervous. I didn’t know what to think. Mr. Roy asked if I would be interested in going to

a recording studio to record an anti-drug message with Hal Smith. I couldn't believe my ears. Of course, he mentioned that this was to be kept in confidence and that we would be travelling with several other students.

*I was in awe when we left campus for the recording studio. When we arrived and walked into the studio, Mr. Smith was already sitting at the head of the table waiting for us. I could not believe that I was in the same room as the actor who played **Otis Campbell** on the **Andy Griffith Show**, and yet, there he was in person.*

Recording a voiceover project for an anti-drug campaign was honor enough but to meet Hal Smith in person and sit at the same table with him was off the charts. What a nice man he was too. He was genuinely interested in learning about each of us. I never would have believed it if it had not happened to me.

I will be forever grateful to Mr. Roy for the opportunity and for thinking enough of me to invite me on this very special project. --Carlos

Note: Please keep in mind that the actual note Elizabeth wrote me was written many years ago. I am drawing this segment based on past memory and am paraphrasing.

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Sunday 072824 5:54 AM

Peace be with you!

"O Happy Day!" There is always reason to be joyful in spirit ... the gift of life, the blessing of a new day, another opportunity to respond to the Lord's grace, to pray for a neighbor in need, to assist where I see a need, to look outside and take in the Lord's beautiful creation, and (don't laugh)...new bathroom towel racks and a couple

of other items (in the bathroom) that needed tending to.

I am joyful because the Lord has made all this possible. Who would have thought that hanging towel racks and removing the nails the towels were hung on would make me happy? Then again, receiving new underwear or a bowtie or character tie makes me joyful, why not new towel racks?

Today is Sunday, the Lord's day. This is the day that the Lord has made. Let us rejoice and be glad.

I suppose that should have been the opening line to this entry.



I am truly sorry for the way I responded to Monsieur Man Saturday evening when I was concerned that my right thigh (*the same thigh I pounded on the barbecue grill Friday morning*) appeared swollen. I reacted as I did because I was afraid. I need to not do that. I must do as the Lord said and *not be afraid for, He is with me*. I will apologize to Mr. Man.

Speaking of Monsieur Man, he mentioned that he had fallen in his office as he was getting up to take his breakfast dishes to the kitchen on Saturday.

This occurred while I was at choir practice. He bruised his knee and broke a glass but seems to be okay, praise God. I will keep an eye on him as much as I am able. It hurts my heart whenever I know that an elderly person is alone, lonely, or has had an accident and is without assistance. We need to take better care of our children, the elderly, and ourselves.

As much as I enjoy the dog days of summer (*except when the humidity is unbearable, but even in that we give glory to God*), however, I always look forward to the time when *summer* transitions into *autumn (fall)*. There is something about the last three months of the year, especially late September to just after Thanksgiving that I like most.

Prayers for my children. I love them all very much and am always grateful to the Lord daily that I have children. No, it isn't easy, and many mistakes were made, but I do love them. I am truly sorry for those times when I failed them as their father, but I pray with all my heart that they will always know in their heart just how much I love them and want only their greatest good.

OMGoodness! I was so busy yesterday (Saturday) that I forgot to respond to Brother G's Facebook Messenger message. I hope to chat with him later today. He has been such a great friend and brother. Another reason to be grateful for the blessing of true friendship.

Until next time. God Bless. **-CM**



Sunday 080424 6:23 AM

Peace be with you!

We are now four days into the dog days of summer—the hottest month on the calendar year (August). May all the glory and gratitude be sung in praise to our Father Creator for the blessing of this amazing month of summer. To Him be all the glory.

I learned this morning that my former wife (Amy) has congestive heart failure. Let us please join our hands and hearts in prayer for Amy in accordance with God's will with respect to her health condition and those intentions and concerns that she carries in her heart.

Speaking of Amy, I believe that our beloved Savior is answering prayer through the intercession of our heavenly mother. Amy has gone into "mama" mode. She is finding possible solutions that would better assist our son Matthew. Teamwork! I love it. God be praised!

This is why I believe absolutely that faith and prayer must be a necessary part of our daily life. Like it or not, we are nothing without God. Period. We did not create ourselves. He created us. He does not need us, yet here we are. Created from love for love.

I cannot deny what my own eyes have seen over the years with respect to answered prayers. Maybe I did not always get what I wanted in the way that I wanted it because prayer is about asking for something in *accordance with God's will*, not my will.

That is how I bring any request before the Father in contrast to the way I used to pray back in the day.

When someone comes to me with a prayer request, say a family member has cancer, my response is this: *"Of course we will pray for you. Just know this, I cannot go before the Father and*

tell Him (demand) that he removes the cancer. That would mean that I am demanding that my will be done. Instead, I will ask God that if it be His will or in accordance with His will, we pray against this cancer. The rest, we leave to Him."

As for the "we" part—who is "we?" They are prayer warriors I call upon with a prayer request. We are not one voice but many: a collective body acting as one for the good of a neighbor or neighbors:

'In truth I tell you once again, if two of you on earth agree to ask anything at all, it will be granted to you by my Father in heaven. For where two or three meet in my name, I am there among them.'

It is amazing to know how much my life is changing for the better as I walk with Christ to the end of the journey. "Glory and praise" to my God, indeed!

No word from Matthew as of today. Josh took him to the *Family & Children's Services Crisis Care Center* just after 12 midnight Saturday morning. Matthew was troubled once more by that *voice* that he continues to hear in his mind. It was Matthew who requested that Josh take him to get help.

My heart hurts for my son because I feel powerless to help him. I know that I am not for God is with us, but you sometimes cannot help but feel that way. I must trust and believe on faith that God will hear our prayers and assist my son.

Josh, who has been through much himself, continues to amaze me in how he has *chosen* to respond to this this family crisis, and I am proud of him for his efforts. I know this isn't easy for him. I know in my heart that God will bless Josh for acting so unselfishly at a time when I needed the blessing of at least one of my children. *'Father, if it be your will, bless my son Joshua not only with the spirit of faith and love for You as I love You, but hear his prayers and come to his assistance. Amen.'*

Matt and I are not alone. Others are praying for us.

This afternoon, I am taking Mark to see his family. His daughter is in town visiting from Colorado. I pray the visit with his family will rejuvenate his spirit and bring joy to his heart.

I need to get ready for Mass. The time is currently 6:59 AM. I will continue writing later today.



Photo Credit: Carlos Padilla. Cosmetology Student Appreciation Day, 2007, Tulsa, Oklahoma. Tulsa Convention Center.

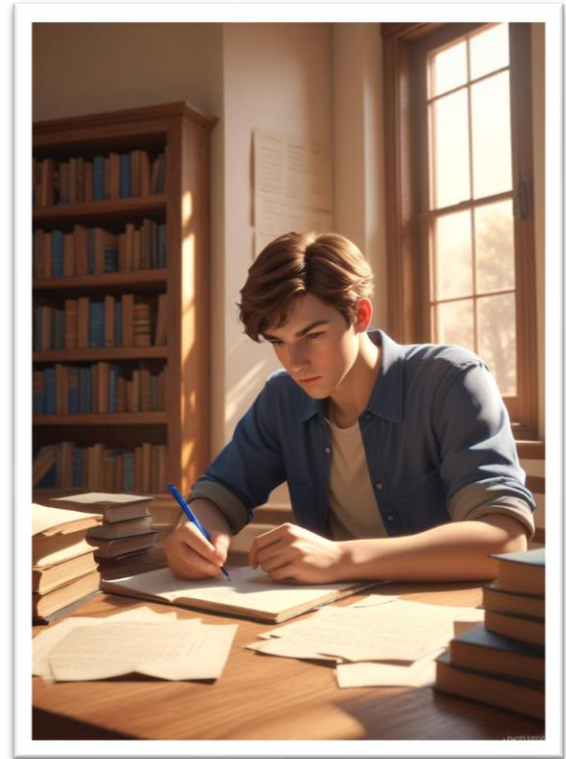
I attended Mass, sang with the choir, and received Holy Communion at St. Thomas More (Tulsa). Fr. Daniel Gormley is the guest priest who celebrated Mass.

Following Mass, I had coffee and Mexican bread (Pan Dulce) with members of the STM English parish community.

My friend Chris informed me that he and Laura will have to decline my invitation to attend the Saturday (Aug. 10th) lunch (at the house) due to a necessary trip to Rochester, New York. Of course, I understood.

When I arrived home (after Mass), I chatted briefly with my son Joshua before loading the car for the short trip to Sand Springs so Mark could visit with his family.

God's will be done. Until next time. **-CM**



CarlosMichael360

by Carlos Michael Padilla

“My past negative experiences did not destroy me. Messed me up? Yes. Destroyed me? No!”

--Carlos Michael

Tuesday 080624 6:26 AM

Peace be with you!

Monday was a bit challenging in that I had trouble focusing. I woke up tired. I felt tired throughout the day. I guess it is more like fatigue or exhaustion. I am not complaining. I am grateful for the opportunity to make this offering to the Lord, that He may dispense with it in whatever way He deems fit. I will say this, that type of fatigue sure does make the day even more challenging when attempting to get the Lord's work done. Still, all is well.

I spoke with Matthew's mother on the phone this evening. According to the conversation, our son could, if he chooses to, be transferred from the facility he is currently at to Laureate. God's will be done.

Before talking with Matthew's mother, I had an opportunity to call and speak with my son. He did not sound *chipper* or *joyful*, but it was nice to hear his voice. I miss him.

Mark had another opportunity to spend time with his family today. His daughter and son were busy working in one of the three bedrooms in their mother's house which took up much of the time. Mark's daughter is returning to Colorado on Wednesday. She, along with her daughter and mother will stop by the house for lunch and a visit before making their way to the airport on Thursday. I am happy for Mark.

I received a reply from Fr. Leo regarding my request to have Matthew speak with Fr. Donovan. I appreciate his effort. Until next time. **-CM**



2025 Teresa-Rogers Good Neighbor Awards

I am happy to announce that the Carlos Michael Communications Media Teresa-Rogers Good Neighbor Awards have been scheduled for 2025.

The date is set for Saturday, August 23, 2025, at the Property Event Center in Broken Arrow, Oklahoma.



The 2025 event will consist of a meet and greet pre-award social hour, dinner, entertainment, and a raffle drawing.

The call for nominations will open in January (2025) and close in March. Award winners will be announced in July. Ticket sales will open soon.

Everything will be included in the price of the ticket, which will run \$49 per person with a \$10 discount for any food or clothing donation made on the day of the event.

Proceeds from this event will go toward establishing *We Serve Oklahoma*, a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization that will be dedicated to serving the hungry, clothing the naked, and visiting the lonely in the state of Oklahoma.

Stay tuned for further details, coming soon.



Thinking out loud!

1 How does one deny the existence of God? The universe DID NOT create itself. Something CANNOT create itself from nothing. Life did not will itself into existence no more than Disneyland willed itself into existence. Each has a designer, a creator. In the case of Disneyland, it was Walt Disney. In the case of the universe, well, we call the Creator many names, but my favorite is "Father Creator." Personally, I cannot look at nature or myself as a creature and not believe there is not a Creator; an author of life who designed or willed all this into being simply because He could.

2 What does manhood (macho/manly) have to do with the preferred style of undergarment one wears? I never understood that reference. I suppose I never will. Whatever!

3 The Courtship of Eddie's Father starring the late Bill Bixby was a favorite show for me as a boy. Many times, while watching I would imagine myself as Eddie played by Brandon Cruz enjoying the relationship he had with his father that I did not believe I had with my own father. Don't get me wrong, I know dad loved me. That much was clear. I guess I was selfishly wanting more with dad. I wanted the type of relationship that was being presented on television. Hindsight being what it is, I learned a long time ago that television fantasy is not the same as real life and that we should be grateful for what we do have. Amen to that.

4 I remember mother telling me in response to something stupid I said, "What! Do you think I was born in a barn!" My internal response because I dared not say it aloud was, "How am I supposed to know? I wasn't there when you were born!" I am glad I only thought that and did not

5 speak it, otherwise my teeth would have been on the other side of the room!

6 Why do there have to be bullies at school, the workplace, in families, etc.? I mean, doesn't life do a pretty good job already with pushing us around without some goober adding to that? Just saying.

7 If I could pull it off, I would wear white pants or shorts all the time mixing them in with solid dark or pastel-colored shirts. You know, the preppy look. I have always enjoyed that look and style of clothes. I can't say why I like the color white so much, but I do. See, you learn something new every day.

8 Speaking of [white] shorts, my favorite shorts back in the day were *tennis shorts*. Every opportunity I got I would wear those shorts. I just liked the way they looked and how comfortable they were. Today, those *back in the day* tennis shorts have been replaced with white *rugby* shorts that I like to order through *World Rugby Shop* online. Those shorts are fun to wear and are extremely comfortable. There I go again, sharing useless nonsense (LOL).



Sunday 081124 6:41 AM

Peace be with you!

What a beautiful experience I had this morning. It was as if the Lord was truly present with me. I believe this is how we should feel after receiving Christ in the Holy Eucharist at Mass. I can still feel His presence now. I am at peace, and I know that I am loved by the Father who created me. There are no words but one that comes to mind—*humility*. I am truly humbled in the presence of my God.

Why me?

I don't know 'Why me?' I asked God that very question. Then again, why Peter, Paul, James, Andrew, and so many others (Augustine, Aquinas, and Francis)? Were they not as *unworthy* as me to walk in the presence of the God man—the Lord Jesus Christ?

Yes!

And yet, walked with and called by Him they did and were. So, why can't someone like me?

And if I can, why can't you?

There is a place at the table of the Lord for you if you want it, but that is it—we must *want* it; to want to sit at His table and over time to repent and walk in His light.

His *mercy* is available to any *sinner* that wants it. And not to those who want it but actively seek it out; seeks HIM out.

Today I *let go* once more. I *surrendered* everything to Christ. *Trust* is the operative word.

"Find out what you're good at, then find out how you can help others with what you are good at. That is YOUR purpose!" (--Shia LeBeouf).

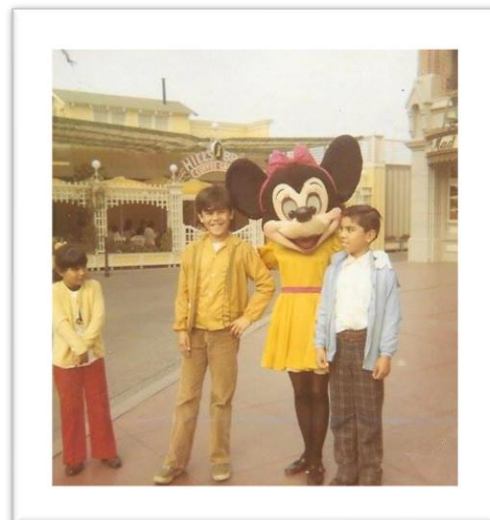
Amen. --CM



Plaid Checker Pants (circa 1970s) ...

As far as menswear goes, worst clothing faux pas for men since the invention of the boxer brief, but I digress.

I remember a family trip to Anaheim, Disneyland where my brother [Frank] and I wore those awful, plaid checkered pants. The horror! I am still in therapy after that experience (LOL).



(L-R): Cindy, Frank, Minnie, and Me!

Friday 081624 5:49 AM

Peace be with you!

What a week! It began with that Sunday morning experience (see Sunday, 081124 entry). I went to confession with my friend Leda on Tuesday at the Church of Saint Benedict in Broken Arrow. On Wednesday, I purchased ad space in the St. Thomas More bulletin for one year, I signed the contract for my desk space with Regus at the Kennedy Building downtown and I picked up my son Matthew from the Family & Children's Services Crisis Care Center. It is great to have him home. I missed him.

Thursday morning, I attended Mass at St. Thomas More and sang with the choir. It was the Feast Day of the Assumption of the Blessed Mother, a holy day of obligation. I love going to Mass. The highlight for me only after the coming together of heaven and earth during the consecration is receiving Jesus in Holy Communion.

I absolutely believe in the true presence of Christ in the Holy Eucharist.

After Mass, I enjoyed breakfast and fellowship with Rose and Leda at the IHOP located at the corner of 129th East Avenue and 31st Street. That was a real treat. I barely arrived home in time to join the COHO (Coalition of Hispanic Organizations) Executive Board Meeting. I am privileged and honored to serve as a member of the board and as Second Vice-President. It is a great organization with amazing potential for doing good for the community it serves.

Following the board meeting, I joined my sons Matthew and Joshua to see the new *Wolverine-Deadpool* movie at the Cinemark Theatre located on 71st Street. I enjoyed my time with the boys but not the movie itself. The use of foul language and the taking of God's name in vain—*not good! Not good at all.* Done right, this could have been a very entertaining movie. I like Ryan Reynolds

and Hugh Jackman, but the language and overt sexual references were not necessary. I will keep both actors in my prayers.

You can bet I was exhausted by Thursday evening. Reflecting on the food I consumed this week; it was not good. I need to do better at eating better if I am going to meet my weight loss goal.

I found a book at St. Benedict's that I am looking forward to reading titled, *The Hidden Power of Kindness: A Practical Handbook for Souls Who Dare to Transform the World, One Deed at a Time.* Should be good. I will let you know. Until next time. *Adios! --CM*



DISNEYLAND SOUVENIRS:

David A. of San Jose, CA., would like to know which shop was my favorite at Disneyland and what souvenir did I prize most?

If memory serves me correctly, my favorite shop was the *Main Street Emporium* first only to the *Adventureland Bazaar*. As for which souvenir I prized most, that would be the large wall map of Disneyland Park that I purchased in the early 80s. I cherished that map until it became lost during a move in the early 90s. When I last visited Disneyland in 2000, it did not occur to me to search for and purchase a new wall map of the park. I wonder if those are still available.

Sunday 081824 3:52 AM

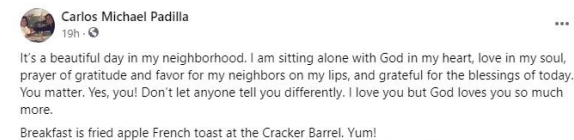
Peace be with you!

What is my problem!? I continue to be my own worst enemy where sin is concerned. Why can't that one part of myself be free and at peace in the light of Christ? I must continue to be strong in the face of temptation—all temptation, however, I must also continue to surrender every part of my being to the Lord and trust in His love and mercy. My repentance *must* and *will* begin in the Lord today.

Saturday was a beautiful day *in the neighborhood*. At least that is how I described it on my Saturday morning Facebook post. Here is what I wrote:

"It's a beautiful day in my neighborhood. I am sitting alone with God in my heart, love in my soul, prayer of gratitude and favor for my neighbors on my lips, and grateful for the blessings of today. You matter. Yes, you! Don't let anyone tell you differently. I love you but God loves you so much more.

Breakfast is fried apple French toast at the Cracker Barrel. Yum!"



As stated, Friday evening, other than leaving the house for breakfast at the Cracker Barrel, I spent

the majority of today resting, praying, and watching YouTube videos. **The highlight of today was talking with my sister [Cindy] on the phone.** She is doing well and continues to be her funny self, a personality trait that I love about my sister. It was nice hearing from her.



The *Meet The Family* caricatures of my sibling's image was created in 2015, just for fun. Coffee Breakers familiar with my show *Coffee Break w/Carlos Michael* know that I am BIG on family, family tradition and celebrating family. The song that comes to mind as I write this is *We Are Family* by the family singing group *Sister Sledge*. Great song.

The birth order of my siblings [oldest to youngest] is as follows: Frank, Me, Cindy, Kristina, Ralph, Manuel and Jesse. Manuel and Jess are fraternal twins with Manuel being the oldest of the two by four (4) minutes.

I believe the last time I was with my siblings was in 2020 or 21 following the death of our father. I look forward to seeing my siblings and other family members in the not-to-distant future.

It is time to put an action plan together, lose weight, and make the most effective use of my time. I can do this together with Christ because without Him, I can do nothing. Until next time ...

--CM



Thursday 082224 6:09 AM

Peace be with you!

As I mentioned previously, these last few months, at least since June, have been quite a challenge across all fronts with the most challenging front being the home front.

Tuesday evening and Monday morning, Matthew (my middle son) began to exhibit signs of mental distress. I learned after taking him on Tuesday evening to Laureate Psychiatric Clinic and Hospital for an in-patient assessment that Matthew, in addition to *schizophrenia*, has *intellectual and developmental disabilities*. Laureate could not help Matthew because of his inability to answer their questions and because he was not considered a physical threat to himself or others.

That was fine. I could accept that but...it was clear to me that he was experiencing a mental breakdown or episode. The words *Psychiatric Clinic and Hospital* are clearly affixed to the Laureate building. Matthew was experiencing a psychotic event. Could they not have done something to alleviate his distress? I mean, after all, he was experiencing a psychotic event.

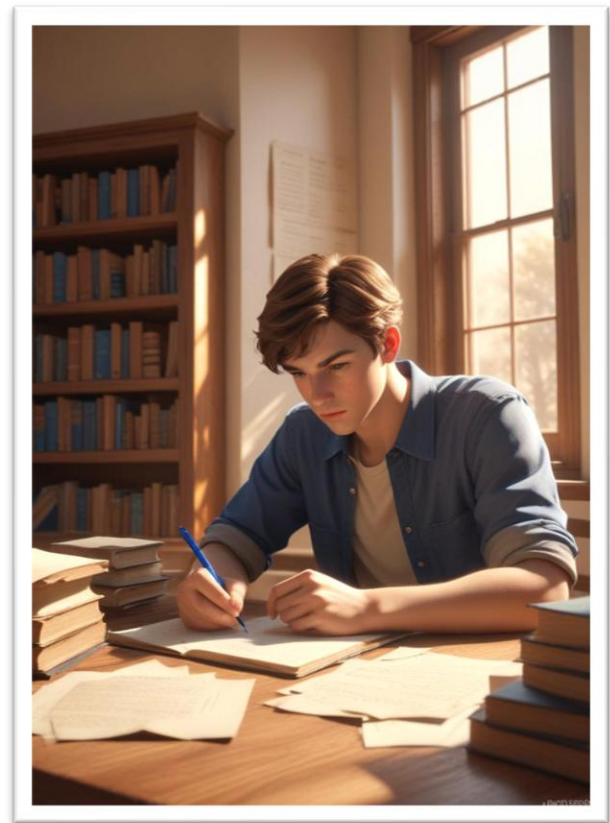
While the staff was professional and empathetic to the situation, they could only do what protocol dictated and nothing more. I was disappointed and heartbroken for Matthew's sake while I pondered what to do next.

While enroute back to the house, I was informed by a loved one that *my priorities are not consistent with the time vested in the care of my son*. Ouch! That statement hit my heart dead center, and it hurt.

I decided to keep my pride and emotions in check because I knew any attempt to defend myself was going to be futile. Unconditional love, right?

The situation grew progressively worse for Matt on Wednesday morning. In fact, these last past several weeks have been quite a challenge for my son, bless his heart. I won't go into detail about his condition or what he has been experiencing save to say that it has been a real challenge for him and for me and my youngest son, Josh. However, Matthew is my son and there is nothing that I would not do for him as a parent who loves his child if it contributes to his well-being and ultimate good and does not take from or hurt another in the process.

That is what love is. That is what love does. I wouldn't have it any other way.



Matthew Update (083024)

Matthew is finally going to receive the type of assistance his mother has been asking me to see about getting for him. Of course, this has nothing to do with me and everything to do with God and

I would not have it any other way. I am humbled and truly grateful for the answered prayer.

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Friday 083024 6:24 AM

Peace be with you!

I thought today was the end of the month. However, low and behold, the good Lord has blessed us with one more day of August. You know what the means, right? Of course you do! The Fall season is just around the corner.

This is the time of year when summer comes to an end, college football kicks off, and the parade of changing leaves, holiday decorations, family gatherings, reasons to be grateful, and the birth of the baby Jesus take center stage.

I think if I wasn't always so physically exhausted, I would enjoy this wonderful time of the year more than I usually do. However, I am not going to let my physical limitations rain on my parade. No sir! There will be no "Negative Nancy" coming from me.

Instead, I choose to be grateful to the Father Creator for all the wonder and beauty, truth and goodness that surrounds me while not forgetting to offer daily prayer for those neighbors who are in great need or have no one praying for them and then just enjoying the season.

Yep! That is what I am going to do.

--

Becoming Disciples

I had a great conversation with my dear friend, Janet A. Thursday evening at the *Becoming Disciples* meeting at St. Thomas More. In fact, I had several refreshing conversations Thursday evening with Fr. Daniel, Ms. Irma, Christopher (*my brother from another mother*), the beautiful Ms. Sally, and dear sweet Teresa. It is a beautiful feeling to know that you are valued, loved, and appreciated. What a beautiful blessing that is. I am so undeserving but grateful just the same.

--

Nostalgic For Home

Watching those YouTube shows of Anaheim, Disneyland by Traver of So. Cal Disney Dad, Chris of Provost Park Pass, and Dave of Fresh Baked, sure has made me nostalgic and a bit homesick for the old homestead, my birth state, the "real" California – southern California. Just kidding, I am not homesick. That ended around 2009.

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Upcoming Projects

Speaking of home, I pray that the good Lord will allow me to make a few more trips home before you know who comes calling, however, I think after I complete the *Disney Challenge* video about my adventures and experiences with Anaheim, Disneyland and the Walt Disney Company, I am going to produce a video of my southern California adventures (circa 1961 to 2002). 2002 is when I moved to Tulsa, Oklahoma. That will have to be a separate video because the adventures here, in Oklahoma, although not quite on the level of my southern California adventures, were stellar just the same. I will start working on those projects soon.

--

Losing Weight

I notice the gains made in 2022 with respect to personal weight loss have been negated, having only myself to blame. That is about to change. I have decided not to allow that to remain status quo. No more excuses. It is time for this granddaddy to eat right, cut back on the sugar and the carbs, and get back to exercising, sometimes walking laps in the garage (depending upon the weather) or outdoors, and at least two days per week with my son at the gym. I am not interested in attempting to look younger, bulk up like Arnold Schwarzenegger, or live longer than God intends. I simply want to take better care of the body that was blessed to me because it is the right thing to do. Period. End of story. Let's do that.

--

The Shirt Feels Great!

I recently placed an Amazon order for a men's Navy blue Alimen's Gentlemen's short sleeve Oxford shirt (2X), regular fit, with button down collar and pocket. I must tell you; I am beyond satisfied.

I ordered this short sleeve shirt for a few reasons: cost, quality, look, and comfort. All are spot on. The goal is to replace the few current short sleeve shirts that I have (*giving those to my son Matthew*), with these solid color button down short sleeve shirts (*which are the type of shirts I prefer to wear in contrast to shirts with designs on them*). I next color ordered was orange. I hope to order the burgundy and stripped blue on white next month.

--

Disney Challenge Video

Speaking of videos, how is the *Disney Challenge Video* coming along? Let's just say that it is on track and will be available soon. The video will

open with my first visit to the park in 1968 and conclude with my last visit in 2000 and whatever occurred during that period which probably isn't as much or as exciting as my friend thought who challenged me to put this video together, but I will leave at the discretion of the listener. Stay tuned. Coming soon.

CarlosMichael360

by Carlos Michael Padilla

“My one and only negative Disney experience is when I was terminated as a cast member (1980) for supposedly failing to follow procedure due to an illness. I was devastated!”

--Carlos Michael



Saturday 090724 6:23 AM

Peace be with you!

Here we are, seven days into the month of September and I have yet to write in this journal. Life is great! One would think that I should feel otherwise considering the challenges experienced during the months of June through August with respect to my son Matthew.

I could be angry but what good would that serve for my son, my relationship with God, family, etcetera?

I gave that much thought last month, although I am not certain I mentioned it in my writings—being angry I mean. The more I thought about it the more I refused to acquiesce to that emotion (because that is what it is), when choosing love and joy in the service of God and neighbor is a far more humbling and superior outlook.

When I mention to someone who asks how I am that I am tired or exhausted, that isn't a complaint. Serving others is one of my top superpowers! It's genuine. It comes from the heart. It is almost always done with love. I say *almost* because I sometimes get in my own way!

I love serving others, perhaps to a fault. The reason I love serving is because I believe with all my heart that when I deny myself for my neighbor, I am doing it for God. I am serving God. I am loving God, and, maybe even making up for sinful, idiotic behavior from the past and present.

Although I did not think about this early on, I believe this journey with my boys has grown my faith and love for God exponentially. I know where my bread is buttered. I know who is in charge—and it isn't me! I know and believe everything comes through the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

How can I not be excited about that!?

Since 2017, my blessings (undeserved, I know) have been *off the chart! Epic! On par with God's promises!*

His love is not lost to me. I am not lost to Him. He has been with me on this journey from the very beginning even when I thought He was not present. My desire to walk that narrow path that leads to my Father is so great, I can barely contain my immense joy.

Why would any of us not want that?

Yes, I have enjoyed the blessings of living in this world that He created. If the sweetness of creation has been this amazing, how much more will Heaven be?

Just thinking about how much more Heaven will be gives me God bumps!

Today is a great day. I feel great this morning. The time is currently 7:59 AM. I know that I will continue to have my moments; days when my faith and joy will be tested, but not today. Today is *First Saturday*. That means we get to respond to Our Lady's request to give her honor as Queen and Mother in reparation for the five offenses committed against Her Immaculate Heart through the *First Saturday Devotion*.

Today isn't a trip to Disneyland, although that would be fun. However, today is so much more than a trip to Disneyland and I will take that day any day of the week.

Autumn (the plus one!) is 14 days from the official beginning. The big three (Halloween, Thanksgiving, and Christmas) are just around the corner. Even more importantly, so is All Soul's Day, All Saint's Day, Advent, and the birth of the Lord, Jesus Christ.

What is there not to be excited about!?! Enjoy the rest of today. —CM

Sunday 090824 5:14 AM

Peace be with you!

First Saturday Devotion: Disaster or Blessing?

Well, I would certainly not want to classify Saturday's First Saturday Devotion as a disaster. Any event that is set to honor Our Lady or Our Lord, even when everything does not go right is never a disaster but a blessing and a gift.

Saturday's event was a gift because the Lord (and Our Lady) were kind enough to work everything out. John's departure (from the STM FSD) was blessed by the following: Denny, Christopher, Deacon Ken and his wife Betty. The latter stayed for the Rosary while Denny visited long enough to have a great conversation about Our Lady and St. Thomas More. I tell you; I was on top of the world filled with joy!

Naturally, my joy grew exponentially when Fr. Leo was gracious enough to hear my confession. Praise God! Without even asking, that prayer was answered. Even more exciting, I was able to attend Mass (although not with Fr. Leo in the chapel), sing with God's choir, celebrate Michael Montgomery's funeral Mass, and receive my Lord in Holy Communion. Such a joy! A true joy!

The focus of Saturday's First Saturday Devotion mystery was the *Wedding Feast at Cana*. We listened to the YouTube recording by *Miles Mariae*. We had a great post-mystery discussion following the meditation. Some good points were brought to the table although I cannot recall what they were. I was thrilled to see Christopher, Deacon Ken, his wife Betty, and Denny present with us yesterday. I say with great humility to Our Lord and Our Lady, *'Thank you for a beautiful First Saturday Devotion! I pray that our efforts and prayers pleased you.'*

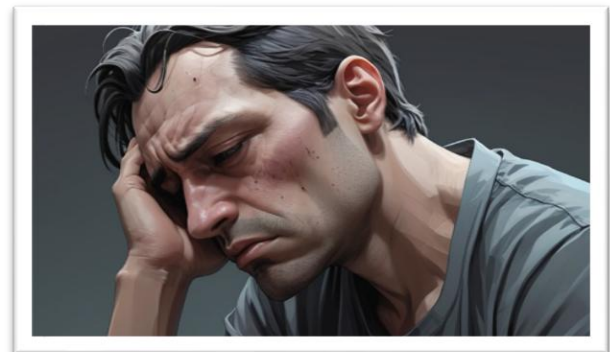
Speaking of Saturday, when I sent Mark a text asking how the game between the Oklahoma State Cowboys and the Arkansas Razorbacks was

going, he was in all sorts of misfits. At the time the Pokes were down 21-0 and playing poorly. Of course, Mark did not fail to miss a beat. He made his usual pronouncement, *"We aren't going to win this game. There is no way we are going to pull this game off."* Yawn! I have heard it all before.

It's a game of X's and O's, winners and losers. That means sometimes your team will win, sometimes not. Putting that much oomph into something you truly have no control over is not worth it. I get it, but still, it's not worth it. Just enjoy the game, accept the outcome, and move on.

Anyway, after I arrived home and sat down to watch the game, *not that the outcome had anything to do with me, God forbid*—the Pokes managed to pull out the victory in overtime, besting the Razorbacks 31-29 bringing their record to 2-0, 0-0 as they prepare to tangle with the *Tulsa Golden Hurricane* (on the road) next week.

Go Pokes!



How Mr. Man appeared watching the game during the first half.

I enjoyed First Saturday despite feeling exhausted. I guess it is because I realize that I have so much to be thankful for. God truly is with me. That is such a blessing. **-CM**



2025 Carlos Michael Communications Media Awards

And the winner is ...

I am thrilled to announce the 2025 Carlos Michael Communications Media Awards are scheduled for August 23, 2025, at the Property Event Center in Broken Arrow, Oklahoma.

2025 nominees will be nominated by the 2023 awardees.

These awards will honor eight (8) individuals, one (1) Parish Community, and one (1) Non-Profit Organization who reside in, operate from or worship in the Diocese of Tulsa and Northeast Oklahoma.

There are Five Award Categories:

Good Neighbor Award

Available to four (4) participants aged 21 and over, this category shines a spotlight on their “small act of good neighborliness” that impacted the life of their neighbor(s) or communities.

Trolley Award

Available to two (2) participants aged 13-21, this category shines a spotlight on their efforts of good Samaritanism and living the “Good News” among their peers.

“Bienvenido Y Gracias” Fiesta Award

Available to two (2) participants from the Hispanic Community, this category shines a spotlight on their efforts in the service of their community in one of the following sub-categories: *religious life, education, medicine, entertainment, civic leadership, sports, and/or entrepreneurship.*

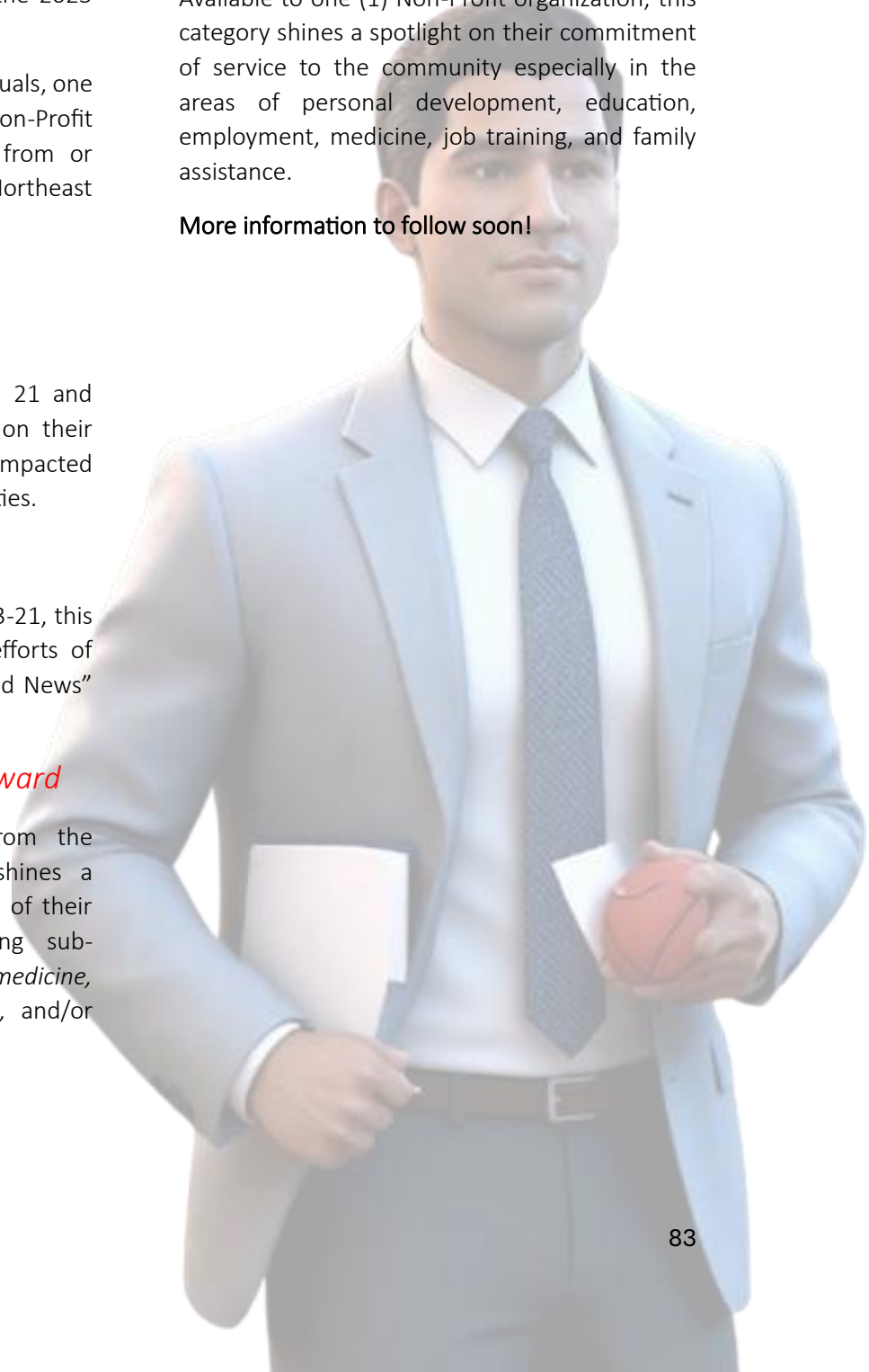
Teresa-Rogers Award

Available to one (1) Parish Community, this category shines a spotlight on their commitment to both service and good neighborliness not only to their parish community but also to their surrounding neighbors in the spirit of Mother Teresa and Fred Rogers

Carlos Michael Communications Media Award

Available to one (1) Non-Profit organization, this category shines a spotlight on their commitment of service to the community especially in the areas of personal development, education, employment, medicine, job training, and family assistance.

More information to follow soon!





Tuesday 091024 7:12 AM

Peace be with you!

What do you do when you spent the previous day in the service of a *first neighbor* (family member) and you end the day absolutely exhausted?

Simple! Praise God and thank Him for any graces received from that service and for the opportunity to serve Him with love through that neighbor. Amen.

My *go to songs* that I prefer to focus on whenever I find my mind wandering in the course of my service to a neighbor and I am thinking of myself are three: “*He Ain’t Heavy, He’s My Brother*” (The Hollies); “*That’s What Friends Are For*” (Dionne Warwick), and “*We Are The World*” (USA For Africa).

Whenever I think of or listen to these songs, I am reminded that life is not about me nor who I am but the good that I do for others (hopefully unseen) in the spirit of love beginning with my love for God.

Service IS its own reward!

--

From Midnight to midnight, I tag-teamed with my youngest son Josh looking after and attending to my son Matthew. I cannot begin to describe the immense joy and love I have in my heart observing Joshua in action.

He recently admitted to me (initially) that his role in caring for Matthew was out of concern for me (and to an extent, his brother) and guilt. I begged to differ although my son did not agree. I believe

what my son is doing is being done through love. He just hasn’t yet let go of something that is causing him to view this as an act performed through guilt rather than love.

Fear not for I have the power of grace and prayer, faith and perseverance. The mercy of God is enormous. The love of God is untouchable even by evil itself. There is nothing that God cannot do. Nothing! With all my heart, with the trust of a child, I absolutely believe that my son’s way of

thinking will be abated, and he will come to accept that what he is doing is because of love, not guilt.

O Jesus Christ, Son of the Living God, I believe because You have said it. Where You are, nothing more do I need. I believe! Amen.

--



Halloween: A

friend once asked, “*Carlos, how can you be someone of faith and still celebrate Halloween?*” For the record, I have never celebrated a holiday for the sake of the holiday. Meaning, I don’t celebrate Halloween in the way or to the level that some take it. For me, Halloween is an extension of the Fall (Autumn) season which also includes All Saint’s Day, All Soul’s Day, Thanksgiving, and the Macy’s Thanksgiving Day Parade. I enjoy the latter, but I do not celebrate “the day” in as much as what each represents.

All Soul’s and All Saint’s Day are observed annually by the Catholic Church with one being a *Holy Day of Obligation* (All Saint’s Day).

In my opinion, both are worthy of reverence and observation because of what they represent. According to the Xavier University website (www.exavier.edu), All Saints' Day is celebrated on November 1st to remember all saints and martyrs during Christian history. It is followed by All Souls' Day on November 2nd to commemorate those who have passed within the faith.

Halloween for me (on the other hand) while it does have its dark side (no thanks to the nature of we fallen creatures), is for me an opportunity to spend time with friends and family as I do on certain other holidays, not just to dress up in silly costumes, collect candy, get fat and ruin my teeth. It's the one time per year when I get to let my hair down, have fun, watch great holiday programming (if it is available) and look for moments of God among the carved Jack-O-Lanterns, scary haunted houses, and badly decorated front yards.

Wait! See God? In Halloween!?

Yes, of course. Even in the bad or the ugly, the tragic or hardest of storms, I do my best to see God present amid that chaos. We must remember that God's presence is everywhere—even in the dark, bad, and lonely.

HE is present.

Whenever I am enjoying as opposed to celebrating a certain holiday such as Halloween, it is always in the spirit of playfulness and fun but always keeping God close to the vest with the prayer and hope that in doing so, I will not take that celebration outside of the love of God where it must always remain.

The Halloween Rule: Always in God, for God, with God, and because of God. Have fun but keep it in perspective.

Regret & Mercy.

When I look back on my life, there is much that I regret. Much that I am sorry for. I once told my former wife (Amy), *"I won't have any regrets!"* That was my pride talking. Of course, I have regrets. Many regrets.

The thing we must remember is that the mercy of Christ, which I am still trying to understand is there for us, if we truly want it.

"It" is called "forgiveness."

Am I truly sorry for every word, action, or deed that separated me from my relationship with God or hurt or offended someone here on earth over the years?

You bet I am, down to the last fault!

If I must have a regret, it is that I did not realize and touch this mercy early in life. Not in the way that I am attempting to do today. I am grateful to the grace and love of God that led me in the direction that I needed to journey to be exactly where I am today.

Please do not ever think that YOU are beyond God's love and mercy. That is a lie! Jesus is waiting for you. In the meantime, look for the clues (grace). When you see that grace, embrace it and go with it.

LOVE

keep these Dad LOVE

Matt → me!!!



Dad Dad Dad Pimp



gang (fante)

LOL

Wednesday 091824 7:08 AM

Peace be with you!

The last few days (praise God) since last week have passed without incident. Matthew seems to be improving. He has not spoken to (from what I have observed) Al (the bad voice) or mentioned Al since last Wednesday or Thursday. For that I am truly grateful.

Matthew has indicated to both me and his PACT Team Case Manager, Julie, that the medication he is currently taking (fluphenazine, Clonidine, and Quetiapine) is working.

Matthew has begun doing things for himself again (e.g., bathing, getting dressed, preparing his meal) to name a few. He is no longer insistent on wearing all white and he is no longer drooling (a side effect of one of the medications).

I cannot stop praising God enough. May the suffering that my son experienced through this ordeal benefit his soul and those souls most in need. You don't wish schizophrenia or any other mental disorder, disease, or illness on anyone. However, if we must suffer through this (patient or caregiver) let it be with a heart of love, gratitude, and patience.

I took Matthew to see his primary physician (*Dr. Michael Saylor*) as a follow up to his Sept. 9th visit to the Ascension/St. John emergency room (Broken Arrow). Dr. Saylor stated that Matt's lung sounds clear and the 5-day antibiotics that he was prescribed by the hospital (*Amoxicillin and Azithromycin*) have knocked out the early sign of pneumonia that he was diagnosed with in the emergency room.



Since this all started in late May/early June, I believe we have *visited the emergency room 5 to 6 times, and the Family & Children's Services Crisis Care Center 3 times*. Each time Matt was admitted to the Crisis Care Center it was about a week plus one or two days. *It was only after the third visit to the Crisis Care Center that he was assigned to the Pact Team.*

Again, I am praising God with all my everything, especially for the Pact Team.

During all this, Matthew stayed 3 weeks at the *Tulsa Center for Behavioral Health* on Harvard, was assessed by *Parkside Psychiatric Hospital & Clinic* located on Trenton Ave, visited with *Claire Roarty*, a therapist of *McClure and Associates* in Tulsa, and had one visit to *Laureate Psychiatric Clinic and Hospital*, whom for a second time could do nothing to help Matt.

Note: In 2021, when Matthew had his first psychotic event with the voice, we took him to Laureate at the suggestion of his therapist (Sean Sykes). Laureate could not help

him. They did not even assess him; however, it was Laureate who recommended that we take Matt to *Parkside*, which we did. He was admitted there.

In 2021, Matthew was prescribed Risperidone. Since that time, he has been on the following medication either previously or currently:

Fluticasone 50MG Prescribed 090424 (2 sprays, 2x's daily for 7 days)

Cetirizine 10MG Prescribed 090424 (1 tablet daily for 7 days)

Benzonatate 100MG Prescribed 090424 (Every 8 hours, 3x's daily for 7 days)

Hydroxyzine Pamoate 50MG Prescribed by Dr. Michael Saylor, DO (Primary Physician)

Terbinafine 250MG Prescribed by Dr. Michael Saylor, DO (Primary Physician)

Quetiapine 300MG Prescribed by Family & Children's Services

Fluphenazine 5MG Prescribed by Family & Children's Services

Clonidine 0.1MG Prescribed by Family & Children's Services 090624

Amoxicillin 500MG Prescribed by Dr. Allison Moore, St. John's ER Broken Arrow 090924

Azithromycin 250MG Prescribed by Dr. Allison Moore, St. John's ER Broken Arrow 090924

I cannot begin to imagine how stressful this has all been for Matthew. I am just so grateful to the most Holy Trinity (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit) that Matthew has weathered the storm and has finally found a semblance of peace.

I cannot with certainty if the storm has abated or we are merely in the eye of the storm. Regardless, I will take what we have today and concern myself only with today because as the Lord said, "...today has enough problems of its own and tomorrow hasn't come."

Amen!

--

Mini Word Search

Former Sierra League Foes

Colts-Trojans-Spartans-Warriors-Huskies-Wildcats

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

Reflection

Why do I try so hard [to be what I am not; to do what I probably have not been called to do; to feel loved when I am loved?]

Why?

It is strange when I think about it. I have spent a great deal of my life [at least it seems that way] trying to prove something, trying to be [that] someone when others do not care, have not noticed, or [it] isn't important to them.

The other day I was talking with a young adult. In fairness, he did not come to me for advice, however, at the end of the conversation he said, *'What you think doesn't matter. It's what I think that matters.'*

I am paraphrasing but you get the gist of the comment.

I don't know why but that comment stuck with me, "What you think isn't important. It's what I think that matters."

That is akin to saying, *"You don't matter because I DO NOT see you."*

Maybe that isn't what he meant but that is how I inferred it. Hmmm, talk about getting punched in the mouth!

I walked away from the conversation feeling like I did all those years ago, *that I have something to prove because I have no credibility.*

Then it hit me ...

"You can't have what you never had in the first place."

Damn!



Thursday 091924 6:48 AM

Peace be with you!

I am thinking about the show I posted yesterday (Wednesday). I hope the viewers don't think that I was bagging on the elderly, because I was not. I was attempting to make a point about *complaining* and *murmuring* and how neither, from young nor old, serves the greater good.

Naturally, not being skilled in oral communication I probably sent the wrong message. I am certain my poor attempts at humor did not help either.

Can't do anything about it now. I mean, I can remove that show from my Facebook page, but it is already out there. As a courtesy to the viewers, I did add my own commentary explaining what the show is and is not in terms of my comments toward the elderly. I pray that is clarification enough.

Yesterday was one of those days when I really wanted to let my hair down, grab a Harley and just ride. Nowhere in particular, just ride. Still, the more that I think about it, who I am (as I am) is exactly who I enjoy being most—not that person decked out in leather with his wind blowing south behind him, slapping home girl in the face, and thus, obstructing her view. I am as God created me and that should be good enough.

--CM



The Red Balloon (1956)

An award-winning short film by Albert Lamorisse, elegantly capturing the adventures of a boy who befriends a seemingly sentient balloon and follows it through the streets of Paris.

This film, which I saw as a student at *Orangewood Elementary School*, West Covina, California, connected me to the character of Paschal, played by Lamorisse' 5-year-old son, except in my case, my red balloon was a *refrigerator* box.

For an in-depth analysis of the film, please click here: <https://www.popmatters.com/red-balloon-albert-lamorisse-1956>

To view this movie on YouTube, click the link below or go to YouTube and type the following: **THE RED BALLOON | Children's Fantasy With English Subtitles (1956)**.

The Red Balloon is a moving story about unconditional friendship and love. However, despite his immense happiness, Paschal soon discovers that nearly everybody appears to be determined to separate him from his beloved

friend. (--M. Lanzagorta (06-19-2008), *The Red Balloon (Le Balloon Rogue)*).

Friday 092024 7:49 AM

Peace be with you!

Sometimes I am not certain what to write. Mainly because I keep holding back hoping I don't write anything that will offend the reader or scandalize my children, grandchildren, or future family members (should they read these journals).

Even in this, because these journals are public, I must hold my tongue as I carry two full buckets filled with a life lived all while walking over a bed of hot coals with no place to set the buckets down and no end in sight as far as the coals are concerned.

I have told a lie. There is an end. A physical end to our current existence with respect to the body. The good news is that our soul lives on with memories intact, at least I think that is correct regarding the memories. My only hope is that the Mercy of Christ will admit me into the Father's Kingdom.

I don't relish the idea of leaving my loved ones behind, especially my children, but for an eternal opportunity to be with the Lord and all that waits for us in the afterlife, when God decides that it is time to *punch in my ticket*, I say, "*Bring it on!*"

In the meantime, while I continue the journey from here to there, I think I will share aspects of my life in brief snippets without necessarily sharing the whole story, unless someone who currently reads these journals each month should ask me to elaborate on an entry they found interesting either on the show (Coffee Break w/Carlos Michael or Carlos Michael 2.0-Resurgence) or in the pages of these journals, I can do that.

Okay, moving on ...

--

John and Dale: Sometime between Kindergarten and 3rd grade; I had two best friends whose last names I cannot recall: John and Dale. **Dale** always sported a crew-cut haircut. He had blonde hair, always smiled when talked, and seemed to have a favorite red t-shirt that he liked to wear. **John** on the other hand had jet black hair that he parted to the side. He used to always sit between Dale and me at lunch. Although not a term used at that time, I would say that I shared more of a *bromance* with John than I did with Dale. There isn't much more I recall about John except that he was of Italian descent, clean cut and a great friend. Both eventually moved and I never saw them again.

--

1980 Election: Up until this time, like my Father before me, I was a life-long Democrat. However, following the unsuccessful attempt to rescue the hostages in Iran, I decided to switch parties and became a Republican. I was living with my Uncle Ralph and Aunt Maxine at the time. This did not go over well with my father. It wasn't personal against President Carter because I liked him and his wife very much. I just felt that then incoming President Ronald Reagan was what we needed to force the Iranians to release the hostages. And they did!

--

Five Dollars. Not my finest moment, among many. One day while sitting at the bleachers in the Edgewood High School gymnasium, my sister (Cindy) came up to me and asked if she could borrow five dollars. I said no, which caused her to be angry with me. To this day (although my sister has forgiven me), I feel terrible that I denied my beloved sister a mere five dollars.

--

"Don't Hang Up, No No!" Speaking of not being one of my finest moments. One day I

became so angry with my mother that I walked to the nearest pay phone, called the house and when she answered the telephone, I hung up! What foolish child does that to their mother!? Me! I hope I confessed that and that my mother, if she knows, has forgiven me.

--

Affable. What does that word mean? It means *friendly, good-natured, easy to talk to*. One day while still married to the mother of my children, living in the rented mobile home in Adelanto, California, I was speaking to an attorney about a case he was assisting us with when he said, *"I like you, Carlos. You are affable among other things."* I didn't know what the word meant until years later and in what context he meant it. Still, it is nice to know that an attorney thinks I am friendly.

--

Say Hello. I don't know why it was, but it always seemed that "those guys" always knew how to single me out and, well, I won't say it here. In one situation, I found myself at the signal at Cameron and Sunset Avenue in West Covina, California when this dude wearing a leather jacket parks next to me, looks at me, smiles and makes a nod with his head as if to suggest that he was interested. Good grief! Of course, as a courtesy and to be polite I smiled back as I nodded and then quickly turned right rather than continue in the direction I was driving. Give me a break.

--

Crickets: One day my parish pastor, the late Fr. Maurice Cardinal at Our Lady of the Desert Catholic Church in Apple Valley, California gave his approval to sponsor a speaking event. Father also agreed to be the keynote speaker. After promoting the event for several weeks, on the day of the event despite setting out 100 chairs in the auditorium, the only people to show were my mother (Mary) and her sister (Margaret). I was both horrified and embarrassed. When I turned to Father and asked what we should do, he said, *"What we intended to do. Minus the two sitting in*

front, let's believe the remaining chairs are filled with angels." Instead of crickets, we were talking to the angels. What an amazing pastor and friend Fr. Maurice was for me at that time.

--

Brave? Are you kidding!? ME!? I am probably more of a coward than Don Knott's thought he was in *"The Ghost and Mr. Chicken!"* Most people would be shocked thinking what they think they know about me about that bit of truth. It's better now but back in the day, awful.

--

Turkey Candle. Did you know I once had my version of *The Red Balloon*? It's true, except in my case it was a Thanksgiving turkey candle. I cannot tell you why that turkey candle became my Mrs. Beesley (a reference to Buffy's doll on "A Family Affair), but it was. That turkey went everywhere with me. Here's another secret, I wasn't in elementary school when this occurred. Imagine my horror when I came home one day and found my turkey candle halfway melted. Yep, mom lit it up. I was devastated. Like the parakeet I had several years later that was snuffed out by my sister's cat, I was sad because it felt as if I had just lost my best friend. Naturally, some in the family thought it was funny. They weren't being mean. I believe their response was more out of ignorance. That's okay. I forgave them, even though it took me a while to get over the experience. WHO gets attached to a turkey candle!? Lord, help us all.

--

Dad: What are some special moments that I recall sharing with dad ... Watching Star Trek together. The day he helped me with purchasing the grey Toyota. The day he took out a mouse that was sitting on the couch where my feet were. I don't know, maybe it was a rat. Either way, 'Ewe!' The time dad took grandpa and my siblings (Frank and Cindy) to Mexico and to El Monte Legion Stadium to watch professional wrestling. We saw Andre the Giant that day. The time dad and I

talked on the phone about being molested growing up. That was a very special and tender moment that I will not forget.

--CM

Wednesday 092524 6:54 AM

Peace be with you!

The dust is finally settling with respect to my son's visit (Matthew) to the Urologist on Tuesday morning. His brother (Josh) had to keep Matt focused so he didn't get distressed. He was showing signs of distress at the Urologist office. We also moved the full-size bed into his bedroom.

Matthew is scheduled to have surgery on October 14th to remove the kidney stone. I need to send a message to his primary physician (Dr. Saylor) to confirm that any of the medication he is currently taking does not fall under *blood thinners* which he cannot take 10 days before the surgery (October 4-14, 2024).

I updated Matthew's mother (Amy) on his current situation with the Urologist, upcoming surgery (Oct. 14th), and my conversation with our daughter. I also shared information with Amy on how one can apply with the state to become a *personal care attendant*. I also sent the information to Joshua and plan to investigate it further.

Early Evening Update:

Mark had a problem with his Gmail. Somehow the screen went from normal size to way beyond full size. This occurred Tuesday evening. It was an easy fix. The constant calls to his cell phone and the home phone are becoming an annoyance. It is obvious that the calls are most likely political or current cycle elections centered and are generated by a computer. Just another something to place at the foot of the cross as an offering for those brothers and sisters who are most in need.

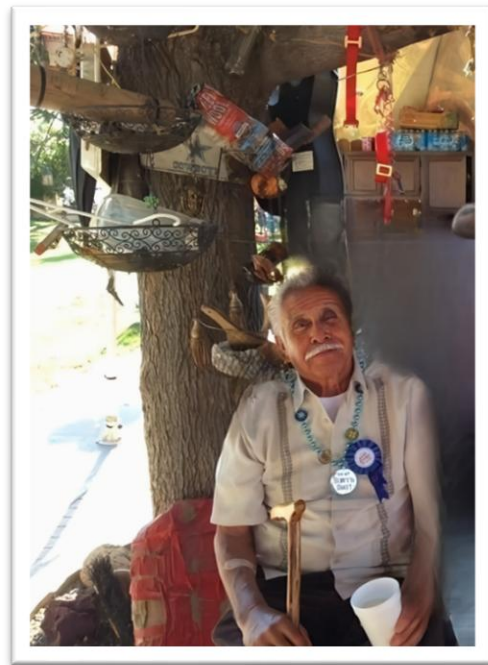
Matthew had a good day. No problems. He seems to be sleeping well on the bed. I am happy for that. I didn't think sitting and sleeping in the recliner long-term is good for him. I am joyful that he is switching between both.

His PACT Team Case Manager (Julie) called in the afternoon. She is following up to see how Matthew is doing and what the results were from his visit to the Urologist. I know she is being paid to do what she does, but she is the real thing. I love her personality, humor, and the fact that she cares about those who are charged to her care.

At Julie's direction I printed the **Clubhouse Tulsa** application. *The Clubhouse is a supportive community for adults living with a history of mental illness.* I will complete the first two pages of the application. Julie will take care of the rest.

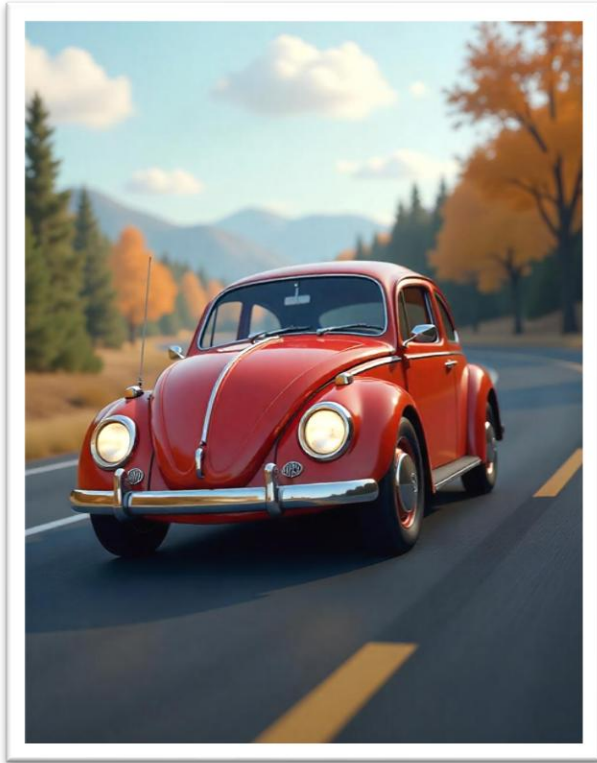
I believe this program will be good for Matthew. He said he is willing to give it a try. That is all we can ask for.

That's it for today. Have a good day. --CM



Dad, Chino, California. 2019





Thursday 092624 8:08 AM

Peace be with you!

What is on my mind today? I believe that is the question Facebook asks before making a post. That is a good question, “*What is on my mind today?*”

--

Dad: I thought about dad this morning. I don’t know why he came to mind, but I am glad that he did. I suppose subconsciously, I have been thinking about him. That’s good. Every son (or daughter) who loves their parents, especially when those parents are gone—should think of and remember those parents. Pray for them too!

Parents often don’t get parenting right, any more than we get life right. And that’s okay. It must be. Whatever wrongs we blame our parents for—and believe me, parenting children isn’t easy—we

must remember that others are blaming us for our wrongs.

Show me someone who says they have or do no wrong and I will show you someone who does not and cannot walk on water.

God said, “Honor thy mother and father.” He didn’t say it just to hear Himself talk!

--

The Past: I thought about what my corner of the world felt like as Autumn approached when I was young, growing up in West Covina (California).

There is so much that I have forgotten that I wish I could recall. Minus the stormy days of life (and my own personal sins for which I am truly sorry), it was a good life. Not great, but good.

I didn’t have a perfect life. There was much I hoped to achieve and much I did not achieve. I married twice, both unsuccessful. I dropped out of high school and spent a lifetime searching for something that was never mine to begin with. I fell out of grace more times than I care to admit, although God was merciful enough to allow me to find my way back into His grace.

I did not have a perfect family. We weren’t the families I watched on television—although I did sometimes wish that we had been like those television families. However, hindsight being what it is, I am glad that was not the case. I love the family that I was born into. My ability to love, laugh, worship, believe, hope, care for others; to be who I am today, came from God through my family—both families: La familia Padila and Salcido. It isn’t what I believe they did wrong that I focus on, but in how much they love me—and they do love me as I love them and that is enough for me.

--

Disneyland: I thought about how much Walt Disney and Anaheim, Disneyland meant to me this morning. I thought about my first visit to the Magic Kingdom at age seven with dad, mom and my two siblings. That was truly a magical experience.

I can understand why Chris (host of Park Pass), Traver (host of So. Cal Disney Dad), and Dave (host of Fresh Baked) put in the time to produce the shows that they do—love Disneyland.

Now that I am retired and if I were still living in southern California, I would be doing the same thing.

Every visit was a magical experience for me despite the aftermath of losing my job in 1980 and the seven years I tried with all my heart to have the “no re-hire” status removed because I wanted so much to work at Disneyland until I retired.

It’s crazy to think that I would have been employed at Disneyland 44 years this year (2024), if I were still working there today. Wow! That’s insane. What a great ride that would have been.

My Age: I thought about my age this morning. I can’t believe that I am my parents’ age (62). Most of my life has been lived. There are less years ahead of me than what used to be in front of me. Don’t get me wrong, I am enjoying my life.

Sure, life didn’t exactly turn out as I had intended, but maybe that is how it was supposed to be all along. I don’t know.

I do know this, beginning today, although I started a few years back, I am going to, by the grace of God, do my best to live the remainder of my life right and enjoy it. I cannot control what I cannot control, but that does not mean that I am powerless either.

I don’t want to waste a single moment being unhappy, miserable, or not being “that” person

Fred Rogers spoke about on his death bed. Taco Bell’s slogan comes to mind, “Live Mas!” (Live More!) I believe that I will.

Coffee Break: I thought about the show this morning. How do I grow this show? What can I do to gain new Coffee Breakers? Becoming a Social Media Content Creator was not a mistake. With that understanding, I am not going to concern myself with how I am going to grow this show. This is God’s gig. I am just the host. Using the skills He blessed me with, we will do something with this show so long as it continues to serve the greater good.

Things People Say and Why We Make That Important: I thought about statements or comments people made over the years that were directed at me, of which I am also culpable.

Then I asked myself, “Why did I say that!?” “Why did I respond that way? It was wrong!”

Sure, I can focus on the negative statements and comments people directed at me, that were about me, but what about the negative statements or comments I made that hurt those at whom those words were directed toward?

Why would I do to someone, knowing how I felt when those mean-spirited, negative words or comments were said to me?

From those that I could, I asked their forgiveness.

From those whom I could not ask forgiveness; I prayed that they would know that I am truly sorry for any negative words or actions on my part and find it in their hearts to forgive me. I thought about that because while life can be hard, it also, if we are blessed with a long life and an open mind, can and does change in a positive way. That is reason enough to have joy.

It may not have been a wonderful life, but it is a good life, and I will close with that.



Friday 092724 7:46 AM

Peace be with you!

I was sitting at my desk this morning thinking about what to write in today's entry when it dawned on me that I have not written any new short stories. I need to get motivated and stir up the creative writing juices and write some new short stories for "Coffee Break Short Break."

If you have any ideas for a short story based on a real-life situation you experienced, please feel free to send me a one paragraph summary or a one-page summary of what that experience was and maybe we can turn it into a short story, using fictional characters and locations, of course.

In fact, the inspiration for

-- *Thursday and Brother G*

Thursday went well. I had an opportunity to chat briefly with Brother G. He informed me that the recent blood work and stress test revealed some anomalies and *heart issues*. Brother is currently working with his healthcare provider to schedule an *MRI* of his heart.

While I am embracing brother's outlook and faith with respect to his current health situation, including having been diagnosed with *Parkinsons* several years back, I cannot help but feel bad for brother.

However, knowing brother as I do, he would not want me to feel bad for him. Rather, he would ask that I keep him in prayer and that is precisely what I will do.

I am also asking all Coffee Breakers and 360 Readers who believe in prayer as we do to please keep Brother G (Gary) in your prayers.

-- *Matthew*

Matthew, my son who has been diagnosed with schizophrenia got through Thursday okay. When I

asked if he is sleeping well on the bed—until recently, he preferred sleeping in his recliner—he confirmed that he is sleeping well.

That's good news.

I believe his Pact Team Case Manager is scheduled to stop by today and visit with Matthew. I remain truly grateful to God for the blessing of the Pact Team. I believe this is the second week that we have not received a visit from his therapist or meds manager, however, that does not mean they are out of the picture. I did hear from Robert (therapist) on Monday when he called to remind me of Matt's invitation to attend "Group" on Tuesday from 11:30 AM to 1:00 PM.

-- *Coffee Break*

I posted a show on Wednesday. The show title is: **Forget About 2.0**. The topics discussed were *Ditching 2.0, Zombie Latte, Dad, Disneyland, and Word of Advice*. The total run time of the show: 5 minutes and 20 seconds.

I did not post the show on YouTube. It was a Facebook only post. As of this writing, it has 27 views. Not bad for a show that was posted at the last minute, had bad lighting, and the look of the host was not exactly stellar. Then again, I am a 62-year-old man.

Carlos Michael 2.0 is a show that had a brief run a few years back. It did not catch on and the show title wasn't exactly well received. Recently, while doing research for "Coffee Break w/Carlos Michael," I came across the CM2.0 intro. After listening to it, I thought to myself, "*Maybe I should bring the show back as a Monday through Friday show and move 'CBWCM' back to Saturday as the flagship show.*"

After a couple of attempts, I decided that maybe that wasn't the best direction or look for the show. As a result, I decided to go back to "Coffee Break w/Carlos Michael." However, during certain

times of the year, CBWCM will air under a different name relative to specific seasons, holidays, or events.

For instance, during the month of October, CBWCM will air under the name of “Zombie Latte.” The focus of the show will be the season of Autumn, Halloween, and any church related events during that time. Should be fun.

-- *This N That!*

-- 1 This is that time of year when regulating the temperature in the house becomes a foot race with the thermostat. Should I turn the A/C off or leave it on? Has it cooled down enough outside that we can run the house fans instead just to keep the air moving? Had it cooled down enough to turn on the heat and start wearing sweaters? Believe me, I am not complaining. I love this time of year. It is, for me, the most wonderful time of the year.

-- 2 I just threw my resume in the ring by showing interest in the “Director of Communications” position that just became available at St. Benedict’s, Broken Arrow. I don’t know if I have a shot, but I will put forth the effort. The rest I will surrender to Christ through Our Lady.



-- 3 Today was a good Friday. God is great. Always. Could have been an even greater Friday, but I will take what I was blessed with. Gained so good insight. Matt had another decent day. I give glory to God for His blessings, love, and mercy.

Reflection

Sometimes all I want to do is to run away, which is silly when you think about it. Where would I go? There isn’t any place I could hide that someone wouldn’t know where I am. Okay, fair enough. Now what!?

I fight the good fight and leave the rest to Christ.

When I say that I am physically, mentally, and emotionally tired—I am! But that does not mean that I want to give up on life. Heaven’s no! Life is a precious gift, blessed or gifted to us through love—the love of a Father for a son [or daughter].

While I may feel and perhaps look like that old man, I once feared of becoming, I am grateful just the same to be where I am.

Why?

Because I have an *opportunity* to do one thing right that will truly make a difference in the life of another and that must matter. That must account for something. If but *one* soul can come to God by how they experience God through me, then I have done that *one* thing right and can hopefully ascend back to God knowing that I will spend my eternity with Him.

Wow! To finally be free of the chains that we tether ourselves to in this world that we may love our *Father Creator* perfectly for all eternity. Who doesn’t want that? Why would we not want that? More importantly, why would we not want that for everyone else that we currently share the world with?

O my Jesus, forgive us our sins, and lead all souls to Heaven. Especially those who are most in need of Your mercy.

The Fatima prayer. How I love that prayer. “Ad Jesum Per Mariam!” (To Jesus Through Mary). Amen.



MIKE
TO HIRE YOU
BE LONG

CODY

Wednesday 100224 6:36 AM

Peace be with you!

Change. I will never understand why we as a species push back against change. Why do we resist it so much. “*Why change what has always worked?*” one might ask. I sometimes wonder if what we should be asking ourselves is this, “*Am I pushing back because a) I believe the current status quo really does work, or b) because changing that which has always been good for me makes life uncomfortable or downright frightening?*”

I agree that change is often necessary. It usually occurs at the point where the new generation begins to ascend over the previous generation.

One generation pushes forward while the other attempts to push back.

However, an argument can be made in defense of certain time-honored traditions as well. They too are necessary. For instance, holding the door open for another, smiling and saying hello to someone as you walk past them, calling a friend and inviting him or her to coffee just to spend time with them, saying ‘thank you’, ‘please’, and ‘you’re welcome’ as a sign of gratitude or acknowledgement are time honored traditions that should not change.

The challenge then is attempting to embrace the new while not necessarily dismissing the old.

How would you do that?



Daily Prayer. Lord, I surrender everything that I have been, am, and could be to You through the maternal hands of Your Most Holy Mother, Mary. Thy will be done. How, Lord, may I serve you today?”

--

Our Enemies. It is so easy to celebrate the defeat of a perceived enemy. We rejoice in their misery when we consider the pain said enemy inflicted upon us or others. But is not our enemy loved by and loves another? Does God love only the just and not the unjust; the sinner, which when you consider it thoughtfully and prayerfully, we all are—a sinner.

Jesus said in Matthew 5:43-45: "You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' But I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, that you may be children of your heavenly Father".

What then does it mean to *love your enemies*?

According to the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, “Pope Benedict XVI wrote, ‘Love of enemies helps to interrupt the spiral of hatred and revenge and break the chains of evil which bind the hearts of rivals.’ For Pope Benedict XVI, Love of neighbor . . . consists in the very fact that, in God and with God, I love even the person whom I do not like or even know. (DCE 18)”

Which is why I would often close previous shows with these words, “*Be a good neighbor, especially*

toward those who aren't so kind to you." We never know when our simple act of kindness may affect or change the life of another."

--

Metamucil. Speaking from personal experience. If you are having trouble trying to push through the leftover, unprocessed undigestible food you ate that is now causing grief in your colon, I recommend drinking two glasses of Metamucil. One in the morning, the other after dinner or before going to bed. I recommend you check with your doctor, first, before taking it, but it has made my life much easier these days.

--

Getting Old. I remember a friend from my past named Abraham—no, not the Biblical Abraham. I am not that old, who used to tell me each time he saw me, "*Carlos, don't get old.*" Of course, he was referring to all the aches, pains, and what not that comes with the blessing of aging. As if I had a choice, right? At 62, I am beginning to experience some of what he experienced; however, my attitude is much different. I am down with my age and love life despite the groans, moans, pains, constant trips to the bathroom, etc. I made it to be a senior citizen. How many have not?

--

Ostrich, Alligator, and Crocodile, O My! I received an advertisement from *Touch of Modern* recently boasting about their exotic belts that said, *Choose from Ostrich leather or alligator, or crocodile for bold accessories that transcend standard leather looks.* The only thing I could think of was, "*Bummer! And I thought cows, pigs, and chickens had it bad.*" Can you picture yours truly wearing a chicken belt? Not in my lifetime.

--

Residual Effects. I am still experiencing residual effects from Monday night's visit to St. Thomas More by Michael John Poirier. Thank you, Deacon Ken, for making that happen.

Michael's message and music was focused on several themes, however, it was his message about the fact that he once upon a time did not believe in the true presence of Christ in the Holy Eucharist, as well as his message about how I as part of the domestic Church need to stand up and become that force of good that Holy Mother Church is calling us to become in addition to sharing the good news about Christ's mercy and love hence that great sacrifice that He made for us on the cross.

How does one listen to a message like that and not immediately want to open their heart to humility and charity that calls us to be merciful, forgiving, and giving of ourselves in sacrifice to others without any thought to ourselves?

That has been my lifelong mission, although I did not realize it when I was young, often getting in my own way and making a mess of everything.

Despite all the mishaps, the desire to be that person, a true servant and disciple of Christ was always present in my heart. What a tremendous "wow" moment one has one they suddenly realize that I am kind of sort of being that person today. Not because I am doing anything right, because left up to me I would still be getting in my own way. Rather, because of everything right that Christ is doing through me and therein lies my joy.

Why do I believe that happened? Because like Michael and many others who have been since the time of Christ, I surrendered, I heard, I listened, I discerned, I answered, and I acted. I pray that happens for you as well.

Until next time...

--CM

Saturday 100524 7:10 AM

Peace be with you!

First Saturday. Today is the First Saturday of the new month—October. It was on the 13th day of this month in 1917, at the Cova da Iria at Fatima, Portugal that the miracle of the Sun took place.

Over 70,000 were present at the event. The event was seen as far as 20 miles in every direction. Had the three shepherd children not been kidnapped by the Mayor of Orem in August, it is reported that the miracle would have been even greater.

One can only wonder how much greater the miracle of sun could have been when you consider what took place that day 107 years ago, when 10-year-old Lucia Dos Santos, the oldest of the three children shouted, “Look at the sun!”



How many lives were changed? How many souls saved following the events of 1917, including my own.

I first met the “White Lady of Peace” while recovering from a recent surgery at Queen of the Valley Hospital (West Covina, California).

I apologize. That is not a true statement. The first time I met the “White Lady of Peace” was in the operating room. It wasn’t until I awoke in the recovery room that I was introduced to the message of Our Lady of Fatima, “the White Lady of Peace” through the 1952 film, “The Miracle of Our Lady of Fatima” starring Gilbert Roland, Angela Clarke, and Susan Whitney who played the role of Lucia Dos Santos.

That was a life-changing moment for me. I just wish that from that day forward, I had properly dedicated my life in the pursuit of Godly living and service to others rather than the life I mistakenly chose.

God was patient with me 44 years before He lovingly helped me understand that my life was never about me. Who I am and what I have been blessed with in terms of skill, knowledge, experience, talent, love, etcetera, was meant to reflect the love, truth, goodness, and beauty that is God that was to be *shared* through me with my neighbors in the pursuit of their greater good.

I became *aware* of my love for God at age 3 or 4. That I recall to this day. It wasn’t until that day at the hospital in 1970 when I came to truly know and fall in love with Mary, the Mother of God. The White Lady of the Peace. The Queen of the Most Holy Rosary. She who is clothed with the sun.

I understand how much I have done wrong. How much my sins have weighed heavily on the heart of my dear mother, and more so, her Son. All of which I am truly sorry for.

For those, I believe I have been forgiven and confessed. At least I pray that is the case. However, what will I do as I move forward?

What I should have done after 1970 but have done on at least two occasions after 2017, *surrender everything to Christ through Mary and listen to the Holy Spirit as He shows me the way.*

--

Pancakes Away! I posted the following image



on my Facebook page with the following message:

“First Saturday Mass at Saint Benedict’s, Broken Arrow, breakfast at Jimmy’s Egg, stop at Target

for some retail therapy then home to check on boys, the Ancient One and some afternoon football. My reward to self after that crazy all-day Friday with my sons at St. John's Hospital."

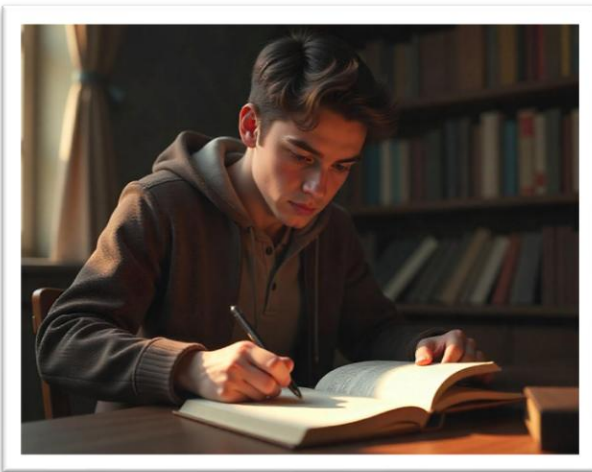
It turns out that the image and message was posted prematurely. No sooner did I post the said message; I received a text message from my son that my other son was not doing well, and I needed to head home.

What are you going to do? Shite happens. God is good. I choose to remain joyful.

--

E 36th Street Media: I am strongly considering changing the name of the media biz from *Carlos Michael Communications Media* to *E 36th Street Media*. Then again, I could play around with it a bit more until I come up with something more creative and fun. I guess I better give this a bit more thought.

--



Monday 100724 8:26 AM

Peace be with you!

Oklahoma State Cowboys. Saturday's game versus the West Virginia Mountaineers (at home) did not go well for the Pokes. They are now

0 and 3 in conference play. The Mountaineers defeated the Pokes 38-14. This is the second game of the season the Pokes have lost at home. These conference losses have students and alumni alike scratching their heads as they wonder what the heck is going on with the team that was supposed to be up there with Utah and Kansas State if not the frontrunner.

I know very little about the game, let alone knowing anything about coaching to criticize the coaching staff or players, however, it does seem that the team is flatlining. They seem to have lost their sense of purpose.

Listening to "The Gund's" [Coach Gundy] post-game press conferences, he seems to repeat the same statements, "We were out coached!" "We played a better team" "I asked the guys to have faith in me," etc.

They are supposed to have an experienced O-Line, but they cannot seem to protect the line, Bowman [QB] doesn't seem to want to get hit and Ollie [Gordon] the 2024 Doak Award Winner cannot seem to get his run game going.

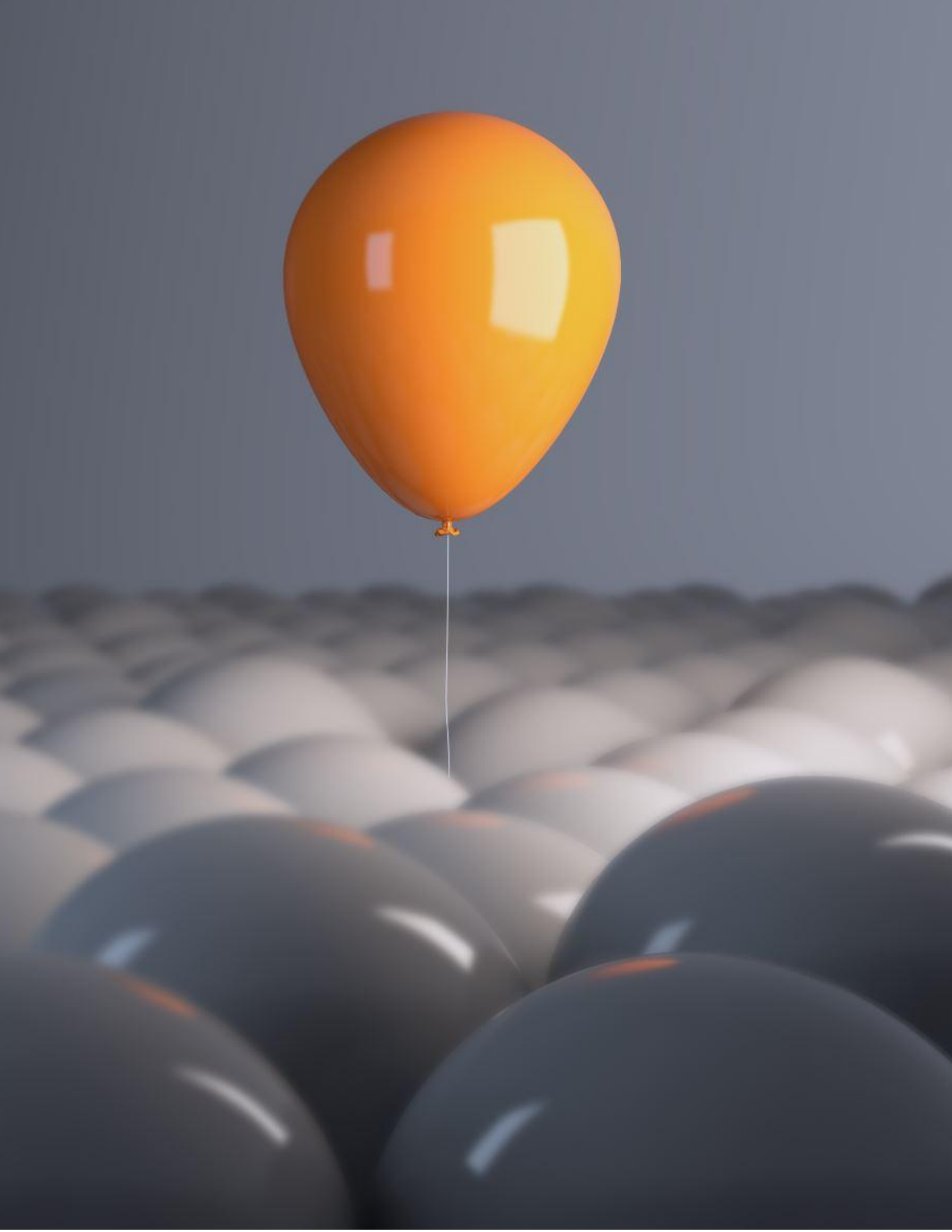
At this juncture, going to the Big 12 Championship to play for a shot at the playoffs is out of the question for the Pokes. All one can hope for is that the team can pull out three more wins and at least go to a bowl game—not that bowl games mean much these days. Not like they used to mean. The corporate suits have seen to that.

Go

Pokes!



Let's make the world happy with prayer!



Sunday 101324 7:13 AM

Peace be with you!

Today is the 13th day of October. Today is the day the miracle of the sun took place at Fatima. It is also the last time that Our Lady appeared to the three shepherd children.

My heart is heavy due to the sin(s) I committed on Saturday. What was I thinking? I am deeply ashamed and sorrowful.

Of course, I must not despair, but that idea that I acted out as I did the day before this special Sunday—the 13th of October 2024, is unacceptable.

I will avail myself to the sacrament of reconciliation at my first opportunity. Then, I will, with the grace of God, conquer this evil within me (*for there is nothing I can do on my own without God*) and live for Christ and heaven, not for Carlos and this world.

I hold myself accountable. It would be unwise to do otherwise.

May God have mercy on my soul. Amen.

--

Today is the day before Matthew's surgery on Monday, 101424. Check in time is 7:00 AM. The surgery will occur at 9:00 AM. The objective is to crush and remove the *kidney stone*. I pray that everything will go well. "Lord Jesus, into Thy merciful and loving hands do I surrender my son, this surgery, and his recovery which I pray through the loving heart of Blessed Mother Mary. Amen."

--

I never believed that I would witness how the world is today in my lifetime. Then again, understanding how sin corrupts and destroys, of which I too am guilty, why would I expect any less?

But that will not give me cause to lose hope. Where there is even but a speck of light, there is always hope and that is what we much hold onto.

The key is to come to this conclusion and then resolve to *truly* amend one's life. To abandon everything that I am and desire and surrender everything to Christ and desire only Him.

There is nothing more that we could or should want.

First, surrender. Second, take a deep look into me—a self-examination. Complete an inventory of what have been my most egregious personal sins and pray for wisdom and the knowledge to know what I must do to turn from those sins.

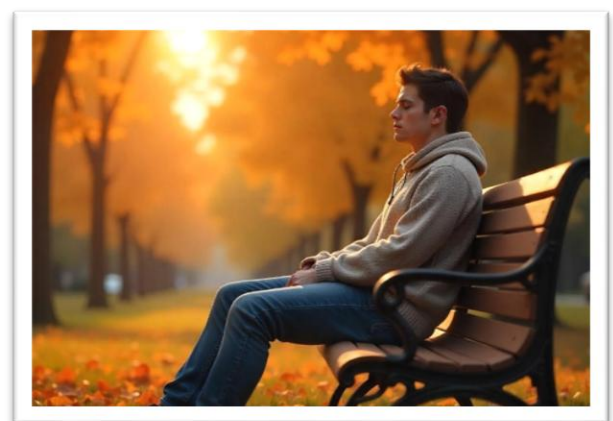
Make more time for daily Mass, Adoration, praying of the Rosary, spiritual reading, and personal prayer.

Believe that one person can in communion with Christ and His Church (the bride) make a difference in today's world.

Do I truly believe that?

Yes! I do.

Then let's begin that *change* today. I agree. Amen.



Tuesday 101524 7:27 AM

Peace be with you!

Let's begin this entry by giving glory to the Father for Matthew's outcome related to his kidney stone procedure/surgery.

Despite the small hiccup aside where my other son is concerned, of course, taking into consideration that his negative experience is important and very real to him and therefore should not be swept under the carpet, everything went well for Matthew.

The staff at Ascension St. John Broken Arrow that I interacted with were nothing but professional, empathetic, and forthcoming with information related to procedure or care. On a scale of 1 to 10 stethoscopes with 10 being best, I give ASJBA 9 stethoscopes.

Why nine?

Had my son Joshua did not have the experience he had in the *Surgery Waiting Room* according to him; 10 stethoscopes would have been my pick.

We arrived at 7:00 AM as instructed and got Matthew checked in. From there, we were instructed to take the elevator to the second floor and take a seat in the *Surgery Waiting Area* until someone calls for us.

Matthew was called back to the *OR Prep Area* sometime between 9:15 and 9:20 AM.

He was instructed to undress and change into the provided hospital gown then get into the bed that had been prepared for him.

From there he was asked a series of questions before an IV was inserted into his right hand. Three ladies from *Radiology* came down and took an x-ray of Matthew's right side—the side where the kidney stone was located.

After Matthew had been processed, poked, questioned, and prepped, all that was left after

meeting with the anesthesiologist was to speak to Dr. Milten—the surgeon performing the procedure.

Sometime between the time Matthew finished being prepped and the meeting with Dr. Milten, the attending nurse asked if I wanted her to bring Joshua to the back. I thought, "How nice of her" and agreed.

When Josh came back that is when he mentioned to me about the experience, he had with a staff member, an older woman, in the surgery waiting room.

I explain to Josh that sometimes people wake up on the wrong side of the bed, are having a bad day, etc. That we should not get to upset or judge because we don't know what that person is experiencing in their life right now.

Sure, maybe they are just not nice people. Then again, they may need our understanding, forgiveness, a charitable response, etc.

That is not what he wanted to hear. There I go again, being religious and forgiving and understanding when he believes I should call that person out, hold them accountable, etc.

I did not mean for him to feel that I was not validating him, supporting him, etc. I thought I was.

Apparently not, because when I asked him later what was wrong, he stated that he was angry with that lady (for her behavior) and with me (for not supporting him).

It was worse when we went downstairs to "The Bistro" for some coffee once Matthew was taken to the *Operating Room*.

Some of what my son said to me would probably make your toenails curl. However, out of love and respect for my son, I will keep that conversation between me and him.

It is clear from listening to my son (and I did listen) that he is not just angry (which I believe is just a response or defense mechanism that he uses to protect himself)—he is hurting. I don't know if I observed and listened to the situation correctly, but I feel that he feels misunderstood, unappreciated, etc.

Yes, it is true, the time spent at "The Bistro" listening to my son was not only heartbreaking, but it was also painful as well.

As a parent you want only to help your child—even if that child is already an adult but feels so powerless to do anything except listen (really listen), try to understand, ask open ended questions, pray, and love them.

I pray that will be enough (from me) for my son because I love him and desire what is good for him in accordance with God's will.

--

You Are Cancelled! I am not referring to today's *cancel culture*, who need a dose of love and daily prayer. I am referring to *Carlos Michael Communications Media*. I think it is time to throw in the towel on that entity and move on.

As hard as I have tried, I don't believe the show is bearing any fruit. I know what Gary and others have said about not knowing how many the show may touch despite the poor viewing numbers, lack of feedback, and running out of content to talk about.

Golly! Is that even possible? To run out of content to talk about?

As I stated in today's video, I don't know if this will mean the end of *Coffee Break w/Carlos Michael*. I will have to put that in the Lord's hands and see where it goes, if anywhere.

I guess I want to make more time for the *right* things, whatever or whomever those are and not waste time doing the wrong things.

The comment that was made Monday evening, "*You're here but you're not here*," along with the conversation I had with my son at the hospital really has my mind spinning and thinking.

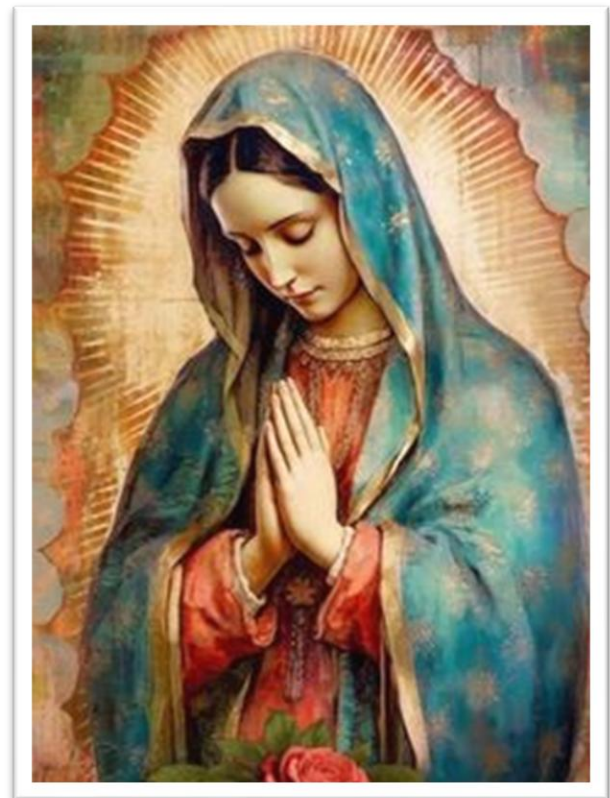
This is something I truly need to pray for; maybe seek advice on. From whom, I don't know yet. That will be my first prayer, to ask the Lord to lead me to the *right* person who can help me with my discernment so that I may pray and serve in accordance with God's will.

Currently, I will focus on caring for the three individuals (two sons and the ancient one) that have been charged to my care and go from there.

I also plan to pray, read, write, study, and leave the door open. Wow, I feel as if I have lost my best friend. Don't know why I feel that way, but I do.

Let's see where life goes from here.

--



Praying for America and the world.



Wednesday 101624 6:04 AM

Peace be with you!

Anytime I am blessed with the opportunity to share my life story or just snippets of my life, it is never meant to be about me.

It's true that it started out that way, and yes, I am sharing MY life story, but the story is really about God and all the amazing ways He blessed my life with neighbors and opportunities that helped me love Him even more, especially during the difficult times.

I suppose that is what *faith* is—believing in what we cannot see but knowing deep down inside that there is a Creator, a Father, and the whole reason for our existence is love. We were created from love.

Everything goes back to that—*His love for us and our love for Him.*

What more do we need!

--

What am I thinking about today? I am thinking about many things but probably nothing anyone would be interested in reading. Moving on >>>

--



Sunday 102024 5:08 AM

Peace be with you!

What am I thinking about today? I am thinking about all the people born into this world who died alone—since the dawn of time.

From children to the elderly to everyone in between. For instance, that young Syrian child who drowned at sea and washed up on a beach, his tiny little body lying face down on the sand.

How horrible and terrifying it must have been for him when he fell out of the boat and into the ocean. Why did such a tiny little life have to die such a tragic death?

I suppose this is how my late brother in Christ (Alex) must have felt when he mentioned to me about his concern for children in Africa who were dying from starvation.

I grieve for those innocent souls who were made to suffer because of the injustice, arrogance, ignorance, and evil of humanity.

Who is fighting for justice on their behalf? Who is praying for them? Who is even thinking of them?

I understand that much remains unknown to us. God is the author of life. Some things are only meant for Him, the Lord and the Holy Spirit to know.

I accept that. However, it still does not stop me from grieving for all those souls since the dawn of time who died violently, alone, or lived their life on the wrong side of God.

For all of them I will continue to pray.

That is what I am thinking about this morning.

--



Tuesday 102224 9:54 AM

Peace be with you!

What am I thinking about today? I am thinking about the great difficulty Matthew experience related to his mental illness beginning Monday afternoon. The voice(s) began to torment his mind, frustrate his emotions, and failed to let him rest.

Joshua, my youngest son, has done much to assist with taking care of Matthew. I am concerned for him and how all of this is affecting him. I am also concerned about how this is affecting Matthew as well.

My faith sometimes feels tested. But I will continue to trust in the Lord and the will of God. It does no good to talk about standing firm in faith during the stormy seasons and to do one's best to be a *great* neighbor when I am doing neither of the two myself!

I acted this morning in a way that is not in line with my faith. I fear that I may have cut myself off from God. I am sick with grief. I have acted wrongly. I must never allow frustration and anger to be an excuse to commit sin--and yet I have.

Merciful Jesus. Son of the Living God. Have mercy upon me.

I will contact Fr. Daniel at St. Thomas More and ask if he will hear my confession. I am so thankful to the Lord for the blessing of this beautiful sacrament.

Sure, it can be stressful going before Christ in the person of His Priest to confess one's sins. I mean, some of what one confesses can be so egregious and personal that you find it difficult at times to say, *"Father, forgive me, for I have sinned. It has been (x) days since my last confession. I confess..."*

Regardless, I wish every Christian would make it so they could avail themselves to the sacrament of reconciliation. That will be my prayer. **—CM**

Sunday 102724 5:04 AM

Peace be with you!

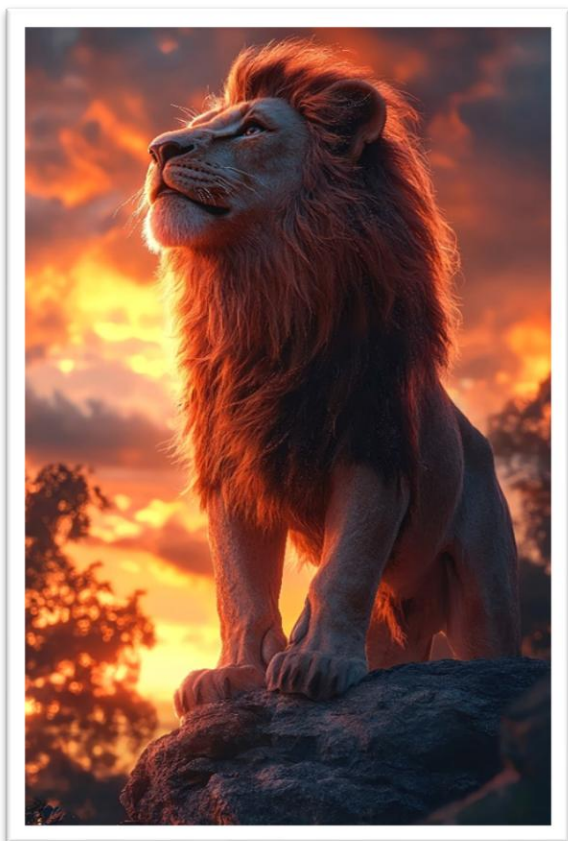
What am I thinking about today?

Well...let me think. I am thinking about my children and where they are (or are not) in their walk with the Lord.

Jesus, in His conversations with St. Faustina said that if we pray the following prayer with total trust and contrition in our heart, a sinner will begin to make the journey to conversion.

"When you say this prayer, with a contrite heart and with faith on behalf of a sinner, I will give him the grace of conversion. This is the prayer: *O Blood and Water, which gushed forth from the Heart of Jesus as a fount of Mercy for us, I trust in You*" (Diary 187).

This needs to be my constant daily prayer.



Monday 102824 5:44 AM

Peace be with you!

What am I thinking about today? Several things!

Crisis Care Center: Matthew began to show signs of *distress* Sunday afternoon. I am not certain if *distress* is the correct word to use.

He appeared okay while he was sitting on the recliner in the living room, however, after returning from his walk and conversation with Joshua, that is when he began to exhibit signs of distress: drooling, forlorn look, not very responsive, etc.

I don't know which is worse at times; Matt's psychotic episodes or Joshua's sometimes overreaction and revved up emotions?

Josh called *The Pact Team* number once, then spoke to *Julie*, Matthew's Pact Team Case Manager on the phone. At Joshua's urging, I called the Pact Team number and spoke with Aric.

The outcome was as expected (not a criticism of the Pact Team). If Matthew is not a danger to himself or others, all we can do is *ride* this out.

That's fair. I understand that. What I don't understand, other than this being what *Schizophrenia* is, what triggers these episodes?

Julie suggested to Josh that he encourage Matthew to play a video game to discourage Matthew from listening to the voice(s).

According to Joshua, that started out fine but eventually Matthew went back to listening to the voice(s).

It was clear to me that Matthew was not doing well. I was also concerned about Joshua staying up the night with Matt again. In the interest of both boys, I decided to take Matthew to the *Family & Children's Services Crises Care Center*. It was not what I wanted to do. It was not where I wanted Matthew to be. Home is where I want hm to be, holding his *Zero* stuffed animal by his side and watching a movie in the living room.

After completing the paperwork, Matthew was called back for an assessment. It was determined that he was going to be admitted.

I did not even get a chance to hug my boy and give him my blessing. That hurt my heart.

As we (Joshua and me) left the building, we were confronted by a homeless man who asked if we could take him to the hospital because he was feeling suicidal. He stated the *Crisis Care Center* would not help him.

I failed to help him and for that reason I am heartbroken. I failed to be the neighbor I ask others to be in one's time of need, "...when you

see a need and you can fill that need, don't think about it. Don't reason with it. Just do it!"

What if that homeless man was Christ or an angel in disguise?

What would Mother Teresa have done? Exactly! Why didn't I then do what Mother Teresa would have done?

Not because of *indifference*. It was because of *pride, fear, and anger*.

Why anger?

As Joshua and I were getting on the Interstate home, I remember saying to him, *"I want to be angry, but I don't know who to be angry at!"*

Then I thought of that homeless man who asked for a ride to a hospital that was just across the street, but did not help because of *fear!!!*

Was that a test? Because if it was, I failed. Not only did I fail in an *opportunity* to be *charitable* toward a neighbor in need, I also realize how *prideful*—two parts of me that must be corrected by God's grace.

At present, I feel like *Jack Skellington* from *The Nightmare Before Christmas* during the graveyard scene after he had been shot down when he begins to sing, *"What have I done? What have I done....?"* Because he realized the gravity of his mistake with respect to Christmas.

The same is true for me in a two-fold sort of way.

1) *What have I done* in not helping that neighbor? In not giving him a ride to the hospital even if it was only across the street? What was my motive for not helping that man? Was it really fear of the unknown or the what ifs? Does that make me a hypocrite?

2) *What have I done* (lately) in the pursuit of *charitable* work? What neighbors have I really served? In what ways have I embraced *the service of my neighbor* as Mother Teresa did?

Monday Evening Update ...

The day was busy "in a good way." I was honored to be of assistance to Mark. The only thing I found distressing was my lack of *charity* toward Mark this evening while loading the dishwasher.

Clearly, he was not the *cause* of my frustration. However, that is still no excuse to never act with charity, kindness, patience, etc. That was wrong on my part, and I am sorry for that. I will apologize.

Matthew: No update on Matthew. Julie, his Case Manager stated to me during our phone conversation that someone from the Pact Team will visit him at the Crises Care Center and get back with me.



Wednesday 103024 6:17 AM

Peace be with you!

What am I thinking about today? It's the eve of all hallows eve. Thursday is Halloween. Friday, which is al *First Friday* (praise God) is *All Saint's Day*. I am looking forward to going to Mass and celebrating the saints. Saturday is *First Saturday* and *All Soul's Day*. This is the day that we remember and pray for our deceased loved one's.

In Mexico, they celebrate *Dios de Los Muertos* (Day of the Dead).

How beautiful it is that the Church has given us these two days on the Church calendar to celebrate all the Saints and our deceased loved ones back-to-back.

This year I remembered to enroll as many families as possible and friends that I could recall so they will be remembered in prayer during the Mass.

Still no news on Matthew. We will call again on Wednesday.

Mark and I performed our civic duty by completing and mailing our election ballots. I am praying for a "Godly" outcome.

I have a coffee meeting with Deacon Ken this morning (8:30 AM) at the Panera Bread in Broken Arrow. I look forward to seeing him.

I had a good conversation with Mark Tuesday evening. I will keep him in continuous prayer.

I slept for seven hours. That does not happen too often. How refreshing. Praise God.

I pray to respond to god's grace and to have a blessed day. One that includes mercy, charity, love, service, and prayer. Amen.

My saint for 2025 will be Mother Teresa of Calcutta.



Wednesday 110624 11:13 AM

Late Morning Entry

Peace be with you!

Coffee Break. Thank you, Father Creator for blessing me with the abilities and skills I possess and with the resources needed to produce these shows. This is such a precious gift you have blessed me with.

The show has taken on a new look over the last week or so. My alter-ego and imaginary best friend, *Alejandro Armando Armand*, one of my fictional characters who lives in *Friendship, Oklahoma*, has been virtually co-hosting the show for me. I don't know what the listeners are thinking with respect to the new format, but I am enjoying it.

Matthew/Joshua. Still not home yet. As of today, he has been at the *Crises Care Center* eleven days. I made the decision to take him to the center on the evening of Sunday, October 27th. He was not doing well, and I was not certain if I wanted poor Joshua to have to stay up another night with Matthew when you consider he stayed up with Matthew the week before (October 21st).

I believed taking Matt to the center would get him the help he needed and give Joshua the break he needed to get some rest.

I know Joshua would have stayed up with Matthew if the occasion called for it, but it was clear to me that Joshua was showing signs of stress and exhaustion. I did not want to put him through that again without an opportunity to recharge his batteries.



Sunday 111024 4:19 AM

Peace be with you!

Matthew Update. Great news! Matthew was discharged Thursday afternoon and returned home. He looks tired from his experience. I pray moving forward that he will receive the best care he can receive and finally get a respite from the voices. I cannot even begin to imagine the toll all of this has taken on him.

'Father God, I come before Thee as a son, servant, creature, and father. I come before you father-to-Father on behalf of our son, Matthew. I ask them through the holy name of Your Son, Jesus Christ, heal my son from this mental illness if that is Your will. If not, then I offer this illness and this son to you. I would then ask if it would be possible to power down or shut those voices off completely. I thank You in advance, in the name of Jesus Christ, and for Your glory. Amen.'

Joshua and the kids. Last night after talking with my son [Joshua] I had to pause and reflect on his words. Naturally, my pride (Lord, I pray for the grace of true humility), got in the way. How do I know? You just know.

My greatest desire outside of pleasing God and wanting to spend my eternity in Heaven loving God is to help the children, all of them, to heal

from their past wounds so they in turn can properly move forward with their lives.

That isn't to say that they are not moving forward. Michael is doing well in the secular sense: girlfriends, financial stability, a roof over his head, successful employment, etc. As a father, I couldn't be prouder of his achievements. But spiritually and perhaps emotionally there are scars; issues that need to be addressed and finally put to rest.

I dislike that he feels *a certain way toward me* because of what I said or how I acted in the past. That hurts my heart. Michael has never been second fiddle to anyone. He is my first-born son, the pride of a father's heart. If only he understood how much being the first-born means to me. He is the *Simba* to my *Mufasa* (*Disney's Lion King*).

I wish the children would understand that I am human, an unperfect creature created in love for love by God. That also means I am human. I make mistakes. I wish I didn't, but I have and do.

Now, I never want my *humanity* to be an excuse for those mistakes. We must always strive to be above those temptations, bad behavior, lack of charity, wanting to respond to something with anger or bad words, etc.

I am no exception. I do not walk on water. But I surrender all that I am and all that I have done and all that I might become, do, or say to the one person who has walked on water—JC.

Whatever I have done that affected each of these beautiful children whom I love with every ounce of my being outside of God, I ask forgiveness and will pray for their healing.

It's okay if the children don't like me. I just pray that they never stop loving me.

Amen.



Continuation (6:01 AM): I just finished the pre-coffee routine: bathing, styling the hair [*more like hair spraying it to death!*] and partially dressed [*underwear, t-shirt, and comfy sweater*]. I completed my pre-coffee routine with prayer and gratitude to God which begins immediately upon rising from my sleep.

The choir book is already prepped for Mass this morning [9:00 AM/St. Thomas More, Tulsa], so I don't have to do that.

Today I am going to wear black dress slacks and the black sport coat I picked up from the cleaners yesterday with the new mint green long-sleeve dress shirt I purchased earlier in the week at the Dilliard's Outlet Store.

--

I have begun and am offering two *challenges* to the Lord today. First, begin the process of *losing weight*. Second, Start reading the *books* I have in my possession.

The former will require portion control, daily walking, drinking more water, cutting back on carbs and sugars.

The latter ... The first selection is titled, "*Holiness Revolution*" by Dan Demate. I can already read that this is going to be a *great* book. It is clear to me that the *selection* of this book is no mistake!

--

Carlos Michael 360 2024: I have decided that I am going to put all my writings for 2024 in one document and then inquire as to how much it would cost to get one large or several small volumes published to place on the shelf as a record that the kids can refer to if needed after I am gone.

Lord, I call upon your mercy and blessing for this project. May it be Your will to make this so. Bless me with the graces needed to make this happen. For Your glory and praise. Amen.

As I mentioned to Joshua during last night's conversation, *"I am happy with my life. I like where I am, well sort of. I can and will by the continued grace of God do better. This is finally my time to shine in the light of Christ. Not for me but for those most in need or who have no one praying for them. God is amazing indeed."*

St. Thomas More. It is 8:00 AM. I will leave in 15 minutes for the parish. Today is Sunday, the Lord's day. That also means Sunday Mass. *'Father, how may we serve You today?'*

Continuation (10:52 AM): I just returned home from Mass at St. Thomas More, Tulsa. I wanted to receive our Lord during Holy Communion but decided I had best go to confession first just to be on the safe side. I really need to think about confession as well. I need to thoroughly examine my conscience so I can make a good and holy confession.

The choir did well today despite the technical difficulties with one of the microphones. Following Mass, I joined my fellow parish parishioners in the *coffee room*. I did not get to speak too much and that is okay. Most of my conversations this morning was with Jose, Laura, Irma, and Janet.

I mentioned to Janet about the book that I am reading. I mentioned that I will bring the book to share with her once I am finished reading it.

Continuation (2:56 PM). Josh and I had another discussion about his sister. Honestly, the whole discussion gives me *"head hurt!"* Not in a negative way, just because I feel so powerless to help – to help in a way that won't validate my daughter's lack of trust while not placing any unnecessary burden on Mark.

Of course, well, never mind.

I will put my faith into action and entrust the situation to the Almighty. It will work itself out. It must.

Too Much Stuff. Truth be told, I am tired of having too much stuff. It is probably time that I really do something about that. First, stop buying stuff. Second, get rid of what isn't necessary and keep only what is needed to exist and be productive. I will put a plan together and see if Joshua can help execute that plan.

Matthew Update. Current on his medication. Rested most of today. Joshua gave him something to eat. He seems good for now.



Why am I grateful? Because any other emotion is not necessary.



Superman should never look scary! (LOL)

Tuesday 11/22/24 6:32 AM

Late Morning Entry

Peace be with you!

“Knock! Knock! Tulsa PD: There is something to be said about going to bed thinking all will be fine and being awoken and told that your son’s Case Manager, Police Officers, and EMSA are enroute to the house.

Then, of course, there is the problem of gaining your bearings after being awoken from a deep sleep and realizing that the parties in question have arrived earlier than expected and you cannot get dressed because your clothes are on the other side of the house.

Just another day in the life of this family.

--

Going Silent. I wonder if this latest round of challenges doesn’t signal to me that it is time to make some meaningful changes in life. Changes such as appreciating the beauty of nature,

spending time with the boys and Mark, Nana’s and the grandchildren whenever they arrive and get settled. Perhaps this is a good time to go through everything I own, keep only what is necessary, get rid of everything else.

Perhaps this is a good time to pray more, volunteer, paint rocks, write. Learn something new, visit family back home, live like I mean it, lose weight, take better care of myself, be truly grateful for every little blessing and challenge in life, give glory to God, sing a new song, learn to say ‘No,’ walk away from the past or at least let go of it, audition for a stage play, get a cool costume and walk in a parade, maybe do that with a group of friends...just do something other than what I have been doing.

No more *Carlos Michael Communications Media*. No more *Coffee Break* shows. No more *dressing up* all the time. Go casual. Grow a beard and mustache. Let the hair grow longer. Get a tattoo!

Um...no...forget the tattoo!

Compile all your writings and put them in books to be self-published to put on the shelf as a record of mine. Not for anyone but for the kids.

I can serve God through my neighbor in so many other ways than what I have been trying to do.

This essentially boils down to that day in the car in the late 90s when I was not certain which way to go and told God, *“Whichever way the winds blow is the direction I will go.”*

Of course, what I was saying and what I was thinking were two different bananas. But not this time.

This time, what this means for me is that I am letting go completely and letting Jesus be in control.

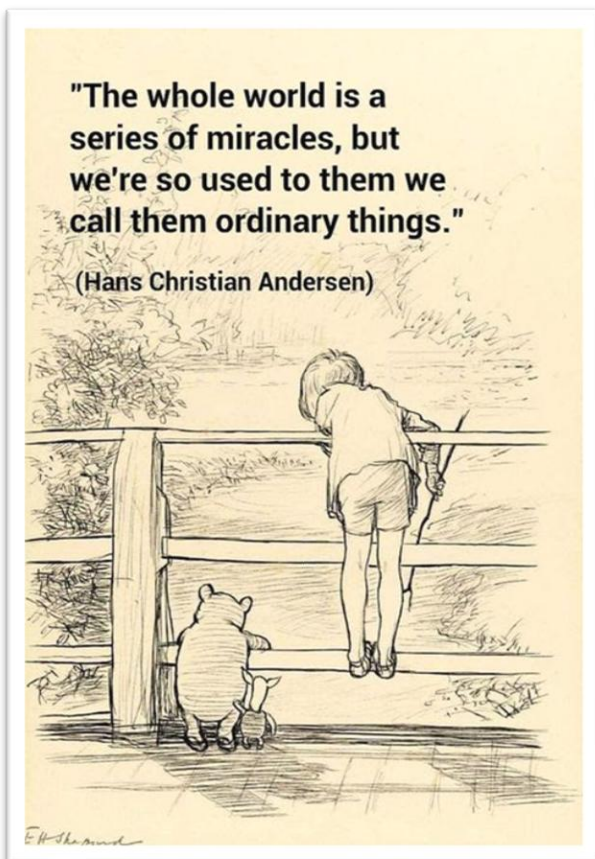
It will be akin (only Jesus is better) to how liberating it feels when you throw off the pants and can walk about freely in your house in your underwear and not worry about what anyone will say—except in my case, I intend to be thinner.

I agree with my Facebook post.

Perhaps today is the day to cancel everything, go quiet, and silently live the remainder of this life unnoticed.

I like the sound of that.

--CM



Wednesday 111324, 7:00 AM

Peace be with you!

Show Cancelled. I scripted a show for Tuesday, however, midway through the editing process I decided not to post the show. I continue to focus on Father Case Cole's words about his show, his salvation, and whether I am or am not truly serving God through this medium.

Based on a comment Mark (aka Mr. Man) said yesterday, it is possible that I am. He said, "I hope you continue with the show you get the listener to thinking."

Perhaps there is no need to question but to *trust* completely in the Blessed Trinity (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit).

If this work is truly dedicated to the Trinity, then I must believe that I am being guided by their love for me because they know I only desire the good of my neighbors.

God is so amazing. I love Him so very much. May his name be gloriously praised from every rooftop.

--

Thunder. The time is 7:07 AM. I just heard the crash of thunder outside. According to a message I just read on my cell phone, *the rain should stop soon.* I enjoy hearing the rain fall. I marvel and respect the power of God and nature—the crash of thunder and the whistling of the wind, providing that wind is not a tornado (aka tonidie!).

If only we would take more time away from the electronics, radios, computers, iPads, etc., and listen for God in the quiet stillness of the Church or via the sounds and beauty of His creation (nature).

I remember doing that as a boy. Who says I cannot do that now, as a man with the heart and spirit of that 3-year-old boy. I want to touch, see, smell, and hear the "Songs of the Almighty" sung

by His glorious angels through the sounds of nature.



To know that Jesus is pleased is enough for me!
How about you?

--

The Boys. I am thinking about the boys this morning, Matthew and Joshua. However, let me state for the record that this does not mean that I am not thinking about, loving or praying for the eldest children, because I do...often.

I suppose I think more about Matthew and Joshua because they are here at home with me. I dislike how challenging this mental illness has been on both boys, especially Matthew. However, I also rejoice at how this terrible personal tragedy has brought the boys and me closer together.

I suppose that old saying is true, "There is always a silver lining in every storm if we just look hard enough."

--

Gary Christensen. It saddens my heart at how my brother, and I have grown distant. He prefers not to talk by phone but through Facebook Messenger, however, the conversations we have are more like two ships passing in the night with barely a word spoken between the two.

Don't get me wrong. It does not mean that we do not conversate at all. I remain grateful for any opportunity we get to chat back and forth. It's just at a diminished level currently.

Oh well, you take what you can get, right? Right!

During our most recent conversation, Gary informed me that he and five other vehicles within a two-mile radius of his home had been stolen.

Five vehicles! In the state of Utah? Wow!

When it rains, it pours. Brother left Oklahoma in early June because his employer had informed him in November 2023, that he may continue to work *remotely*, except that they preferred he did so from Utah (where one of two corporate offices is located).

Not long after relocating to Utah, brother informed me that he was laid-off due to cutbacks. You know, "*Last to be hired, first to be terminated.*"

Add to that the other dominoes that tend to fall in response to a situation like being laid-off or terminated only to have your vehicle stolen as well.

Poor brother. At least he continues to have a joyful heart despite these temporary setbacks. Prayers, prayers, prayers for Brother G.

--

Carlos Michael 360 (May-October). I copied and pasted the May through October

2024, Carlos Michael 360 journals with the November issue combining the issues together to make one issue.

I need to locate the February through April 2024 editions and include them as well. This way all the issues will be complete in one volume, or two if printing one is too expensive.

I really enjoy looking back to see what I have written. What was on my mind. What was challenging me most and any joys experienced.

Time to get on with today.



A New Idea! Well, I thought I was going to get on with today. A new idea has come to mind. Why produce an audio version of these journals and post them on the website and on the YouTube

channel. Otherwise, create a new YouTube channel and delete the others. Hmm, something to pray on and consider. I will keep you posted!

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Thursday 111424 6:40 AM

Peace be with you!

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Saturday 111424 11:22 AM

Peace be with you!

My last entry was intended to be on Thursday, 111424 at 6:40 AM. However, it does not appear that I completed that entry.

No problem. Let's move on to today.

Matthew: As of today's date, Matthew is still not home. He is at the *Family & Children's Services Crises Care Center* near downtown Tulsa.

He has been there since Monday, 111124.

When I spoke with him Wednesday by telephone, he did not sound joyful. I cannot say that I blame him being that he was put in a place he does not want to be.

It was not my call. Julie, his Pact Team Case Manager made the call to file that third party whatever you call it that brought Tulsa PD and EMSA to the house. It was decided by that group that Matthew should go to the *Crises Care Center*.

All he wanted was to ... um ... poop!

He reminded me of that when I spoke with him on Wednesday. He also thought it was me who made the decision to put him in *Crises Care*.

It was not. Hopefully he will be home soon.

--

Gary Christensen: I had an opportunity to chat with Gary this morning via Facebook Messenger. He prefers that platform to talking on the phone.

If you recall, Gary moved to Utah during the first part of June 2024. He stated back in November of 2023 that his employer *Nelnet*, had informed him that he may continue to work *remotely*, except that they preferred he was *in-state* rather than *out of state*.

This is the same situation Gary experienced when he moved back to California from Oklahoma in 2022 except it was with a previous company.

Not long after arriving in Utah, Gary was informed that he was being laid off. Not only that, but his living situation had also not worked out as planned hence his staying at a motel.

After losing his job, a friend invited Gary to stay with his family temporarily. This friend was going to have a surgical procedure done and having Gary present would mean having someone to run errands, pick up medication, etcetera.

Not long after that, Gary informed me that his car had been stolen. One of five in a two-mile radius from where he was staying.

Some of his clothes were in the car as well at the time it was stolen.

After speaking with the insurance company, Gary was told that there was nothing they could do to compensate him for the car because he was not fully insured.

Bummer!

Then, to add insult to injury, Gary informed me that he was put on notice by his friend that the family would have to move from the current

location by the end of December, which means Gary will have to find another place (or friend) to live or stay with.

This entire situation did not work out as well as Gary had intended. I pray that the situation changes for the better.



Under the Weather: Today is day two or three of feeling *under the weather*. It began with a hint of soreness in my throat, that was followed by mucus drainage. That was followed on Friday by a constant round of sneezing, which was followed on Saturday with chills and coughing. Still, God is good. I woke up this morning feeling as if I had experienced night sweat. That causes

me to believe I must have had a low-grade fever to boot. Other than fatigue, I am in good spirits.

--

Oklahoma State: The 0-7/3-7 Cowboys will host the *Texas Tech Red Raiders* today at Boone Pickens Stadium in Stillwater. I am not certain what to expect but I am certain that the fans continue to remain very unhappy with Coach Gundy and the current coaching staff.

--

Funny Questions For Guys by Country Living that I will answer.

1. *If you could only wear one color for the rest of your life, what would it be?* **White.**
2. *What is the funniest movie you have ever seen?* **Wow, that's a tough one. I cannot think of one now.**
3. *Which actor would play you in a movie about your life?* **Esai Morales.**
4. *Who would play me in that same movie?* **I don't know because I don't know who "me" is!**
5. *Everyone knows that potatoes are the most versatile food, what's your favorite way to enjoy them?* **Mashed!!!**
6. *How are you going to survive a zombie apocalypse?* **By biting them and turning them back to normal!!**
7. *What's your most unusual habit?* **Walking around the house in my underwear.**
8. *Which dinosaur is your favorite?* **Triceratops.**
9. *Not including a wish for more wishes, if you had three wishes, what would they be?* **1 World Peace. 2 An end to poverty. 3 To own a small-town coffee shop and bakery.**
10. *What's the most useless invention of all time?* **The Atomic Bomb!**
11. *What's the grossest thing you've ever eaten?* **Lamb's Head**
12. *What's the funniest name for a Wi-Fi network you've ever seen?* **Briefs4me**

13. *Are you afraid of clowns?* **No, unless one is chasing me with a weapon in its hand.**

14. *Who's more annoying, a mime or a magician?* **A mime.**

Source:

https://www.countryliving.com/life/entertainment/a62354048/questions-to-ask-guys/?utm_source=google&utm_medium=cpc&utm_campaign=mgu_ga_clv_md_pmx_hybd_mix_us_18711629947&gad_source=1&gclid=Cj0KCQiAouG5BhDBARIsAOc08RRWcxftFAcEc9EY8YlrmhbqM8Hf1v1Qeq1uEi13G7qSLEw9Ex-C4ZMaAvzwEALw_wcB

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Sometimes. Sometimes I wish I could express what is really on my mind but for the sake of others, I will not.

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Pinterest: I saw this on Pinterest. Number 2 is interesting: *We give our lives meaning. If you feel like life is meaningless, that's your fault.* Do you suppose that is a true statement?

8 HARD TRUTHS ABOUT LIFE I WISH I KNEW EARLIER

1. Everyone you love is going to die.
2. We give our lives meaning. If you feel like life is meaningless, that's your fault.
3. The perfect partner doesn't exist. Concentrate on finding someone who has a lot of qualities you like and the same values and build a fantastic relationship.
4. Life is a game. Find the games you want to play, learn the rules, and find a way to be successful at the games you selected.
5. Everything ends. Youth, love, life, all end, and that's what makes them valuable.
6. Be romantic about the little things.
7. Be a realist about the big things. Life isn't a movie, you need to have a plan, have an artist's ambition but an engineer's mindset.
8. Figure out a way or don't complain.

--

Short Story: Alejandro's Confession: The Unspoken Truth

1. Introduction: Setting the Scene with Alejandro and Carlos:

The sun was setting over the bustling city of Friendship, Oklahoma, casting a warm, golden hue over the narrow cobblestone streets. Alejandro sat on a park bench, his eyes tracing the intricate patterns of the leaves above him. Beside him, Carlos, his best friend since childhood, was animatedly recounting a story from his creative writing class, his hands gesturing wildly in the air. Alejandro smiled, nodding along, but his mind was elsewhere, caught in the web of memories he had long tried to suppress.

2. Flashback: Alejandro's Childhood and the Trauma He Experienced:

Alejandro's childhood had been a tapestry of vibrant colors and dark shadows. Growing up in a small town, he was the youngest of three siblings, always the one with the brightest smile and the loudest laugh. But beneath that cheerful exterior lay a secret that gnawed at him—a secret that began when he was just eight years old.

The abuse started subtly, with a trusted family friend who would visit often. At first, it was just uncomfortable touches, but it soon escalated into something far more sinister. Alejandro, too young to understand, felt trapped in a nightmare he couldn't escape. The abuse continued until he was thirteen, leaving scars that would take years to heal.

3. The Moment of Revelation: Alejandro Coming Out to Carlos

As the years passed, Alejandro learned to bury his pain, masking it with humor and charm. But the truth of his past lingered, influencing his every thought and feeling. It wasn't until he was now that he began to understand his attraction to the same sex, a realization that was both liberating and terrifying.

Sitting on the park bench, Alejandro knew it was time to tell Carlos. His heart pounded in his chest as he turned to his friend, the words caught in his throat. "Carlos," he began, his voice barely above a whisper, "there's something I need to tell you."

Carlos paused, sensing the gravity of the moment. "What is it, Ale?"

Alejandro took a deep breath, the weight of his secret pressing down on him. "I'm attracted to men," he confessed, his voice trembling. "And I think it's because of what happened to me when I was a kid."

4. Carlos's Reaction: Initial Shock and Attempts to Understand

Carlos blinked; the surprise evident on his face. He opened his mouth to speak, then closed it again, struggling to find the right words. "Alejandro, I... I didn't know," he finally said, his voice filled with a mix of shock and concern.

Alejandro nodded; his eyes fixed on the ground. "I never told anyone," he admitted. "I was scared. Scared of what people would think, scared of what it meant about me."

Carlos reached out, placing a reassuring hand on Alejandro's shoulder. "I'm here for you, Ale. Whatever you need."

5. Deepening the Conversation: Exploring Alejandro's Feelings and Experiences

Encouraged by Carlos's support, Alejandro began to confide in Carlos, sharing the details of his past that he had kept hidden for so long. He spoke of the confusion and shame he felt, the fear that his abuse had somehow defined him.

"I always wondered if it was my fault," Alejandro confessed, his voice breaking. "If I did something to deserve it."

Carlos shook his head vehemently. "No, Ale. It was never your fault. You were just a kid."

Alejandro nodded, tears welling in his eyes. "I know that now, but it took a long time to get here."

6. Carlos's Support: Offering Help and Understanding

Carlos listened intently, his heart aching for his friend. "Have you talked to anyone about this? A therapist, maybe?"

Alejandro shook his head. "I was too scared. But I think I'm ready now."

Carlos smiled; a warm, reassuring smile that made Alejandro feel safe. "I'll help through this. You're not alone in this. Say, maybe we should talk to Mr. Eastgate. I happen to know that he has experience in situations like this."

Mr. Eastgate was a well-respected counselor on campus. "How do you know this," Alejandro asked. "Well," Carlos said in return. "You are not the first to confide in me about something like this. My friend Ben Stillwater also had the same experience. He told me that someone had suggested that he talk with Mr. Eastgate, and it turned out to be good for him. He's moved on, but he tells me that he is doing fine."

7. Resolution: Strengthening Their Friendship and Alejandro's Sense of Self

As the conversation continued, Alejandro felt a sense of relief wash over him. For the first time, he had shared his truth with someone he trusted,

and it hadn't changed their friendship. If anything, it had strengthened it.

Carlos's unwavering support gave Alejandro the courage to begin healing, to confront the demons of his past and embrace his situation. He realized that his attraction to men was not necessarily a consequence of his abuse, but was not something he had to act on and is a part himself could finally accept.

8. Conclusion: Reflecting on the Importance of Acceptance and Support

As the sun dipped below the horizon, Alejandro and Carlos sat in comfortable silence, the weight of the unspoken truth finally lifted. Alejandro knew the road ahead would not be easy, but with a friend like Carlos by his side, he felt ready to face whatever challenges lay ahead.

In that moment, Alejandro understood the power of acceptance and support, the profound impact it could have on a person's life. He was grateful for Carlos, for his friendship and understanding, and for the chance to finally be himself.



The city lights flickered on, casting a gentle glow over the park. Alejandro smiled, feeling a sense of peace he hadn't known in years. He was no longer defined by his past, but by the strength and resilience he had found within himself. And with Carlos by his side, he knew he could

face anything the future held.

--

Update (1:43 PM):

Oklahoma State: I was wrong. OSU and Texas Tech did not play today. They play next week. Oops!

Leda Diedrich: I had an opportunity to chat briefly by cell phone with Leda. I am afraid I revealed more about my current state of mind than I should have.

What do you do when a friend shows their true colors? You continue to stand by them, pray for them, and love them. You don't have to hang out together, but you do that much.

--

Sunday 11/17/24 7:25 AM

Peace be with you!

Hi. I will say "good morning" being it is currently 7:25 AM as of this writing.

Mass. I reluctantly decided not to attend Mass physically for fear of spreading what I have. I do not want to miss Mass. With all my heart I want to be present, but it would be self of me to put myself first over my parish family.

At my next confession, I will mention this to Father.

--

Facebook. I finally received a response from a certain individual in response to my message sent at 11:29 AM but not to the follow up message sent at 12:42 PM. One minute we are having a nice conversation, well, I thought so anyway, and the next, whoosh, the individual leaves without so much as a word. Just gone.



That's okay. I mean, it isn't okay, but it is because I love my friend and understand. Besides, it is a forgivable offense. It isn't like I haven't committed my share of dumb stuff we do to our friends. Besides, I have been around the block enough times to see the writing on the wall, and that is okay.

--

Fr. Daniel Campos (St. Thomas More): I sent Father Daniel a text message informing him that I will not be attending Mass (physically) this morning due to my illness. I don't want to risk spreading what I have. I also requested (when I am better) to make an appointment to see him for confession.

8:01 AM Update: Father Daniel responded saying he will keep me in his prayers. That is good enough for me.

--

Tuesday 11/19/24 6:24 AM

Peace be with you!

Not long ago a friend asked if I would write another book. I declined. The idea of writing another book does not appeal to me. The only writing I prefer to do these days are in the pages of this journal, although I do admit this is more of the *cookie cutter* version than a compilation of *what truly is on my mind or in my heart*.

Meaning: For the sake of whomever may be reading these journals, I am holding back for their sake. I am making nice, playing by the rules.

Matthew: I was informed Monday afternoon by my son Joshua that Julie, Matthew's Pact Team

Case Manager had attempted to contact me. According to Julie, who I spoke to on the phone not long after speaking with Josh that Matthew is going to be discharged from the *Family & Children's Services Crises Care Center* on Tuesday (which is today as of this writing).

Not long after completing my phone call with Julie, Matthew called the house phone. I answered the phone. Matthew wanted to let me know that he is being discharged on Tuesday, which I already was aware of because of my conversation with Julie. He seemed to be in a better frame of mind during this call than he was when I spoke with him, briefly, by telephone on Wednesday 111324.

During that conversation he blamed me for putting him in the *Crises Care Center*. What else is new?

Current time: 6:45 AM. My apologies, I keep dosing off. Where was I....?

Oh yes, Matthew is coming home today. That's great. I pray he can make it through a full week following his discharge with no incident.

According to Julie, Matthew informed her that he believes we worry about him too much. Okay, that's fair. That the voice has a sound and that he wants to get involved with the *Crossroads* program. When I mentioned *Crossroads* to Matt over the telephone, he acted like he did not know what I was talking about.

No worries. I shall rejoice in his homecoming.

Deacon Ken (St. Thomas More): I received an email response from Deacon Ken to last week's email (November 13th). He was in Midland, Texas teaching a class. Good for him. I am grateful that he touched base with me. I need to respond in kind.

Gary Christensen: I do not know what to make of this wayward lad. Anyway, I sent a message to Leda Diedrich, the St. Thomas More Choir Director, asking her to round up the troops so that they may take Gary and his current run of challenges into prayer. He may be an *egghead*, but he is our *egghead*, and he needs us to stand behind him during his current storm. "*Father God, in the name of Your Son, Jesus Christ, please hear our prayers for Gary. Amen.*"



Friday 112224 7:39 AM

Peace be with you!

A good prayer that should be prayed often: "**From today on, my own will does not exist. From today on, I do the will of God everywhere, always, and in everything.**" (Jesus to St. Faustina, *Diary 372*).

A new day. Many rich blessings, including the challenges. Amen.

Matthew experienced a moment of distress Thursday afternoon and evening. It was similar timeline wise from last week after his discharge from *Crisis Care*.

He was in Crises Care from Sunday, Oct. 27, 2024, to Friday, Nov. 8, 2024 (13 days). He was

readmitted on Monday, Nov. 11, 2024, where he stayed until Tuesday, Nov. 19, 2024 (9 days).

I was praying we would not have to take him again last night.

In both events, constipation was the *trigger*. His distress lessened following a bowl movement. Interesting. I noticed how Matthew's demeanor changed on the 11th and yesterday after having that bowl movement.

Although Matthew was not fully coherent, he was better and that meant we might get some rest at bedtime.

When I awoke at 4:00 AM and checked with Joshua about how Matthew did while I was sleeping, Joshua stated that Matthew experienced some light moments of distress, however, overall, he did well. According to Joshua, Matthew went to sleep in his recliner about 2:00 AM.

I have given Matthew a glass of *Metamucil* on Wednesday and Thursday with the hope that it will help with constipation and make it easier for Matthew to complete a bowl movement.

I remain grateful to our Father in Heaven for His love and any answer to prayer He desires to bless unto us and this situation. All is placed in the hands of His loving Son who is my Lord and Savior.

--

Joshua. I do not know how to summarize the conversation I had with Joshua Thursday morning, except to say that it was *educational* if nothing else.

We touched on some *button pushing* topics but nothing that could not be listened to, dissected, and worked on.

I realize there were occasions where Joshua felt that I was not listening, as in really listening, but I felt that I was (listening). I was listening because I truly want to understand what it is he is troubled by, so that I may be the Father, he needs me to be in that moment and not who I believe I should be.

Don't be the always in charge, authority figure father like "Martin Crane" from Frazier. Rather, be the understanding, open minded, 'I see you,' father like Fred Rogers (aka Mister Rogers).

There is a difference which in turn benefits the child in question be they young or adult.

Sometimes the challenge for me is wanting to hold onto certain values and traditions that I honor and respect while still embracing and learning to adjust to the changes in today's young person (culture).

Wrong is wrong and right is right. That never changes. But in the area where there is gray matter, in that area we can find compromise.

Whatever is eating away at my three sons and one daughter, I want to understand to the best of my ability so I may empathize and walk with them without upsetting the apple cart or walking on eggshells.

I do not like having to walk on eggshells.

The question is, 'How do I do that without being dad because being dad is all I know, which apparently, I have not been an always "good" dad.

Yikes! Tough crowd. Now I know what mom meant when she said, "*One day, when you have kids of your own, you will understand exactly how I am feeling today [because of you].*"

Crap! I was even getting it from mother too!

My one consolation...God knows my heart. Amen to that.

--

Sunday 112424 5:50 AM

Peace be with you!

Mental Illness. The weight of Matthew's mental illness, seeing what this is doing to him (and Joshua), and having to sometimes listen to Mark's questions or comments that I can neither seem to answer or defend properly is taxing to say the least.

Still, God must and should be glorified, praised, and love.

I will not complain because that never leads to a solution (or a plan). Instead, I must offer this an opportunity of redemption; to give it the power to do good for those who need that good most by placing it at the foot of the cross of Christ.

Don't get me wrong. There are times when I wish this cup had passed us by. That "WE" were not going through this. After all, it is "WE" not just "ME" who are affected.

But to echo the words our Lord spoke in the Garden of Gethsemane at the beginning of His Passion, *"Not my will but Thine be done."*

My suffering pales in comparison to His, so yes, I will embrace and offer this current moment in this current season as a love offering in the hope that it will do good for others.

"Mankind shall not know peace until it has turned to My Mercy." (Jesus to St. Faustina).

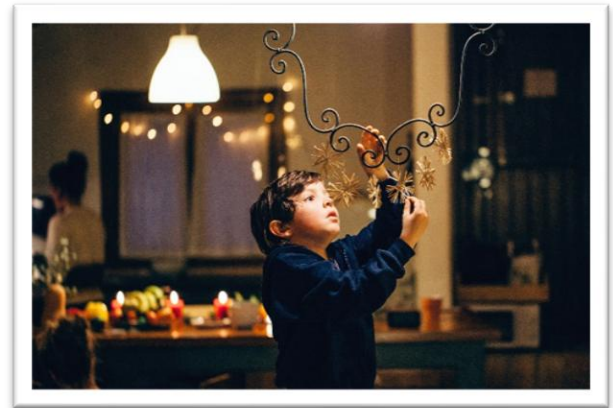
I want the Lord's Mercy. I want to walk through that door of mercy. I want to share His mercy with others!

--

Saturday. Although I had not intended it to work out this way, I spent the day (with the boys) working in the front and back.

I mowed the lawns, organized the garage a bit, brought in the plants from the front porch (with Joshua's help), disconnected the water hose from the main faucet, washed laundry (colors), moved the trash from the west side of the house to an area in the backyard, and with Joshua's assistance, we moved the barbecue and smoker from the west side of the house to the cement slab in the backyard where the patio has been sitting.

The boys, God Bless them, worked on the vine and its branches that have been growing along the fence line on the west side of the house.



I do not know which is the greater challenge on any given day, *which I will keep in my heart*, however, in the meantime, I will imagine myself at the age of the boy in the photo above and stay in that moment for a while.

--

Monday 112524 7:37 AM

Peace be with you!

The Rest of the Story. Sunday was a bit of a challenging day. While I did manage to get some "rest", I would not necessarily classify it as a full day of rest—at least not for me and Joshua.

That isn't a complaint. Merely an observation. God is great and we are always made better because of His love for us.

Do I truly believe that last statement? Yes, I do!

I realize there are days when all we want to do is throw in the towel because we feel as if we are the only ones carrying the weight of whatever on our shoulders.

However, when I really give that "thought" some thought, I know in my heart that is not true. It is God who carries the weight of our burdens, not us. It just seems as if it is us.

That is why we should always be grateful, praise God, and make everything in the day a moment of prayer—a prayer of praise and gratitude for a God who is so powerful, if He felt so inclined, with one thought could think us out of existence.

Or worse!

And yet, He chooses to love us. You can't say no to that. Well, you can because we have free will. As for me (and hopefully my house), I/we choose God.

Dinner. I did not eat "healthy" for dinner Sunday evening, but, on the flip side, it was my only meal of the day, so I take some consolation in that.

Hallmark. At the *subtle hinting* of a certain person who shall remain nameless, I watched the sequel to Hallmark's "*Three Wise Men and A Baby*" (2022), titled "*Three Wiser Men and A Boy*" (2024), starring Margaret Colin, Andrew Walker, Paul Campbell, and Tyler Hynes.

On a scale of 1 to 10 Christmas Trees with ten being best, I give "*Three Wiser Men A Boy*"-- 9 Christmas Trees. Almost perfect, but not quite.

Entertaining? Yes! Just as good as the original? I would say a little better. I really enjoyed watching the interaction and love that exists between the brothers and their mother, played by Susan Collins. However, when you consider the *law of averages*, nine Christmas trees is good for this sequel.

--

Wednesday 112624 7:37 AM

Peace be with you!

Lost A Day. I don't understand how it is that it feels as if I have lost a day, but it feels as if I have lost a day. I woke up this morning thinking today is Tuesday, when it is Wednesday—the day I am scheduled for confession with Fr. Daniel and the eve of Thanksgiving Day.

Ugh! Where does the time go?

Well, wherever it goes I hope that I am making the most of it and not wasting it on needless nonsense.

Confession. I had an opportunity to go to confession this morning with Fr. Daniel (St. Thomas More, Tulsa). I am grateful to Fr. Daniel for seeing me. I am grateful for God's mercy and His love.

Matthew. My son continues to be troubled by the voices. As much as I want to protect him, I sometimes wonder if I am hurting more than I am helping by not letting him do things on his own. I need to learn to step back and let him find his way.

--

Thursday 112824 6:00 AM

Peace be with you!

Money Trouble! Red alert! Red Alert! I received a notification from *Lincoln Heritage*

(funeral insurance) that they could not charge this month's payment due to insufficient funds in my account. Currently, there is \$73 in the account. The bill is about \$130.

The reason this occurred is because I had two unexpected payments go through that I wasn't expecting. That's on me.

I don't want to lose the insurance so I am going to believe through prayer that my Lord through Blessed Mother Mary's intercession will bless me with what is needed to cover the payment.

--

"From today on, my own will does not exist. From today on, I do the will of God everywhere, always, and in everything."

Jesus to St. Faustina, *Diary 372*

It is a good prayer. One I like to pray daily.

--

Morning Challenge. I don't know which is the most challenging, staying up past 9:00 PM or getting ready in the morning.

The mind is willing, but the body says to slow down and go with the snail pace flow. It is tough moving at this pace. It is as if I am operating on half the energy level I once had.

O, the joy of aging. I love it!

--

Thanksgiving Day. Today we Americans take time to give thanks to the Father for all our blessings and for the advantages and freedoms we have in this country. I am not grateful just for today but for every day of every month of every year. I am grateful to be an American for all the right reasons while I mourn because of the sins of our nation. Yes, today is a beautiful day to be thankful for our bounty and blessings, but it is also a good day to reflect on how I as one individual can be and do better than I did

yesterday not just for my good, but for the good of all. America the beautiful. May God truly bless our nation.



2024 Journal. I am happy to report that I was able to complete the project of combining all the individual journals (May through October) into this current journal. My intention is to publish these journals as a book at the end of the year.

--

Matthew (Urgent Care). Joshua was concerned about Matthew's coughing and complaint that his chest is hurting that he felt it necessary to take Matthew to an *Urgent Care*. I would have gone with them, but I believe Josh wanted me to stay behind and rest. Matthew is okay. The attending physician recommended picking up the following: *Flow-Nase* and a cough suppressant such as *Robitussin*. The doctor also sent in a new prescription of *Famotidine* for heartburn. I am thankful that Josh felt the need to have his brother checked by a doctor just to be on the safe side.



The Present Moment (Reflection).

Grateful. I am grateful. *Content.* To an extent I am content but not fully content. *Satisfied.* That is to be determined. *Fulfilled.* Yes, to a degree, I am. *Accomplished.* In certain ways I feel accomplished. In other ways, I do not. *Eggshells.* It is how I feel that I must be around certain individuals, lest I push a button or offend them. My *pride* always wants to change that equation.

Presently, I am good. God is seeing to my needs. I have assistance in caring for Matthew although I remain uncertain how long that will last. I am concerned that it is becoming too much to bear for this individual.

The 80-year-old isn't exactly a bucket full of joy, not that I depend upon him to be my source of joy. I know deep down inside he does not want to be the person he currently is, but the fact remains that he is.

How do I divide my time equally between the three and still make time for God and me? That is my question for the present moment.

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Friday 112924 6:13 AM

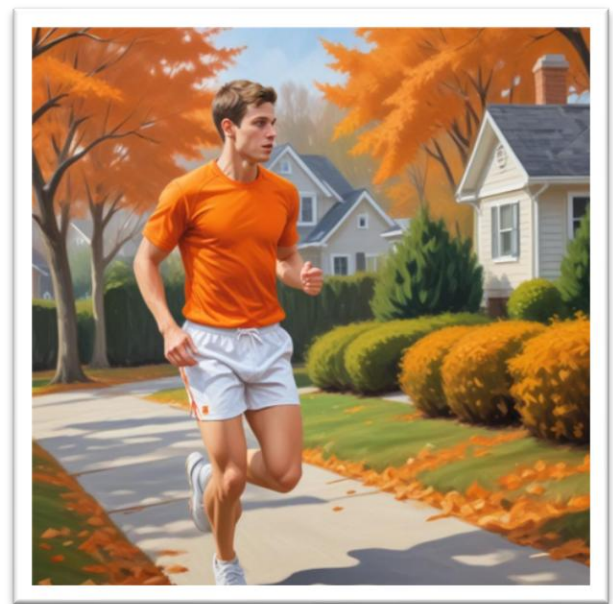
Peace be with you!

Gobble! Gobble! Today we will honor the Thanksgiving tradition by giving thanks, breaking bread, and sharing a meal this evening with my

son Michael as our guest. I pray the evening goes off without incident, otherwise, why get together? We are getting together today because Michael could not be present on Thursday.

--

Matthew. I believe the *Poloxin* injection Matthew received six days hence is finally beginning to be effective. He appears a trifle better than he has been the last four days after receiving the injection. The voices still annoy him, but my hope is that they are quieter and less troublesome.



Jogging. I miss jogging. As much as I enjoy putting on my white shorts and a top shirt, jogging outdoors with just God, myself, and nature is such an incredible experience. I wonder how much of my inability to jog has more to do with me than what I believe my limitations are physically. I mean, if Deacon Ken who is a few years older than me can jog and live life to the fullest, why can't I? Come this spring if the Lord will allow it, I plan to change this situation from a negative to a positive. Maybe I can invite the boys to come along on occasion too.

White. Why am I partial to the color white. I mean, really, why am I? When it comes to

underwear, t-shirts, shorts, pants, and dress shirts, I prefer white to colors. It isn't because I dislike the colors, I just enjoy wearing white. I suppose that is the answer—because I enjoy wearing white. Most likely this preference for white stems back to my childhood. That's okay, it works for me.

--

Short Story. Boston Shaughnessy Mystery: The Case of the Disappearing High-Hat. Written by Carlos Michael Padilla.

Introduction

Boston Shaughnessy was no ordinary detective. Known for his sharp intellect and unparalleled intuition, he solved some of the most perplexing cases across the globe. His reputation preceded him, and it was this very reputation that led Lady Penelope High-Hat to his doorstep.

Her husband, Wilfred High-Hat, had mysteriously vanished during a business trip to old San Antonio, Texas. Rumors swirled that he had fallen prey to the infamous San Antonio werewolf. Lady Penelope, desperate and distraught, implored Boston to uncover the truth behind her husband's disappearance.

Background

Old San Antonio, Texas, was a city steeped in history and mystery. Its cobblestone streets and colonial architecture whispered tales of the past. Yet, among these tales, none was more chilling than that of the San Antonio werewolf. Legend had it that a creature, half-man and half-beast, roamed the outskirts of the city under the cover of darkness, preying on unsuspecting victims.

Wilfred High-Hat had traveled to San Antonio for a series of business meetings. His last known whereabouts were at a local inn, where he had checked in but never checked out. The innkeeper

recalled seeing him leave one evening, never to return. The only clue left behind was a torn piece of fabric, stained with what appeared to be blood.

Investigation

Upon arriving in San Antonio, Boston Shaughnessy wasted no time. His initial observations revealed a city on edge, its residents wary of the night. He began his investigation by interviewing locals, each with their own version of the werewolf legend. Some claimed to have seen the creature, while others dismissed it as mere folklore.

Boston meticulously gathered clues, piecing together the events leading up to Wilfred's disappearance. He explored potential motives and suspects, considering everything from business rivals to personal vendettas. Yet, the shadow of the werewolf loomed large over the investigation.

The Werewolf Legend

To understand the legend of the San Antonio werewolf, Boston delved into the city's history. The tale dated back to the early settlers, who spoke of a cursed man, transformed into a beast by the light of the full moon. Over the years, sightings have been reported, each more terrifying than the last.

Boston examined the evidence with a critical eye. The torn fabric and bloodstains suggested a struggle, but were they the work of a mythical creature or something more human? He considered the possibility of a hoax, designed to instill fear and cover up a more sinister plot.

Climax

As Boston dug deeper, he uncovered a crucial piece of evidence: a hidden journal belonging to Wilfred High-Hat. The entries revealed a man troubled by secrets, hinting at a clandestine meeting on the night of his disappearance.

Boston's breakthrough came when he discovered a connection between Wilfred and a local businessman, known for his ruthless tactics and rumored involvement in illegal activities.

Confrontation was inevitable. Boston confronted the businessman, armed with evidence and the element of surprise. Under pressure, the man confessed to orchestrating Wilfred's disappearance, using the werewolf legend as a smokescreen to divert attention from his criminal dealings.

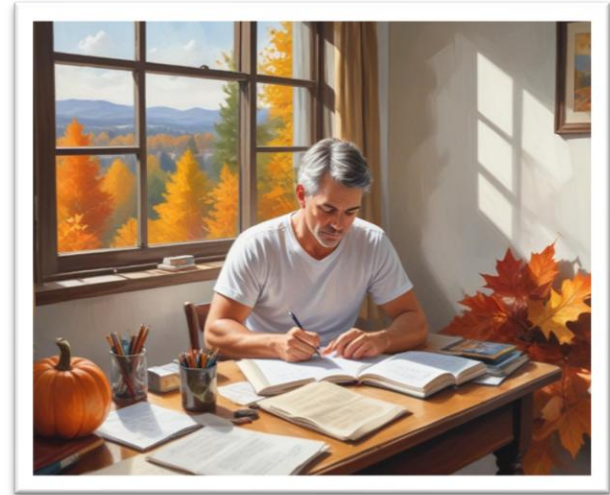
Resolution

The truth behind Wilfred High-Hat's disappearance was finally revealed. He had been lured into a trap; his fate sealed by those who sought to silence him. Boston's keen detective work had unraveled the mystery, bringing justice to Wilfred and closure to Lady Penelope.

The aftermath of the case left a lasting impact on the community. The werewolf legend, once a source of fear, was now seen as a cautionary tale of deception and greed. Lady Penelope, though heartbroken, found solace in the truth and the knowledge that her husband's legacy would endure.

Conclusion

Reflecting on the case, Boston Shaughnessy pondered the power of myths and the darkness that often lurked beneath them. His skills as a detective had once again proven invaluable, and his reputation as a solver of mysteries was further solidified. As he prepared to leave San Antonio, Boston knew that more mysteries awaited him, each with its own secrets to uncover and truths to reveal.



Writing. I enjoy writing, especially journal writing and short stories. I am not very good at it, but I enjoy it just the same. How much more would I enjoy were if I were sitting at my desk with nothing but a t-shirt, underwear, and socks on, living in one of the northern states (e.g., *Vermont, New Hampshire, Maine, Minnesota, Wisconsin, or Michigan*), where the fall season looks like fall and the winters are cold, with a view of the Autumn season behind me, a nice cup of hot coffee, tea or chocolate sitting on my desk as I write? That would be life for me.

--

California & Oklahoma. Forty-one years I spent in California. I no longer miss California.

Twenty-two years Thursday, Thanksgiving day, I have lived in Oklahoma. If the Lord permits me to live another nineteen years, I will have lived the same number of years in Oklahoma that I did in California.

That is crazy when I think about it.

Now that mom and dad are gone (2018 and 2020) and big brother Frank (2013), there isn't any reason to return home. Wait, let me rephrase that statement. Aside from visiting family and friends, there is no reason to return home.

Sure, there is much to see and do in southern California that is not available in Oklahoma, but there is something about this part of the country as I assume it would be for me living in northern New England that feels right. That is the only way I know how to describe the feeling—*it just feels right*.

Family. My only regret or regrets (plural) is that I had to leave two of the children behind when I moved to Oklahoma, and the time that I did not get to spend with mom, dad, and brother big and the family. I realize this may be difficult for some people to understand when you consider their view on family based on personal experience—I *love the family*.

Yes, even with all the so-called negative experiences growing up, the dysfunctional nature of the family and the fact that they are imperfect creatures who do not walk on water, *I love my family*, and I would not want them any other way.

Our parents loved us. They did the best they could with what they had. No, it wasn't perfect love. Mistakes were made. Unkind, mean-spirited words were expressed mainly due to anger or frustration that really had nothing to do with me or my siblings and vice versa. My parents and siblings are no less human than me. And being human with a broken nature with the propensity to sin, hell, we all fall short of the glory of God.

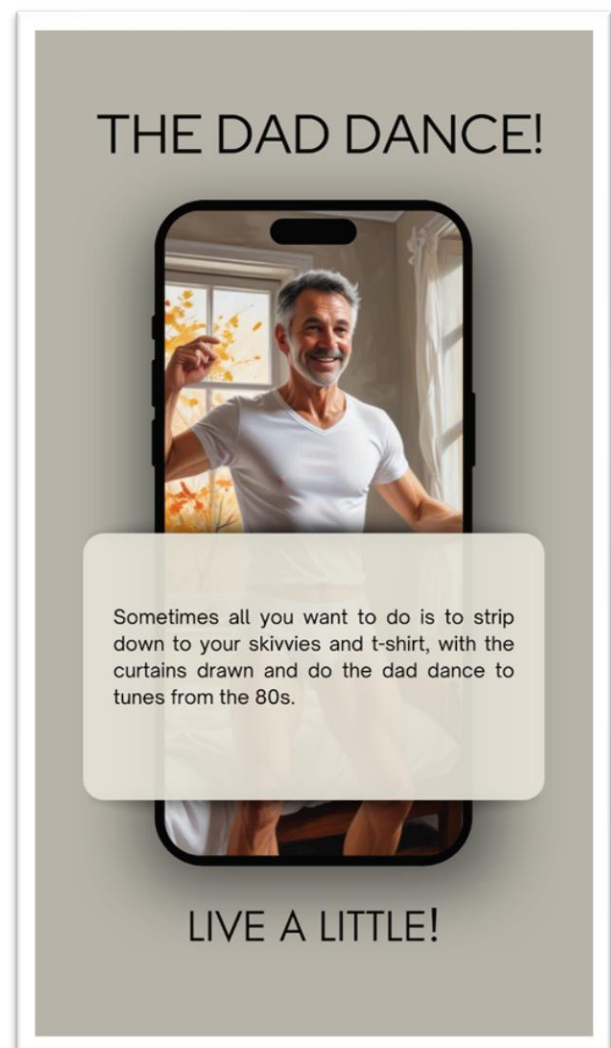
Which makes me wonder what God really thinks about un knuckleheads. It is a good thing for us that He is loving, forgiving, and merciful otherwise we would be toast.

The last time I visited southern California and spent time with my family was in 2021. I was present for dad's funeral. That was three years ago. That seems to be the average time between visits—at least since 2005. It is time for another

visit. But if that does not happen, I am okay with that too.

I enjoy my life in Oklahoma too. It isn't quite as I had hoped it would be for a multitude of reasons, but life is good and that is all I can and should be grateful for.

Have a blessed Friday!



Short Story. *Leave It To Roger.* Written by Carlos Michael Padilla.

Setting the Scene

Carlos and Alejandro were two brothers who shared a fascination for the golden age of television. Their evenings were often spent in the cozy confines of their living room, where the soft glow of the television set cast a warm light over the room.

The brothers were particularly captivated by a 1950s sitcom called "Leave It To Roger," a show that depicted the idyllic life of the Dodger family. The series was a window into a world that seemed simpler and more straightforward, a stark contrast to the complexities of modern life.

On this evening, Carlos and Alejandro settled into their usual spots on the couch, a bowl of popcorn between them. The episode titled "*Roger Graduates from High School*" was about to begin, and they watched eagerly as the familiar theme song played.

The black-and-white images flickered on the screen, drawing them into the world of Frank and Roger Dodger, the two brothers whose antics and adventures were the heart of the show.

The Screen Flickers

As the episode progressed, something unusual happened. The screen began to flicker, the images distorting and warping in a way that was both mesmerizing and unsettling. Carlos and Alejandro exchanged puzzled glances, unsure of what was happening. Before they could react, a strange force seemed to emanate from the television, pulling them towards it with an irresistible magnetism.

In an instant, the room around them dissolved, and they felt themselves being drawn into the screen. The sensation was unlike anything they had ever experienced—a whirlwind of light and sound that left them breathless and disoriented.

Inside the Episode

When the world finally stopped spinning, Carlos and Alejandro found themselves standing in a high school hallway. The walls were lined with lockers, and students bustled around them, dressed in the vintage attire of the 1950s. The brothers looked down at themselves and realized they, too, were dressed in period clothing. Carlos wore a letterman jacket, while Alejandro sported a neatly pressed shirt and tie.

It didn't take long for them to understand what had happened. They were no longer mere spectators of "Leave It To Roger"; they were now part of the episode itself. Carlos had assumed the role of Frank Dodger, the older brother, while Alejandro had become Roger, the high school senior about to graduate.

Adapting to Their Roles

The initial shock of their situation quickly gave way to curiosity and excitement. Carlos and Alejandro decided to embrace their new roles, eager to explore the world of the Dodgers from the inside. They navigated the hallways, interacting with classmates and teachers, all of whom seemed oblivious to the fact that they were not the real Frank and Roger.

As they settled into their roles, the brothers discovered the charm and simplicity of 1950s life. The absence of modern technology was refreshing, and they found joy in the small, everyday interactions that defined the era. They attended classes, participated in school events, and even joined the baseball team, where Carlos's athletic prowess as Frank shone through.

Challenges in Maintaining the Storyline

However, their adventure was not without its challenges. The episode's storyline required Roger to deliver a valedictorian speech at the graduation ceremony, a task that Alejandro found daunting. He struggled to memorize the lines and maintain the character's demeanor, fearing that

any slip-up might disrupt the narrative and expose their true identities.

Meanwhile, Carlos faced his own set of challenges. Like Frank, he was expected to provide guidance and support to Roger, a role that required him to balance his protective instincts with the need to let Alejandro navigate his own path. The pressure of maintaining the storyline weighed heavily on both brothers, testing their ability to adapt and improvise.

A Pivotal Moment

The day of the graduation ceremony arrived, and with it, the climax of their adventure. Alejandro stood nervously at the podium, the eyes of the entire school upon him. Carlos watched from the audience, silently wishing his brother to succeed.

As Alejandro began his speech, he stumbled over the words, his nerves getting the better of him. The audience shifted uncomfortably, sensing that something was amiss. In that moment, Carlos realized that the key to their success lay not in perfecting the script, but in embracing the authenticity of their experience.

With newfound confidence, Alejandro abandoned the prepared speech and spoke from the heart. He shared his thoughts on the importance of family, friendship, and the lessons he had learned during their time in the 1950s. His words resonated with the audience, and the tension in the room dissolved into applause and cheers.

Returning to Their World

With the graduation ceremony complete, Carlos and Alejandro felt a familiar sensation—a gentle tug that signaled their time in the episode was coming to an end. As the world around them began to fade, they exchanged a knowing glance, grateful for the adventure they had shared.

In a flash, they were back in their living room, the television set humming softly in the background. The episode had ended, and the screen displayed the closing credits of "Leave It To Roger." Carlos and Alejandro sat in silence for a moment, processing the extraordinary experience they had just undergone.

Reflecting on Their Adventure

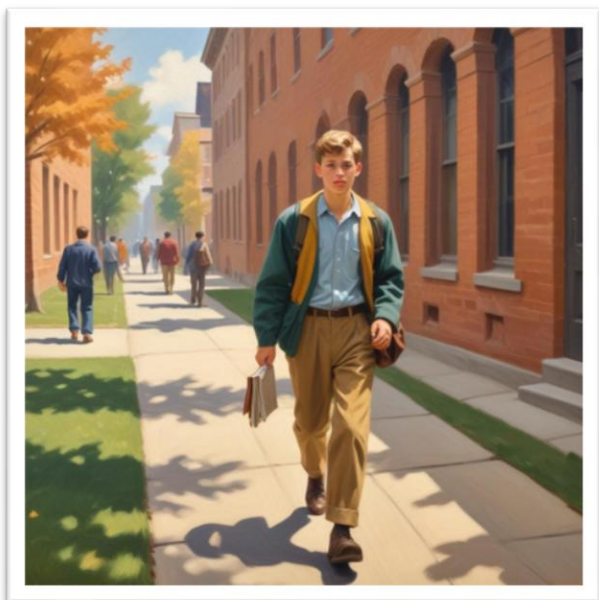
Their journey into the world of "Leave It To Roger" had been an unexpected gift, a chance to step into a different time and place and see life through a new lens. It had taught them the value of adaptability, the power of authenticity, and the enduring importance of family and friendship.

As they reflected on their adventure, Carlos and Alejandro realized that the lessons they had learned in the 1950s were just as relevant in their own lives. The experience had deepened their bond as brothers and left them with a newfound appreciation for the simple joys of life.

With a smile, Carlos reached for the remote and turned off the television. "What do you think, Alejandro?" he asked. "Ready for another adventure?"

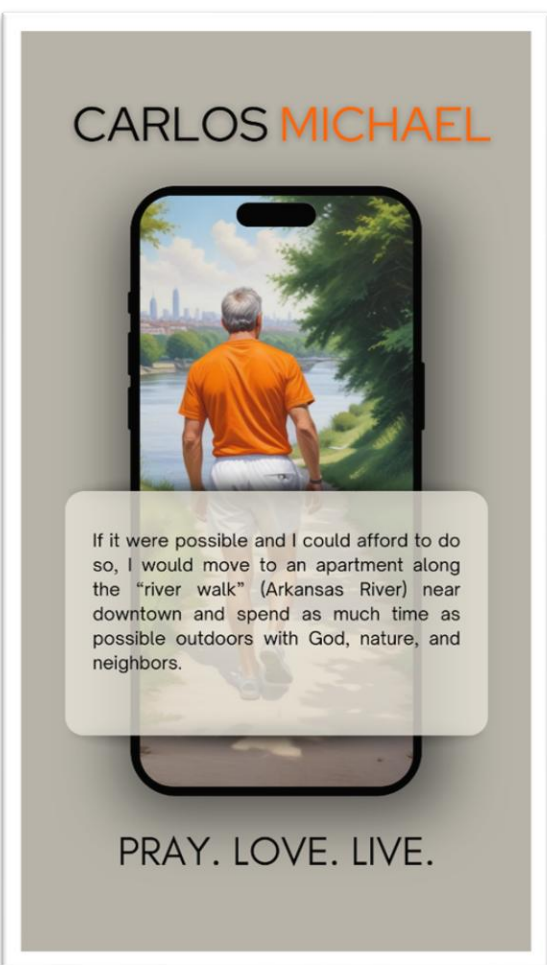
Alejandro grinned, nodding in agreement. "Absolutely," he replied. "But maybe next time, we should pick a show with a little less drama."

And with that, the brothers settled back into the comfort of their living room, ready to embrace whatever adventures the future might hold.



Challenging Friday. I don't know what pushed my button this morning, but I went from nice to naughty to nice again that I was not happy about. By *naughty*, I am referring to feeling angry and uncharitable which is uncommon for me—at least these days. The temptation is to react the way evil would have me do, but I did everything I could through God's grace and my son's encouragement not to do that. Whatever brought it on, I am glad that grace and love assisted me with getting through it.

Oklahoma State Cowboys. Today was the final game of the season for the Cowboys. Colorado defeated the Pokes in Boulder, **52-0**. The Cowboys finished the season, 3 and 9 winning their three non-conference games against South Dakota State, Tulsa, and Arkansas but losing all nine conference games, including their home games. I don't know how Coach Gundy plans to change the situation but something positive needs to take place if the Pokes want to have a decent season in 2025. I am glad the season is over. I feel bad for the team but especially for Ollie Gordon, Brennon Preston, and the other players who gave it their all. God bless them.





2024 NON-CONFERENCE GAMES (3-0):

OSU 44 South Dakota State 20 083124

OSU 39 Arkansas 31 090724

OSU 45 Tulsa 10 091424

2024 CONFERENCE GAMES (0-9):

OSU 19 Utah 22 092124

OSU 20 Kansas State 42 092824

OSU 14 West Virginia 38 100524

OSU 35 BYU 35 101824

OSU 28 Baylor 38 102624

OSU 21 Arizona State 42 110224

OSU 13 TCU 38 110924

OSU 48 Texas Tech 56 112324

OSU 0 Colorado 52 112924

Go Pokes!



Saturday 113024 6:07 AM

Peace be with you!

Friday Thanksgiving. I am afraid our Friday Thanksgiving did not turn out well. I want to commend my son Josh who worked hard to prepare the meal with guidance from Mark. I did what I could, but staying out of the way is probably the best thing I could do.

What I mean by “did not turn out well,” is that I was angry part of the day, Josh was concerned about how to enjoy his meal in the company of his brother, and Mark seemed disinterested.

It’s no one’s fault. It was just one of those days. I believe moving forward I am going to ask that we no longer throw ourselves into the holidays, especially Thanksgiving and Christmas.

Sure, let’s enjoy the season, but let’s not concern ourselves with fixing a special meal, buying gifts, or putting up a Christmas tree. It is kind of a moot point these days.

Instead, just spending whatever small amounts of time we can spend together, drinking tea or

coffee and sharing small talk while listening to holiday music while lightly decorating the house is good enough for me.

But life isn't about me so I would have to consider the opinions and feelings of the other members of the household as well.

Let Me Out! I feel as if I am caught in a jar with the lid affixed tightly with no hope of escape. The air is shallow. My lungs are mired in pain with each breath I take. Anxiety is beginning to set in as I begin to experience *image mirages* in my mind of what isn't there.

The path is clear, close my eyes, relax, breathe slowly, slow down the beat of my heart and pray. God will take care of the rest.

Last Day of November. I just realized today is the last day of November. I have a busy week ahead. Mark has a dental appointment on Monday. Matthew has an appointment with his Urologist on Wednesday and I am scheduled to meet with the new (former) Urologist (Dr. Israel) on Friday, followed by the *First Saturday Devotion* on Saturday.

The *First Sunday of Advent* begins tomorrow as well.

Today was a good day. Thank you, Father God.



Sunday 120124 5:59 AM

Peace be with you!

First Sunday of Advent. “Snow, snow, snow, snow, snow. It won't be long before we'll all be there with snow...” Those are the opening words to the song “Snow” written by *Irving Berlin* and sung by *Bing Crosby, Danny Kaye, Rosemary Clooney, and Vera-Allen* in “*White Christmas*” (1954).

Great movie. Good song. I wish there was snow on the ground now and that cold winter chill in the air, the fireplace burning as the flames dance across the logs and Christmas decorations, music, and holiday cheers abounding in the house and neighborhood.



The secular aspect of Christmas is great: Christmas trees, families spending time together, holiday decorations, eggnog, listening to Nat

King Cole, Bing Crosby, Perry Cuomo, Johnny Matthis, and Andy Willimas delighting us with Christmas music, holiday programming (that is decent) ...it makes for the most wonderful time of the year.

However, the most important reason for the season that makes celebrating Advent in the Christmas season so special is the coming of the Lord as an infant. God Himself, who possesses both a Divine and Human nature comes into the world not as a King in all his glory with an army of angels surrounding Him—as it should be.

Instead, He comes in the quiet stillness of that cold early morning in Bethlehem as a baby who was wrapped in swaddling clothes and placed in a manger. The King of Kings, the Lord of Lords, the name that is greatest above every name comes as a whisper in the night born in extreme poverty and yet, HE IS GOD!

I will enjoy the secular side of Christmas, but I will find joy not in presents nor delicious food nor parades nor on television nor at the local Mall. No! My joy will be in the infant Jesus who will be waiting for me in the Blessed Sacrament in my local Church. That is where the joy of Christmas will be found.

“O Come all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant...”

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Thanksgiving After Thought. While I have not been visited by the ghosts of Thanksgiving past, present, and future, I have had time to reflect on this past Thanksgiving day, thought about the conversations I had with my son Joshua, and kept my heart and mind as best as I could in prayer. Here is what I concluded.

I was wrong to say what I did on Saturday's broadcast, “*Not All Holidays Are Created Equal.*” I was speaking from emotion and not necessarily from the heart. I looked at the day entirely wrong. Credit to my son Joshua who showed me the error of my way.

I was focused on the fact that my button(s) were pushed that I failed to see the beauty of love in action taking place in the kitchen, with my son Matthew, with Mark, around the house, the friends and family that came over, etc.

Shame on me!

My son is correct. Do not stop living. Do not stop giving. Do not stop being who you are, who I am.

One life does touch another life and how that affects the other is dependent upon how I react and respond to the good or bad that may be taking place currently in my life.

I was wrong and I am glad that the Holy Spirit and grace through my youngest son exposed my prideful humanity and showed me the error of my way. God is amazing indeed!

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Michael. It was nice visiting with my oldest boy on Thanksgiving Friday—which is when we honored Thanksgiving. He looked tired. As tired as he looked, he still made time to stop by and spend time with us.

As my son was leaving, I hugged him, I found myself not wanting to let go. I had not felt that way since he was a young boy. He was the apple of my eye then and still is today.

I love my children. I love them as they are, imperfect in every way, and that is okay because they are my children. Correction, they are God's children. I merely have the privilege and honor to be their earthly Father.

If only I had performed better in that role. The children deserve that much.

Now the children are adults. Some with children of their own. How can I as their father be present to them as adults?

The problem is as I have mentioned to Joshua several times, *"I don't know how to be anything other than a father because that is who and what I am."*

Sure, I failed. Yes, I let them down. Of course, I made mistakes. But none of that negates how much I love my children and the tremendous joy they bring into my life.

My prayer is that they will forgive me for any wrongdoing on my part and always continue to love me as I am –imperfect but always trying to do better.

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A father is neither an anchor to hold us back, nor a sail to take us there, but a guiding light whose love shows us the way:

By an unknown author

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Monday 120224 6:37 AM

Peace be with you!

What Do People Want To Know? That is the question I often wonder about when posting these entries for all to read. What does the reader want to really know about this relatively unknown individual who writes almost daily in this journal with the intention of publishing it at the end of the year?

Why go through all the trouble? Who is going to read this anyway?

To the first question, I would imagine that the reader is as curious as I would be if I were reading someone's journals—famous or not.

Who were they really? How did that individual really feel about a certain incident he or she wrote about in their journal when it occurred? Not the generic family-friendly narrative, but the real meat and potatoes version of the incident.

I would like the author of the journal to pull back the veil and show me who he or she really is.

As to why I go through the trouble of writing when most likely no one will read these journals.

It's simple, really.

I want to leave a record of what I can remember about myself and my life (past and present) that I can leave to my children, grandchildren and future generations of family members.

I want to speak to them as if we are visiting the *best virtual coffee shop in America*, meeting over coffee with the intention of telling my story, my life journey experiences. Share who I am. To remove the veil as it were and tell the whole story, not just the family-friendly version.

The Dentist. I drove Mark to his 12:30 appointment at Dr. Smith's office. He said he was seen by Dr. Smith's son. I am happy for Dr. Smith that his son has joined his practice.

Low Tire. After returning home and not making any stops, I noticed that the low-tire light turned on as we were entering the garage. I guess we will have to take the car to Hibdon's to get the tire checked and put air in the tire.

Dr. Israel (Urologist). I cancelled Friday's upcoming appointment (120324). I don't know why I did that other than the fact that I don't think I am ready to see Dr. Israel again. He was my first urologist when I first saw a urologist about the UTI. He was with *Hillcrest* at the time. He moved on to the *Saint Francis Health System* which is when I was assigned to *Dr. Paul Hagood* on 91st and 169th. The reason I had to switch from Dr. Hagood to a new urologist is because I learned during my *November 5th* appointment with Dr. Hagood he is no longer covered under insurance. That is because I switched providers from *OSU Eastgate* back to *Dr. Michael Saylor*.

Joshua's Brakes. I learned from Joshua Monday afternoon that the brakes on his truck have finally expired. There is no point belaboring the point because he did not have the financial resources to fix the brakes when he first was

aware of their condition. He tried, but the cost to repair the brakes was more than he could afford. I think Mark has offered to get the brakes repaired. That is a blessing by God for the good that Joshua has been doing recently. I truly believe that.

CarlosMichael360

by Carlos Michael Padilla

God is ever present. Always watching. Believe!

--Carlos Michael



Christmas at home (2024)

Wednesday 120424 6:43 AM

Peace be with you!

Miracle or Christmas Blessing? On Monday, I mentioned Joshua's brakes going out and the dilemma of how they were going to be repaired. Mark offered to assist with the repairs but in his heart, I am certain that was not his first choice—and that is okay. I get it.

I did not know what to tell my son except to reassure him that everything will be okay, God is watching, He has this situation in His care.

Fast forward to Tuesday afternoon when Mark and I stopped at Hibdon Tires, to check the low pressure in the tires. If you recall in Monday's entry, I had mentioned that the low-pressure light came on after taking Mark to the dentist.

While speaking with the representative at Hibdon's about the tire, Mark inquired about applying for credit with Hibdon's. When he mentioned it to me, he suggested that I try applying for the credit. My immediate reaction was, *"Are you insane. Me apply for credit. There is no way I will get approved."* Of course, I said that to myself.

Mark followed up by saying, *"If you apply and you get denied, then I will apply for the credit."* Again, that was not his first choice, but he was kind enough to offer.

When we arrived home Mark looked up online where to apply for credit, sent me the link and encouraged me to follow through. He essentially said, *"What do you have to lose. All they can say is no."*

He was right.

At that moment I recalled an email I received from *Experion* informing me that my credit score had risen.

I did not pay much attention to it because I thought it was a scam.

After clicking on the link that Mark provided and giving it some thought, I decided to sign up for a seven-day free trial with Experion. Not just to validate the email I received but for a few other reasons as well.

The email was confirmed. The score was correct. I could not believe it. *"How did that happen?"* I wondered to myself. *"How did my credit score rise to the numbers listed?"* Mark reassured me that my score should be good enough to get approved for the card with Hibdon's.

Here is when I ask, *"Was this a miracle or a Christmas blessing?"*

This had to come from me. Joshua is my son. He needs my help. If he cannot walk in faith, then I must do it for both of us. God keeps His promises.

So, I submitted my application for credit and left the rest to God. At best, I would get approved. At worst, I would not get approved, and Mark would apply. Either way, I believed Joshua was going to get his car repaired.

There were no if's, and's or but's about it. When I needed my son and Matthew needed his brother, although he did so reluctantly at first, Joshua stepped up in a huge way to help.

Not because he felt obligated because of how he treated me or Matthew in the past. That was just his cover story. He stepped up because God called him into service and without realizing it, he responded with a yes for one reason--love.

He acted very unselfishly.

So, when he needed God and us during a moment of great need, guess what happened, God came through!!

I was approved with a credit line that was more than enough to get Joshua's truck repaired.

Was it a miracle? No, not for me. It was a Christmas blessing, and I am so deeply grateful to

God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit not just for this blessing, but for everything.

Jesus said to Peter, *“Peter, do you love me?”* Peter responded, *“Yes, Lord, I love you.”* Jesus said in response, *“Then go and feed my sheep.”*

Every day, Lord. Let that be my mission every day.



Dining room table. Christmas 2024.

Counting Blessings. I have every reason to be joyful for God has blessed me beyond measure. These blessings are not meant for me to hold onto but to be shared and used in a providential manner according to His will, not mine. Not my will, but His be done. Amen.

Matthew. Matthew mentioned last night and again this morning that his bottom front teeth hurt. I was concerned that perhaps he had a cavity. He was scheduled to get his teeth cleaned several months back; however, I had to cancel due to the *Crisis Care Center* incidents.

I phoned *Flawless Smile Dentistry* this morning and was blessed to be able to get him in right away. It turns out that he had leftover turkey (or something) imbedded in his teeth which caused his gums to become inflamed. The dentist was able to take care of that but recommended that

we schedule Matt for his teeth cleaning. He will require two sessions.

The dentist also suggested that I give Matt some Tylenol when we return home and have him rinse his mouth with mouthwash as well as floss his teeth.

When we were leaving Matthew indicated that he was hungry. We stopped at McDonald's and got him two (2) breakfast bagel sandwiches.

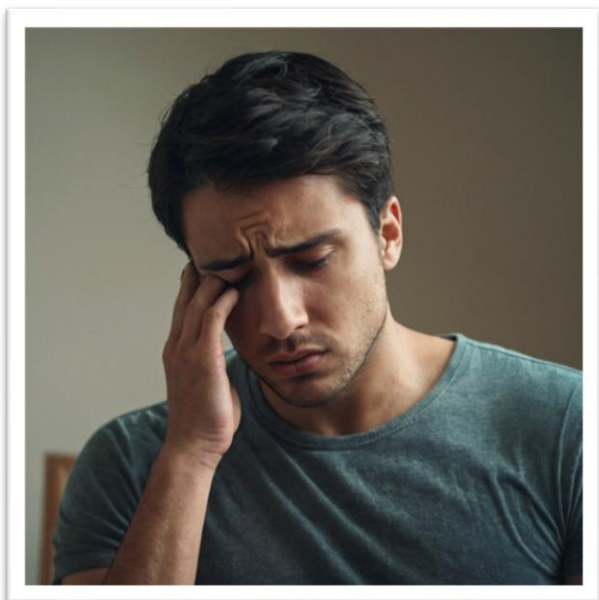
After arriving home, I gave him a spray of Nasal mist to help with his stuffy nose and Tylenol. He is resting in his room.

Later in the afternoon we took Matthew to the Urologic Specialists for his appointment with the urologist. After arriving and taking an X-ray, we reported to “Pod G” as instructed and waited to meet with the urologist.

We had a bit of a wait before finally getting called back. According to the urologist, she was having trouble reading the X-ray and suggested that she schedule Matt to have a Cat Scan completed. She said she would call us on Thursday to let us know when to take him in.

After finishing with the Urologist, I took the boys to eat before going to *Hibdon's Tires* to pick up Joshua's truck. The work on the brakes has been completed. The total cost was about \$1300.00

“It's a beautiful day in the neighborhood” and I get to share a small portion of it. May God be praised. Amen.



Saturday 120724 8:23 AM

Peace be with you!

Exhausted! Some mornings you wake up and you say to yourself, “Self! I am beat, burnt out, tired, exhausted.”

And there other days when you feel the same in terms of lack of energy or exhaustion but you’re like, “Self, I am tired but today is a great day to be alive!”

That is how I feel this morning. Today is *First Saturday*. Let’s make it count!

Update! With gratitude in my heart, First Saturday took place. We had a small showing, about six, but Mass was celebrated, confessions were made, the Rosary was recited, and fellowship abounded. I am just sorry that we did not complete the 15-minute meditation as is customary on the First Saturday.

Leda, Tammy, Teresa, Jack, Dorothy and I were in attendance. Fr. Gormley (associate pastor at St. Anne’s in Broken Arrow), heard confession and

celebrated Mass. He is truly a treasure to the local Church.

Tammy informed me that Cathy (Miller) is petitioning or seeking to get the First Saturday Devotion started at St. Henry Catholic Church in Owasso. If this occurs it means we will lose both Tammy and Teresa, but I will be joyful for Cathy and St. Henry’s knowing that the First Saturday Devotion is possibly growing. I pray that is the case.

Now, if I can only reign in my sins and start being a true friend of my Lord and His Mother. I trust Jesus that this will happen for I want nothing more than to leave the trappings of this world and love the Trinity and Our Lady in Heaven

Matthew. Matthew slept most of the day. I pray that is a good thing considering how sick he has been as of late. He still has not regained the use of his voice. I remain confident that he will weather this season in his life and come out better on the other side.

Big 12 Championship. Arizona State versus Iowa State. The #13 Sundevils rolled over the #16 Cyclones, 45-19. Didn’t see the Sundevils coming at the beginning of the season. Forks up!



Sunday 120824 3:46 PM

Peace be with you!

Summary. I woke up tired but did not let that fatigue extinguish the morning. I completed my morning routine, said my prayers, and went to Mass at St. Thomas More (Tulsa).

As I entered the church, I noticed Deacon Ken having a conversation with Dave in the choir area of the main sanctuary. Joye (Dave's wife) was walking from the back of the church to where Deacon Ken and Dave were.

I bowed before the Lord before proceeding to the choir room. While in the choir room prior to Joye walking in, I continued to say a few prayers in silence.

Not long after Joye walked into the choir room the rest of the choir members, less Jim, Janet, Jose, and Cynthia followed suit. We warmed out and headed toward the main sanctuary.

Fr. Daniel Campos celebrated Mass.

Following Mass, I joined some of the choir members and other members of the parish community in the coffee room for coffee, Mexican sweet bread and fellowship.

I had an opportunity to chat with Susan, Ralph, Jordan Laura, Chris, Dorothy, Deacon Ken, Leda, and Rose. I offered to take Leda home so Rose could run an errand.

Before taking Leda home I asked if she would like to join me for breakfast. She agreed and we went to IHOP on 31st and 129th. I really enjoyed my time visiting Leda this morning. That, for me was a prayerful moment.

Upon my return home, I greeted Mark, checked on Matt and Josh, and took care of a couple of computer related items before sitting down and watching television. Not the most exciting way to spend a Sunday but it was restful.



Marriage. "On the first day of Christmas, my true love gave to me..."

What is true love?

According to Google's Ai, *True love is a powerful emotion that involves caring for someone's well-being and happiness, even when it requires sacrifice. It's a process that involves mutual understanding, acceptance, and support, and it can be characterized by several other aspects:*

1. **Trust:** *You can trust that your partner is honest with you, and you can be honest with them.*
2. **Respect:** *You recognize and value each other's individuality, opinions, and feelings.*
3. **Empathy:** *You can deeply understand each other's feelings.*
4. **Commitment:** *You're committed to staying together and making the relationship work, even during challenging times.*
5. **Communication:** *Communication with your partner often feels natural and effortless.*
6. **Common goals:** *You and your partner likely have aligned life goals and a vision for the future.*
7. **Acceptance:** *You embrace each other's flaws and imperfections.*
8. **Forgiveness:** *You're able to be sorry for your mistakes and accept that your partner is sorry for theirs.*
9. **Patience:** *You give your partner the time to mature and develop at their own pace.*
10. **Letting go:** *You're willing to prioritize your partner's happiness and well-being, even if it means stepping back.*

The key words that caught my attention with respect to *true love* are *trust, honesty, respect, value, commitment, communication, goals, vision, acceptance, forgiveness, patience, and sacrifice.*

I was just telling my friend (Leda) Sunday morning with respect to marriage (thinking of my two previous marriages as an example), *"It is said that*

couples are not willing to stand and fight for what is right [these days] with respect to marriage. It is so much easier [these days] to cut and run than to fight and save the marriage."

While I agree that not all marriages just as not all friendships are Godly marriages or friendships. However, that should be the *exception* not the *norm*.

That is when my dear friend Leda said, *"Some people do not understand the difference between a "covenant" [which is what a marriage is] and a contract."*

Touche', Leda. You hit the nail on the head with that one. Marriage is a beautiful sacrament, a relationship where the two become one and through their union and love, the gift of life continues to bless the whole of humanity through the birth of their children.

Save for abuse, fraud or endangerment, do what you can if you find yourself in a situation where your marriage is in its death throes, find a way to preserve the union, to save the marriage for your sake, the sake of the family and all for but one promise, *"...until death do you part."*

I was not married in the church. I wish I had been. Maybe my situation would have turned out differently. But I do know this, as unhappy as I appeared on the outside, I was at my happiest when I was married and together with my family.



Monday 120924 3:00 PM

Peace be with you!

Thoughts. I began the day with prayer and with a burning desire; a resolve to be better than I was the day before. To love better. To serve better. To appreciate better. To pray better.

Easier said than done, I know. But not impossible. Why? *Because with God EVERYTHING is possible.*

The moment I stopped believing that to be true is the moment my life comes to a screeching halt.

“I am because of God.” That alone is reason to live better, to be better, to strive to be better, to love better, to serve better, to pray better, to *friend* better—just to be better!! Amen.

Vicar. I was reading the EOC (Eastern Oklahoma Catholic) *Extra* this morning and came across the term *Vicar* in an article titled, “*St. Pius X Novena Honors Our Lady of Guadalupe.*” Listed as *Vicars* were associate pastors Gabriel Garcia (St. Benedict’s, Broken Arrow), Daniel Gormley (St. Anne’s, Broken Arrow), and Steven Ditzel (Christ the King, Tulsa).

According to Google, *in the Catholic Church, a “Vicar” refers to a priest who acts as a representative or deputy for another church official, typically assisting a pastor in a parish by carrying out some of their duties, essentially meaning they are “acting in place of” the pastor; the most common term for this is “parochial vicar” where the priest assists the parish pastor with pastoral care and ministry.*

I have noticed that the young priest of the Diocese appears to be embracing some of the practices that were present when I was a boy (e.g., learning and celebrating Mass in Latin, using specific titles, etc.) I do not know if that is an accurate statement as it is an observation and opinion. Still, I think it is good for the Church.



Tuesday 121024 6:14 AM

Peace be with you!

Thoughts. I am *angry* with “me” right now. Perhaps *angry* is not the correct word. Maybe *remorseful* and *frustrated* are the better words.

I failed to show good *parental* sense Monday evening when I reacted with *frustration* at the *condition* or the *disease*, not at my son himself when Matthew pushed his food away and said in *anger* or *frustration* to his brother (Joshua), “*I would rather be at the Center than to be here!*”

By “the Center” Matthew is referring to the *Family and Children’s Services Crisis Care Center*, near downtown Tulsa.

Joshua’s reaction was the nail in the coffin. I told Josh that I would handle the situation. Matthew had gotten up and left the living room at that point. Upon his return, I told him to go to his room.

I began asking Matthew (which was silly on my part) why he reacted the way did toward his brother. I wanted to know if he was serious about wanting to be “at Crisis Care” rather than with us.

Apparently, Joshua felt that how I was handling the situation was wrong because he came into the bedroom insisting that I needed to stop.

That is when I turned to him and said, *“And you need to stop telling me what I am and am not supposed to be doing.”* I then said something to the effect of, *“If he [Matthew] really wants to be at the Center than here, fine, go ahead and take him.”*

Yes, you’re right. Not my finest moment as a parent. I offer no excuse for my reaction.

In hindsight, I know it was NOT Matthew or Joshua that I was angry with or reacting to...it was the *disease*, the *Schizophrenia* and what it is doing to both boys: Matthew as the recipient of the condition and Joshua as a reluctant *caregiver*.

I can rattle off a laundry list of everything I feel that I am carrying that is the true reason(s) for my reaction or response, but what good would that do?

Of course, I offer everything to Christ and ask Him to turn this into good. I also ask for His love, mercy, and forgiveness as well.

Perhaps this is God’s way of showing me what Amy experienced when all of this was on her shoulders. I pray that she and the other children will forgive me.

I was too busy trying to please everyone else and build a business that was never meant to be, that I failed to be the husband and father my family needed me to be.

May God have mercy upon my soul!



Wednesday 121124 6:15 AM

Peace be with you!

“From today on, my own will does not exist. From today on, I do the will of God everywhere, always, and in everything.” (Jesus to St. Faustina, Diary 372).

Time. Every day is precious. We should make the most of it in a positive, prayerful, fruitful way.

Contrition. I realize I speak to this often and I apologize for mentioning it again, however, I am truly sorry with all my heart for every sin; for every word, deed or action that separated me from God, offended another or caused another to fall into sin or worse.

If I were to say, *“If I had my life to live over again knowing what I know today, I would....”* (you fill in the blank).

Why seek a *do over* that will never be? Instead, make *today* the day that we *do over*; that we *make right*; that we *live right*, *do right*, and *be right* (in the eyes of God).

Of course, it is going to take work. The change to greatness; to becoming a saint will not occur overnight. It may take the remaining span of our life, and we may still not get it right. But we should not let that stop us.

Change begins by first accepting and believing that one needs to change. From there you assess all that needs to change, put a game plan together remembering that we can do nothing without God and grace, and then everyday surrender everything to Christ.

Trust in His Mercy. Eventually you will get there.

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Pontificate. What does it mean to *pontificate*? According to the *Cambridge Dictionary*, it means *to speak or write and give your opinion about something as if you knew everything about it and as if only your opinion was correct*: Example: I think it should be illegal for non-parents to pontificate on/about parenting.

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The best part of enjoying popcorn and a beverage at the movie theater is spending that time with a friend.

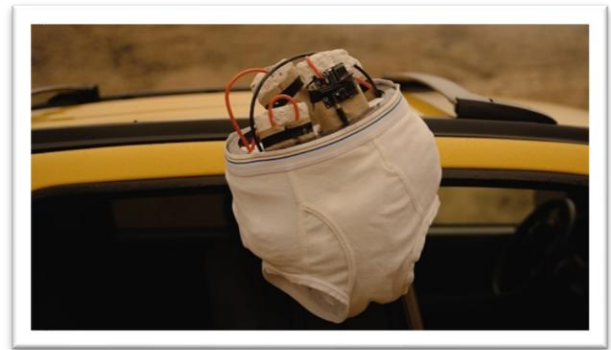
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Finances. This is one of those topics that I dislike speaking about in addition to *politics* and *religion* because it often leads to a heated exchange of words if the emotions are not kept in check.

On the other hand, it is necessary to have this discussion to make a proper assessment of where one is and where one needs to be financially.

I agree that a reduction in spending will help the bottom line. That begins with me. Happy to oblige.

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Is that an underwear bomb?

Maston's Plumbing & Drain. A local company that is three years in the making. Established in 2021. Our first encounter with Maston's was through our neighbor, Randy. He came over at our request to check the leaking faucet in the backyard. From there we went to look at the water heater that Air Assurance the day before had said needs to be brought up to code. It was then that Randy suggested that we contact *Maston's Plumbing & Drain*.

At that moment Randy invited me to his house to see the work that Maston's had done for him and Shelia in the bathroom. Whoa! That was a beautiful job. Everything looked clean and professionally done.

Upon my return, Mark followed Randy's suggestion and called Maston's. The person who answered the phone was none other than the owner himself.

Immediately, I could hear in Kale's voice [the owner] that he was passionate, a good businessman, and someone to do business with.

Someone might ask, *“How can you discern all that just from hearing someone’s voice?”*

For the record, I am not always spot on. Secondly, it is a gift from God, that is coupled with years of experience interacting with people.

Not to sound cheesy, but *“It’s a gut feeling!”*

Turns out that the gift blessed to me by God was correct.

After meeting Chris (Kale’s right-hand man) who came to the house to speak with us and assess the work that needed to be done, the deal was sealed as far as I was concerned.

Chris was spot on with what I felt in terms of his passion not just for plumbing, but for amazing customer service, patience, intelligence, humor, and midwestern hospitality all rolled into one.

I remember thinking to myself, after meeting and speaking with Christ that I had not seen that level of customer service, professionalism, and commitment to quality service sine working at Anaheim, Disneyland in the early eighties.

Turns out there is a connection to the thought which I will share in a moment.

The following Tuesday (121024) in comes Chris and his band of merry men: Sam the man, Brandon, and later, Joey.

I am not exaggerating when I say that those boys did not disappoint. Not only was their work top of the line, not only were they professional in every sense of the word, but they were also everything like how a Disney cast member is expected to be toward those guests who visit the park right down to their smiles.

How about this analogy, *“They were the staff of ‘The Plumber’s Inn’ and I was the guest”* ...the service and interaction was that amazing.

Due to one item, the crew was not able to complete the work in one day as intended. Chris

will have to return on Wednesday to complete the project.

Guess what happens when I hear a knock at the door and open the door. Not only was it Chris, but standing behind him was Kale, the owner himself.

It was as if I had met Walt Disney in the person of Kale. I was blown away.

That was the crem de la crem. The icing on the cake. The bolt that sealed the deal. This company does more than talk, they walk the walk. The live, eat, and breathe the motto, *“The way service ought to be.”*

After speaking with Kale, it turns out that their commitment to a great service experience was due to a seminar he had attended in Las Vegas several years back where he heard a representative from the Walt Disney Company talk about, what else.... service.

I was never so blown away as I was after meeting these giants of quality customer service.





Once upon a time, in the bustling town of Evergreen, there lived a young boy named Ethan. Ethan was like any other child, filled with wonder and excitement as the Christmas season approached. However, everything changed one fateful winter when Ethan's parents tragically passed away in an accident. The joyous holiday that once filled his heart with warmth now seemed hollow and meaningless. Christmas, for Ethan, had lost its magic.

As the snow gently blanketed the town, the streets of Evergreen were adorned with twinkling lights and festive decorations. Families gathered around their fireplaces, sharing laughter and love. Yet, in a small, dimly lit room, Ethan sat alone, staring out the window. The world outside seemed to celebrate, but inside, Ethan felt an emptiness that no amount of tinsel or carols could fill.

As the clock struck midnight, a soft glow filled Ethan's room. Startled, he turned to see a figure bathed in a warm, golden light. It was Noel, a Christmas angel, with wings that shimmered like freshly fallen snow. Her presence was calming, and her eyes held a kindness that Ethan had long forgotten.

"Ethan," Noel spoke softly, "I am here to help you find the true meaning of Christmas." Ethan, skeptical yet curious, listened as Noel explained that Christmas was not just about gifts and decorations, but about something much deeper.

"It's about love, hope, and the birth of Jesus," she said, her voice gentle yet firm.

With a wave of her hand, Noel transported Ethan back to his childhood Christmases. He saw himself as a young boy, decorating the tree with his parents, baking cookies, and singing carols. The memories were vivid and filled with joy. Ethan realized that the essence of those moments was not in the material things but in the love and togetherness they shared.

Noel guided Ethan through the story of the first Christmas, the birth of Jesus in a humble manger. She spoke of the shepherds who came to witness the miracle and the wise men who traveled far to honor the newborn King. "Christmas is a celebration of Jesus' birth, a reminder of God's love for humanity," Noel explained. "It's about giving, not just receiving."

As the night wore on, Ethan felt a warmth spreading through his heart. The bitterness and sorrow that had clouded his spirit began to lift. He understood that while he had lost his parents, their love remained with him, just as the love of Jesus was eternal. Ethan realized that he could honor their memory by embracing the true spirit of Christmas.

When morning came, Ethan awoke with a renewed sense of purpose. He decided to share the love he had rediscovered with others. He spent the day volunteering at the local shelter, spreading joy and kindness to those in need. As he watched the smiles on the faces of the people he helped, Ethan felt a profound peace.

That Christmas, Ethan learned that the true meaning of the holiday was not found in the glittering lights or wrapped presents, but in the love and compassion we show to one another. With Noel's guidance, Ethan's heart was opened to the beauty of Christmas, and he knew that his

parents' love, and the love of Jesus, would always be with him.

And so, in the town of Evergreen, a young boy named Ethan found his way back to the magic of Christmas, a magic that would stay with him forever.



Saturday 121424 5:37 AM

Peace be with you!

"From today on, my own will does not exist. From today on, I do the will of God everywhere, always, and in everything." (Jesus to St. Faustina, Diary 372).

Advent. This weekend marks the *Third Sunday of Advent*. What have I truly done in anticipation of the Lord's coming? That is an easy one to answer...*sin* is what I have done. That is no way for a Catholic-Christian to welcome in the Son of the one true Living God.

Not that I in any way hold a candle to St. Paul, but why do I keep doing what I do not want to do, rather than that, which I know I should do?

Thank God for the mercy of Jesus Christ and the Sacrament of Reconciliation; one of seven sacraments given to us by the Lord Himself.

"Those whose sins you forgive, they are forgiven; those whose sins you retain, they are retained" (John 20:23.)

As I was searching for this section of Scripture, I came across the following information as well:

The Catechism of the Catholic Church teaches that while no sin is unforgivable, *some sins are a refusal to repent and accept God's mercy*. These sins can lead to self-condemnation to Hell.

I believe what that means is there are certain sins that one commits that he or she refuses to repent from, thus allowing oneself to perpetuate the sin and thus fail to accept God's mercy.

That is what I needed to hear.

Only by the grace of God and His Son, Jesus Christ, and through the intercession of our Lady and all the saints, both in Heaven and on earth, will I be saved. Amen.

Ah, but alas, I must do my part as well. Amen! Amen!

--

Matthew. Kind of a rough going on Friday. He went with Josh for his scheduled teeth cleaning at *Flawless Smile Dentistry* in Broken Arrow, Oklahoma. His appointment was time was 11:30 AM. When he returned, he appeared to be regressing. You could tell by the expression on his face, the drooling, and the lost look. Josh and I were in it for the long haul.

Fast forward to this morning at 4:00 AM when I awoke. Matthew was sleeping in his recliner, except that the position of his head meant he would wake up with a painful neck if I did not get him adjusted.

After speaking with Joshua (who was still awake), I decided to lift Matthew's feet up by pushing the recliner all the way back to help correct the position of his neck as I saw him when I first woke up. As I adjusted the recliner, Matthew opened his eyes, saw that it was me and went back to sleep.

I forget her name (the Mexican woman who is with the Pact Team) stopped by on Friday. I am not certain what to think of her. Twice, she has mentioned the quantity of stuff we have in the home. She also inquired if I had a wife. She asked because of the Christmas decorations and the way the living room is arranged. As she was leaving, she mentioned something about knowing the difference between an elitest and a regular (or poor) Mexican.

As she made that comment I thought to myself, "Whoa, un momentito, Senora! What is that supposed to mean?" Was she insinuating that I am an elitist?

If indeed that is the case, I would beg to differ. That is judgment based on appearance because truth be told, "I am one bad decision away from absolute poverty."

The boys and I live well BECAUSE OF CHRIST and Mark and not due to anything we have done right. I am not entitled to any of this (stuff) nor (this way of living). **I don't deserve any of this.** It is a blessing; a gift; most of which I would gladly bless to another should the occasion occur.

Don't get me wrong. I like the woman. I apologize, I do not recall her name. But it is clear to me that she is not Roman Catholic, is old school, and is very opinionated. God love her because you know I do.

To quote Brother G, "SOME PEOPLE'S KIDS!!!"



Yep! You know the type! I bet she is also an expert at chucking the chancla too!

Speaking of Chancla's: Here is something that I came across while double-checking the spelling of the word...

Online Article: *Hisplaining the Power of "La Chancla" as Feature of Latino Culture.* Written by Laura Matinez, July 18, 2024, featured on hispanicexecutive.com

For copyright reasons, I recommend you read Laura's article by visiting the website link below. She does a great job at explaining with humor Mama's best defense for discipline (LOL).

<https://hispanicexecutive.com/hisplaining-the-power-of-la-chancla-as-a-feature-of-latino-culture/>



Sunday 121524 6:33 AM

Peace be with you!

"From today on, my own will does not exist. From today on, I do the will of God everywhere, always, and in everything." (Jesus to St. Faustina, Diary 372).

Matthew. Another challenging day with Matthew. As a result of *flossing* his teeth Saturday morning, Matthew cut into his gum which, strangely enough, caused bleeding around dinner time. Josh noticed the substance, he did not know what it was at first sight, when he went to check Matthew to see if he wanted dinner.

Matthew was sleeping.

Joshua came to me and said, *"I don't want to alarm you, but I just checked Matthew and there is a black substance oozing from the right side of his mouth."*

Upon checking, it turned out that Matthew was oozing blood. When I woke him and asked him to open his mouth it was filled with blood. Not enough to be bad, but enough to look bad.

We asked him to go to the restroom so he could spit the blood into the sink and rinse with a warm water and salt solution, which the hygienist advised on Friday when he had his teeth cleaned.

I had him use the saltwater solution on Friday. I forgot to have him rinse a second time and again on Saturday.

After he rinsed, we assisted him with changing his soiled t-shirt and got him back in his recliner. I put some gauze in his mouth at the site of the source with the hope the blood would clot.

We repeated the procedure one or two more times before deciding that maybe it would be best to take him to the Emergency Room, just to be on the safe side.

While waiting for the doctor to assess Matthew, Joshua said he applied pressure to the gauze in Matthew's mouth which eventually stopped the bleeding.

The ER doctor did not believe Matthew was in danger of infection and discharged him to return home.

Beginning last week, the illness, the constant regiment of medication, and the constant checking on Matthew to make certain he is okay or needs anything appears to be causing him to become *agitated* and *frustrated*.

Last week when Joshua attempted to serve Matthew dinner and get him situated, Matthew placed his food on the tray next to him, threw off the blanket and said, *"I would rather be at the Center [Crisis Care Center] than here!"*

Then when he got off the couch, he looked at Joshua and this, *"This is all because of you, Josh!"*

I am not certain what he meant by that statement.

Yesterday, when Joshua invited Matthew to join him in the backyard in a *symbolic* "smash the voices" pumpkin smashing exercise, not to mention provide sustenance for the birds, Matthew declined.

What caught my attention is when Matthew looked at Joshua and said, *"Why, because it is you!?"*

That statement sounded like something Matthew would say before the onset of the mental illness.

My observation: a part of his old self is attempting to manifest itself. My fear is that Matthew will become frustrated as he did previously in 2022 and refuse to take his medication or move forward with treatment.

This is the same pattern that occurred previously. Still, God is good. He will see us through this.



Sometimes caring for a mentally ill loved one can be quite taxing on the caregivers. However, you push on because of love.

Mass. Today is the Third Sunday of Advent or Gaudette Sunday. The color of the vestments worn by the priest and deacon is rose –which signifies hope. Fr. Duy Nguyen was the guest celebrant today. Fr. Daniel Campos is under the weather.

I sang with the choir although we sang A Capella. To Francisco's credit he did say last week that he would not be present today.

Fr. Duy's sermon was quite uplifting using the analogy of the anticipation and excitement he and his fellow seminarians had knowing they were going to assist the Holy Father (Pope Francis, 2013) with the celebration of Mass in

Rome to our anticipation and excitement in waiting for the coming of Christ.

The remainder of today was spent chatting with Brother G on Facebook Messenger before sitting down in the living room and watching *Star Trek: Enterprise* (2001-2005) starring: *Scott Bakula; John Billingsley; Jolene Blalock; Dominic Keating; Anthony Montgomery; Linda Park; and Connor Trinneer.*

According to IMDb:

Star Trek: Enterprise is set in the mid-22nd century, over 100 years before James T. Kirk helmed the famous vessel, this installment of the "Star Trek" franchise is set on the Enterprise NX-01 -- the first Earth starship capable of warp 5 -- and explores the history of the interplanetary upheaval that eventually leads to the formation of the Federation.



Sunday 122224 5:30 AM

Peace be with you!

"From today on, my own will does not exist. From today on, I do the will of

God everywhere, always, and in everything." (Jesus to St. Faustina, Diary 372).

Random Thoughts. I did not realize an entire week has passed by since my last journal entry. There are only nine days left before the end of the year. I am amazed at how quickly the days seem to pass from one Sunday to the next. God is always good.

Let's get caught up.

Matthew is scheduled for surgery Monday morning. I received a call from his urologist (Dr. Tamara Bennett) early in the week. According to Dr. Bennett, Matthew still has a small fragment of the stone that was broken up 101424 at Ascension/St. John's in Broken Arrow. It makes sense now that I think back when he would mention to me or Joshua that his side was still hurting. Thankfully the lodge fragment has not caused any major damage (or Sepsis) and it will finally be removed permanently. The surgery will take place at 11:00 AM at *Oklahoma Surgical Hospital*, 2408 E 81st St # 300, Tulsa, OK 74137.

I met with **Deacon Ken** Thursday morning at Panera Bread in Broken Arrow. The main topic of discussion was how he would like to go forward with his *Saintly Sip* writings. The sips have gone from phase I (newsletter/website) to phase II (audio recording). Next is phase III (discussing the Sip on a podcast). You just never know where Divine Providence (the hand of God) will lead you if you are attentive and listening. But remember this, it is never about you (the individual) but in how what God is calling you to will serve the *greater good*. Amen to that.

As a result of my meeting with Deacon Ken, I believe it was impressed upon my heart to move forward with my own blessings. First on the

docket, a complete *rebranding* of the *Carlos Michael Communications Media*, the *Coffee Break YouTube Channels*, and the *website/blog sites*.

Second on the docket, move forward with *We Serve Oklahoma* and attach *Coffee Break Catholic: Oklahoma* to it.

I have already begun the rebranding. First, I removed all the previous recorded videos from both YouTube channels. I then created new artwork for the main YouTube channel (the Carlos Michael channel).

I then deleted the second *Carlos Michael Facebook* page and placed the same artwork that is on the Carlos Michael YouTube channel on my personal Facebook page.

I decided to drop "Communications Media" from the name and renamed it *Carlos Michael*. I have not yet decided if *Carlos Michael* will remain a personal endeavor (e.g., like a hobby) or if it can become a viable business. That will require prayer, thought, and the hand of God.



In the meantime, I created new artwork for *Carlos Michael* including the artwork that is on my Facebook page.



I also created new artwork for *We Serve Oklahoma*: "Where the cross touches the heart," as the slogan.



The heart and the cross are on the front face of the golden coffee mug that the barista is holding with the words: *Hungry, Naked, and Imprisoned* just under the word "Oklahoma." That will be the mission of *WSO*: feed the hungry, clothe the naked, and visit the imprisoned. By *visiting the imprisoned*, that also means visiting those who are ill, shut in, in nursing homes, living alone, etc., not just those who are incarcerated.

The artwork I created for *Coffee Break Catholic* is like the artwork for *WSO* and *Carlos Michael*:



All of this is because of Thursday's meeting with Deacon Ken. None of this was on my *radar* but that is the joy of God, the love of God, the mystery of God and dare I say, the fun of God. He is always a *kazillion* steps ahead of us and is not shy about pointing us in the right direction.

May His name and goodness, His mercy and love be forever praised and act as the source of our joy.

None of this is about us or me, but about the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit and I like it that way.

My left *shoulder* was giving me fits this past week. I first noticed it early in the week as I lifted it while getting ready. In fact, I am beginning to feel the beauty of aging and I am just fine with that. It is a blessing to be this age. It truly is. You think that I am going to complain now because of aches, pains, and what nots? Heck no! Instead, I praise God and thank Him for his love and continued blessings.

It could be worse...I could be confined to a wheelchair or a bed, hooked to a machine and living on the street, coughing like a mad man or living in dire poverty.

Believe me when I say that I do not wish any of those circumstances on my brother or sister neighbors, but for those who are suffering such states, they have my love, compassion, empathy, and prayers.

I understand that there will be a day when I will not be able to do what I can do today. Something as simple as changing into new underwear, combing my hair, or walking unabated from one location of the house to another. God's will be done, not mine.

But for now, I embrace the life I have and thank God for it daily and I hope my love and joy in God shows (in a good way), not a bragging sort of way.

I have been giving my next visit to the *confessional* some thought as of late. While I am always sorry for my sins (all of them: past, present and future), I do not like when I have offended or let the Father down because of sin.

What is sin but the sinner acting selfishly, right?

In those moments, I am not thinking about God or my neighbor but about myself (in a selfish way.) That is not good. That is not God. That is not being Christ like. That is not good for me nor my relationship with the Father and my neighbors.

John the Baptist was correct when he said, "*Repent! Repent!*" Let us do what we can to do just that and leave the rest to forgiveness, grace, love and prayer. In other words, to God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Amen.

Sorry, I did not mean to go on as I did. But you know me...always wearing my heart on my sleeve,

talking too much, too transparent, and a mess (*he writes as he chuckles at himself.*)

Too Funny! A month or two back I asked a friend where I could forward his mail, he declined to provide an address. When I mentioned recently that two checks had come for him in the mail, one of them needing to be cashed by a specific date, I received an address immediately. How did I know about the checks? My friend asked me to open and shred the mail on his behalf. "*Some people's kids!!!*"

A Christmas Carol (2019): I had an opportunity to watch a rather interesting, but dark take on this iconic Dicken's classic. I watched it on Hulu.

In this version, Ebenezer Scrooge (Guy Pearce) is not elderly as in the previous versions I have seen.

Bob Cratchit (Joe Alwyn) does not appear to be as fearful of Ebenezer as in the other versions and his wife, Mary Cratchit (Vnette Robinson) is black (in this version). I very much enjoyed Robinson's acting.

Obviously, Mary has a great disdain for Mr. Scrooge because of what she had to do to earn 30 pounds to help her son Tim (Lenny Rush).

This film would have been better without the use of the "F" word. I am not certain that is a word people in that time would have used. Then again, what do I know?

Here is a part of the series that caught my attention due to personal experience.

Young Ebenezer (Billy Barratt) is looking out the window of his boarding school with the Headmaster (Adrian Lukis) standing behind him.

Ebenezer says to the effect of "What will I do now..." when the Headmaster responds (and I am paraphrasing), "You will do what you always do during this time of the year. You will lay with me in my bed."

It turns out that Ebenezer's Father had arranged for young Ebenezer to stay at the boarding school knowing that he would be sexually abused by the Headmaster.

It was Ebenezer's sister (Charlotte Riley) who retrieves Ebenezer from the school after informing him that their father had left or died.

She held the Headmaster at gunpoint stating this arrangement was over while pointing the gun toward his manhood.

This was certainly a darker take on this Dicken's classic. Mark failed to appreciate it, but I did.

I was moved by the scene when Mary Cratchit says to Scrooge in anger (again, I a paraphrasing), "I am a woman [or a mother] and I can call upon certain spirits [the rest I do not recall]."

I suppose she did, hence the visit by Jacob Marley (Stephen Graham) and the three ghosts.

On a scale of one to ten (with ten being best) film reels, I gave "A Christmas Carol" (2019) nine (9) reels. The reason? Brief nudity and inappropriate language usage. Despite that rating, I feel the acting and storyline were phenomenal.



Tuesday 122424 7:38 AM

Christmas Eve

Peace be with you!

"From today on, my own will does not exist. From today on, I do the will of God everywhere, always, and in everything." (Jesus to St. Faustina, Diary 372).

Matthew Padilla (Surgery): Part 1 ... I woke Matthew around 7:15 AM and assisted him with getting ready. The only "meds" he took were the *Fluphenazine* and *Clonidine*.

Together with Joshua, we left around 8:15 for *Oklahoma Surgical Hospital*. We parked in the *parking garage* on the *second level* near the elevator. The hospital was bustling with people and activity.

After checking Matthew in (at the main desk) we were instructed to walk to the lab (*LabCorp*) for blood work. From there we reported back to the main desk.

At that point we were instructed to go to the *Admissions Office*. I was given some paperwork to complete and return on Matthew's behalf. Following a brief wait, we were called back to meet with *Della Reese* (*not her real name*) in *admissions*.

As Della proceeded to get Matthew checked in, we had a nice conversation which included working at *OSH* and *Guest Services*. I mentioned to Della how impressed I was with *Guest Services* and that I would not mind doing that type of work. She immediately spoke up and said, "*They're hiring!*" I thanked her for the information and stated that I would check the *OSH* website when I returned home.

After finishing in "admissions", Matthew and I gave "Della" a hug before leaving to the waiting area where someone in guest services would call for us.

The "Guest Services" representative guided us to the *pre-op* area on the *third floor* where we were greeted by the pre-op staff. Once in the staging area (room) Matthew was instructed to into the gown provided as all the pre-op prep with the nurses was completed.

Sometime between 11:15 AM and noon, *Dr. Sunshine Murray* (a female doctor) visited with Matthew. She apologized in advance for running behind schedule. Matthew's surgery was scheduled for 11:00 AM. "*That's okay,*" I said, "*Things happen.*"

Not too long after Dr. Murray left a nurse from the operating room came for Matthew. I felt strange leaving my son in the hands of a stranger, but I knew he would be okay. Now I know how mom felt.

Matthew Padilla (Surgery): Part 2

... After leaving the pre-op room, Joshua and I went downstairs to grab a bite to eat. What I really wanted was a cup of coffee. Joshua wasn't hungry. As I was eating my Subway meatball sandwich, Joshua and I had a conversation that was like the conversation we had in October when Matthew underwent his first *kidney stone* procedure at *St. John's in Broken Arrow*.

Between 1:00 PM and 1:10 PM, I noticed a call had been made to the phone from the following number: *918.477.5039*. It was the waiting area on the third floor. Matthew was out of surgery. The doctor had stopped by to talk with me, but I was not present.

After leaving for the third floor and checking in, Joshua and I waited in the *Family Waiting*

Room. We were there long enough for me to grab a cup of coffee before a gentleman named *Rodney* from *Guest Services* let me know that he was there to escort (one of us) to the *Recovery Room*.

Matthew was in section #14 in the recovery room. He was awake, drinking apple juice and eating apple sauce when I arrived. I was pleased to see him awake. After chatting briefly with Matthew, I turned my attention to *Nurse Jamie*. Her job was to assist with Matthew's post-op recovery.

Poor Matthew was shivering. It was cold in the room. I believe Joshua's comment about it being cold is most likely to assist with the patient's recovery is correct.

Nurse Jamie informed me that Matthew could not be *discharged* until he could demonstrate that he could *urinate*. That is when Matthew quietly said, "I am trying." Not long after that, Matthew said he was ready to go to the restroom. Nurse Jamie assisted him. The deed was completed, and he was discharged.

Matthew Padilla (Surgery): Part 3

... After exiting the bathroom, Nurse Jamie suggested that I have Joshua pick up the car and take it to the area where Matthew would be waiting to be picked up. I responded that I would have to do that and would ask Joshua to sit with Matthew in the recovery room.

Once Joshua was in the recovery room, I proceeded to level 2 of the parking garage. After a bit of maneuvering, I exited the parking garage and finally found my way to the waiting area. I explained that I was delayed because the exit that I came through in the morning had been closed off and I needed to locate an alternative exit.

After leaving the hospital, we stopped at *Walgreens* on West Kenosha in Broken Arrow to see if Matthew's *pain medication* was ready to be picked up. It is good that stopped because Matthew informed me that he had to go to the restroom (his third time). Joshua assisted him while I stood in line at the Pharmacy.

It was going to be another 20 minutes before the prescription would be ready. I suggested we take Matthew home so he could rest. Joshua volunteered to return to *Walgreen's* later and pick up Matthew's prescription. Before leaving, I took Matthew to the area where some Christmas items were including some *Nightmare Before Christmas* items. He got himself a *Jack Skellington Santa Claus*, one other item and a stuffed *Snoopy*.

I enjoyed watching his face light up.

Matthew Padilla (Surgery): Part 4

... After getting Matthew home, we got him settled (and comfortable) with Joshua doing most of the work. Once he was comfortable, Joshua went back out to get his prescription. When Joshua returned home, he attended to Matthew which included making certain he ate, took his medication, and was comfortable.

Matthew spent the rest of the evening resting, thankfully with no incident. I don't know how long he was sitting in his recliner before he got up and went to his bed, but it was nice to see him in bed resting comfortably.

By the time I was able to "catch my breath" (in the bathroom), all I could do was smile inside and let my Heavenly Father know how grateful and thankful I was for His love, grace and blessings. We are truly blessed indeed.

Oklahoma Surgical Hospital: I am not certain if I did the right thing, however, I applied for two positions with *Oklahoma Surgical*

Hospital: Admissions (part-time) and Guest Services (full-time). Of course, I defer to God's Will. All will be in accordance with His Will. Amen.



Sometimes all you have, faith and prayer notwithstanding, is your smile and a delicious cup of coffee.

Joni Madson: I received a nice text from Joni Monday evening...7:50 PM: "Merry Christmas. Really love what you are doing for Deacon Ken. He is so proud of your help on his *Saintly Sips*. Now I hear there may be a podcast? You made him feel included. Thank you. I love the Ai voice by the way (LOL)."

What a blessing her message is for me. Truth be told, it was Deacon Ken who made me feel *included* rather than the other way around. I am merely the servant (Mr. French, Jeffrey, or Belvedere) doing what man servants do, or maybe more like Christ inspired servants do. No matter. I appreciated Joni's text and am happy for Deacon Ken.

Celebrating Christmas. It has been a quiet Christmas Eve. I suppose I am tired from the time spent with Matthew and Joshua at *Oklahoma*

Surgical Hospital on Monday. I am happy to see him recovering well and Joshua resting.

I watched a portion of *Home Alone* (1990) starring Macaulay Culkin, Catherine O'Hara, John Heard, Joe Pesci, Daniel Stern, John Candy, Devin Rattray, Michael C. Maronna and others. It is difficult to believe that film came out 34 years ago. That means Catherine O'Hara (70) was 36 at the time the film was released. Culkin is now 44 years old. He was 10 when the film was made. Great movie.



Wednesday 122524 11:53 AM

Christmas Day

Peace be with you!

"From today on, my own will does not exist. From today on, I do the will of God everywhere, always, and in everything." (Jesus to St. Faustina, Diary 372).

What A Morning! I opened this entry with the intention of explaining what I meant by the statement, "What a morning!" However, here it is Thursday, and I do not recall what I was going to write about on Wednesday.

Merry Christmas.



Thursday 122624 5:34 AM

Peace be with you!

"From today on, my own will does not exist. From today on, I do the will of God everywhere, always, and in everything." (Jesus to St. Faustina, Diary 372).

Christmas Day: How did I spend Christmas day? The day began with a prayer and a smile—to the degree that I could smile. I have not been happy with myself nor my conduct the past couple of weeks. But I will leave it at that.

I went to Mass at St. Thomas More (Tulsa) Wednesday morning. I sang with the and headed home immediately thereafter. I did have an opportunity to speak with *Roberta* in the church parking lot before leaving. She is such a joy.

I did not get much accomplished between the time I arrived home and left to visit Mark's family.

I suppose that is fair. After all, it was Christmas day.

I was at my computer when Joshua came to me regarding Matthew. I then turned my attention to Mark who was up earlier than usual because of the family visit. Then I received a Facebook Message from Michael that he was intending to stop by to drop off Christmas gifts. All this must have occurred when I was getting ready to write the "*What a morning!*" entry but got sidetracked.

Such is the joy of the holidays! Not a true statement. The joy of the holiday is our Lord Jesus Christ. He is the reason for the season, the hope of the world, the light in the darkness, the joy of my soul. All glory to God the Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

I did not get an opportunity to visit Michael before leaving for Mark's son's house. Michael arrived after we left. I had a nice Christmas visit with Mark's family.

I was pleased with the Amazon gift card I received from the family. We did not take gifts other than the gift we had for Katy, Mark's former wife.

Mark had sent gift cards (digitally) on Christmas Eve to his daughter, son, daughter-in-law and two granddaughters, so, everyone was covered.

While visiting with the family, I continued to be concerned about Matthew> I checked in with Joshua regularly. Joshua kept me apprised of the situation. At one point, Joshua informed me that Matthew was showing signs of distress after returning from his outing with Michael.

It wasn't anything Michael did. It is just one of those triggers that goes off in Matthew's mind that we do not understand. Maybe Matthew wasn't quite ready to get out just yet. I don't know.

Matthew seemed fixated on his mother. I learned from a Facebook message his mother sent me this morning that Matthew had written to her and thought she and the family were in his television set.

My poor son. That is what *Schizophrenia* is and does.

Thank the good Lord, with patience and love, most of it coming from Joshua, Matthew was able to get through the evening.

I cannot say enough about my son Joshua and how proud of him I am. He has no idea how much his sacrifices have meant for me and more importantly, his brother. I pray that God will take

notice and bless him with abundance, peace of mind, and hope.

I concluded Christmas day by purchasing a \$50 gift card from QuikTrip for Michael. That is his Christmas gift from us. Mr. Man and I finally finished watching that *Great American Family* Christmas movie that we started to watch on Tuesday evening before the cable box went awry.

Sadly, I only saw parts of the movie because I kept dosing off. I seem to do that a lot these days. Ugh!

In conclusion, I am grateful to God for the blessings of Christmas Day. Christ the King is born, and there is hope once more in the world. Amen.



New Podcast for 2025: I am excited that the rebranding efforts are taking root. On Tuesday afternoon, I mentioned to Mark that I would like to change the podcast title from *Coffee Break with Carlos Michael* to something new, fresh, and perhaps shorter.

What that would be, I did not know at the time. I concluded our conversation by saying something like, "Well, it will come to me. God's Will be done."

Then it hit me, Christmas day. The show title would be—*The Wrinkled Cup: Seniors on the Run!*

How fun!

Originally, I was going to go with *Codgers on the Run*, but I thought that might be viewed as a negative statement toward the seniors.

After giving it some thought Wednesday evening, *Seniors on the Run* seemed to be the better alternative slogan.

The official title of the podcast will be *The Wrinkled Cup*. The official slogan will be *Seniors on the run!* The show intro will be something like this:

Welcome to "The Wrinkled Cup: Seniors on the Run!"—a lively podcast crafted for seniors and their friends. Join our spirited host, Carlos Michael, as he embarks on a nostalgic journey through time sharing memories of a life lived with a mix of two-cent opinions, a dash of humor, a pinch of wisdom, an ounce of sarcasm and a serving of fun.

Whether you're reminiscing about the past or discovering new adventures, the "The Wrinkled Cup" is your go-to source for engaging conversations, senior moments, and wrinkled entertainment.

But first, "Let's Coffee Break!"

The show logo and YouTube thumbnail features a middle-aged male barista wearing a white shirt with a blue apron, with a golden coffee cup clenched between his hands with a gold background that matches the cup. On the face of the logo in front of the coffee cup are the show title and slogan: *The Wrinkled Cup: Seniors on the run!*

Who would have thought the day would come when I would be excited about putting together a

show that caters to an elderly audience and yet, here I am.

Why not?

I will turn 63 years old in two days (Dec. 28th). But does that qualify me as a true *senior citizen*?

Yes and no.

According to the *seniorcenters.com* website, "What age are seniors: Key Points Summary" ...

In the U.S., senior citizen status begins at varying ages for different benefits: 55 for some discounts, 62 for early Social Security and other benefits, and 65 for Medicare and many senior programs, with similar or differing age thresholds in other countries.

Benefits include discounts, healthcare, transportation, housing assistance, and tax relief, enriching the lives of seniors through financial and social support.

Source: <https://seniorcenters.com/what-age-is-a-senior-citizen/>

According to the U.S. Government, technically, I am not a *senior citizen* until age 65, when I will qualify for Medicare and other senior programs.

My two-cent opinion is this: *"If you make it to be 60 or over, then you are a senior citizen!"* That qualifies me for official membership with *The Wrinkled Cup!*

The Wrinkled Cup, like its predecessor *Coffee Break with Carlos Michael*, will continue to be themed around coffee...my favorite early morning way to start the day only after prayer.

However, the content will focus more on senior related content such as tips, resources, education, and entertainment and less about me although I will continue to include personal commentary, short stories, nostalgic memories, my two-cent opinion as it relates to gender, cultural, and generational differences but never in a mean-spirited or us versus them perspective.

Should I take a position against the prevailing current opinion or trend, it will be *apologetic* in nature, meaning I will respectfully attempt to *explain* rather than to *defend* whatever it is I might be discussing as a show or blog topic.

My hope moving forward is that we can bridge the gap between the generations as neighbors and friends, and if necessary, agree to disagree and still be neighbors.

The Wrinkled Cup will be in *podcast* format, meaning I will be in front of a microphone and not on camera. However, any “live” shows unless otherwise noted, will be on camera.

I also plan to change the format of the show making it less like its cousin (*Coffee Break with Carlos Michael*) and more like an attempt at rebranding.

On *Coffee Break with Carlos Michael*, I opened the show with the “coffee intro” followed by dialog and then going to the “Let’s Coffee Break” intro before moving on to the first topic.

I want to change that moving forward.

There is much to be done. I plan to launch the new show in 2025. Of course, in God’s time. His Will be done. Amen.



Here is the graphic I used to announce the coming of the new show on Christmas Day on my Facebook page.

Below is one of two versions of the circle logo I created for *The Wrinkled Cup*. The first has an outside line encircling the graphic image.



In the second version, the outside line has been removed.



I am looking forward to putting this new show together. I hope it will be well received.



Friday 122724 11:02 AM

Peace be with you!

"From today on, my own will does not exist. From today on, I do the will of God everywhere, always, and in everything." (Jesus to St. Faustina, Diary 372).

Mary Alice Salcido Flores-Padilla (d.2018): Today is the sixth anniversary of mom's passing from this life into eternal life. Mother passed away Thursday morning on December 27, 2018, one day before my 57th birthday.

Mom was born in 1938, 10th of eleven siblings: Ralph, Angie, Trinidad, Ofelia, Lucia, Adelina, Emily, Margaret, Arturo, (mom) and Helen.

At the time of mother's passing, all but two (2) of her siblings had passed away. As of this entry, the only living sibling still alive is mom's sister, Margaret.

Auntie Faye or Ofelia was the last sibling to pass away after mom.

Mom's birthday is September 6, 1938. She was born on a Tuesday.

Mom was staying at dad's house located at 10776 Tolliver Street, Adelanto, California 92301-3861 when she passed away.

I joined my sister Cindy in August 2018 to help her care for mom. My total visit was approximately 12 weeks from start to finish.

Mom and Dad (Carlos C. Padilla) were married in November 1958. My brother Frank was born a year later (Oct. 11, 1959).

Mom and dad divorced in 1997. Following her annulment, mother married Benjamin Flores who passed away in 2009.

At the time of her passing, mother was dating a man named Glen. She met him through my sister Cindy and her former husband Frank. I am not certain Glen was right for mom.

It is not my place to know what happened between my parents that led to their divorce. I believe it had more to do with mom than with dad. I can only imagine how dad felt when he realized mom was serious about wanting a divorce.

Dad loved my mother. Mother loved dad; she just wasn't "in love" with dad (those were her words).

She once told me that she believed she married dad to get away from home. While mother loved my grandfather, she felt he was too strict with the girls.

If that is true, does that mean that mom and dad's marriage was not valid in the eyes of the Church because mother's reason for marrying dad was not based on true love?

Only the Lord knows.

In fairness to mom, she did everything she could to get dad to understand that there was a problem, she wasn't happy, and something had to change. She even tried to get dad to go with her to marriage counseling.

As old as I was (36) when my parents divorced, the breakup of their marriage hurt the whole family, me included.

I am thankful that mom and dad decided to remain friends making it possible for both to be present at family events, but it still felt awkward knowing they were no longer together.

I suppose the same was true for our children following the divorce of their mother and me in 2001. We separated in August 1996.

Marriage is and should be a beautiful sacramental union between husband and wife culminating with the building of a family.

My heart hurts for all the marriages throughout time that ended in divorce or tragedy, especially for the children.

Getting back to mom, it is true that I am named after my father, but I am my mother's son. I favor mother in personality, looks, character, love of neighbor, and the demons we keep hidden from public view.

Like mother, I tend to be insecure, fearful, and always eager to please for all the wrong reasons. Like my mother, I enjoy writing and have always viewed myself as less than others.

Why that is, I really don't know. By ourselves, mother and I were like best friends. I never lost sight of the fact that she was my mother, but she was also my friend. Maybe not when I was younger giving her all those headaches, but later in life as I matured.

I enjoyed mother's company, her smile, and the conversations we would have over coffee.

I know I am not alone when I say how blessed I am as a son to have the mother that God blessed me with. That includes my father too. I may not be a good son, but I am who I am because of my parents and as far as I am concerned, that is a good thing.

I love you mom (and dad).



CarlosMichael360

by Carlos Michael Padilla

***I did not win the lottery,
but that does not mean I
have not already hit the
jackpot!***

--Carlos Michael

Sunday 122924 5:32 AM

Peace be with you!

"From today on, my own will does not exist. From today on, I do the will of God everywhere, always, and in everything." (Jesus to St. Faustina, Diary 372).

Happy Birthday! Was it a quiet or rowdy birthday? It was quiet. That is how I wanted it to be. Joshua wanted to take me out with his friend *Miguel* and my son Matthew, but I was good with staying home.

Kudos to that son of mine (Joshua). He truly went out of his way to love me and to celebrate my birthday. First was the invitation to join him, Miguel, and Matthew. Then he gave me a birthday hug and kiss on the forehead. Then he made a delicious grilled chicken with rice dinner topped with his mother's famous salsa. He ended the day when he and Matthew brought out a delicious white with chocolate frosting cake while playing a Mexican version of "Happy Birthday" that sound as if I were watching Disney's "Coco!"

Mark presented me with a beautiful card that had Mary and the infant Jesus on the front in addition to the birthday wishes I received from over 35 family and friends on my Facebook page, which included a couple of text messages.

Not bad for a 63-year-old codger who dares to believe that he isn't loved when the opposite is true.

First by God and then by the legion of friends, family, colleagues and acquaintances I have been blessed to know over my lifetime.

Too many to name and yet whose faces I can still see today and whose last names I recall off the top of my head ...

Alderson, Gilbert, Wilson, Granados, Robinette, Pantalone, Garr, Mendoza, Haley, Wesley III, Duymich, Bannister, Berry, Ahrens, Garcia, Hembree, Sarnecki, Vasai, Rossler, Prado, Parenti, Cano, Stephens, Bergner, Guglielmo, Basset, Homra, Gonzalez-Wolf, Blake, Cunningham, Morales, Campos, Story, Landry, Stewart, Baldauff, Miller, Toole-Reeder, Landsdale, Kosinski, Thyfault, Ferris, Musicans, Smith, Chajecki, Brunner, Ames, Motley, Madson, Romero, Montano, Lambrecht, Casas, Sutton, Wilson, Cardinal, Kovas, Braunwalder, Magdalik, Jackson, Bozek, Christensen, Waldman, Klein-Haag, Abbott, Felix-Bailey, Mata, Byrne, Martin, Ware, Palhano, Reese, Saveth, Ignacio, Pellechia, West, Rebeor, Gomez, Blu, McCreary,

Sensintaffer-Guest, Wallace, Shafer, Munoz, Beesley, Laymon

This doesn't even come close to listing all the people I have known by name over my lifetime.

Sixty-three years on earth have truly been a blessing, bad living, bad choices, and sin aside. May God and any soul I offended or hurt in these 63 years, forgive all my sins in thought, word, or deed and allow me the opportunity to say, *"I am truly sorry for offending or hurting you. I pray you will forgive me."*



Powerball Lottery: My son just knew we were going to hit something BIG on the lottery Saturday with it being my birthday and all. Who was I to burst his bubble with the odds of winning being what they are.

The numbers he and his brother selected were 07, 13, 25, 36, 63 and **25**. The Powerball number was 25. The winning numbers were: 06, 31, 51, 54, 55, and **12**.

DRAWN NUMBERS		YOUR NUMBERS	RESULTS	PRIZE	WITH POWER PLAY
POWERBALL NUMBERS 6 31 54 55 17 2X		7 13 25 36 63 25	Not A Winner	\$0	\$0
DOUBLE PLAY NUMBERS 22 40 42 54 68 7		7 13 25 36 63 25	Not A Winner	\$0	N/A

This was my son's first time playing the lottery. Hopefully it will be his last. No birthday winnings today!



2025 Goals vs Deadline: The goal for 2025 is not to set goals. Goals are like promises, *too easy to break*. That's wrong!

Rather than set *goals*, I am going to set myself to specific *deadlines*. It is easier for me to accomplish something when I know there is a *deadline* attached to it than if it is a *goal*.

Question: *What is the difference between a goal and a deadline?*

According to the medium.com website:

Goals are specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound (SMART). They provide a roadmap that guides us toward our dreams. A deadline is the defining factor that distinguishes a goal from a dream. It adds a sense of urgency and accountability to our aspirations. (Oct. 2, 2023)

Source:

<https://medium.com/@roheenachudhary7/the-difference-between-a-goal-and-a-dream-is-a->

[deadline-b363af6430aa#:~:text=Goals%20are%20specific%2C%20measurable%2C%20achievable,guides%20us%20toward%20our%20dreams.&text=A%20deadline%20is%20the%20defining,and%20accountability%20to%20our%20aspirations.](#)

Okay, sounds good. But let's look at what the Business Fitness website has to say on the subject:

You need to set the deadline if the dream is to become a goal, as Napoleon Hill said. So, have a dream, break down the steps necessary to reach it, set timeframes to achieve each step and then embark on the first. That is how your dream can become a reality. (April 19, 2021)

Source: <https://businessfitness.biz/a-goal-is-a-dream-with-a-deadline/#:~:text=You%20need%20to%20set%20the,dream%20can%20become%20a%20reality.>

If I am reading this correctly, I must first have a dream, then set a deadline to reach the goal.

Sounds good to me! Let's look at some deadlines and goals I hope to accomplish in 2025.

Dream: *Adoration/Daily Mass*

Deadline: *After first 2025 confession.*

Goal: *Every Wednesday.*

Dream: *Lose weight.*

Deadline: *2025-Weigh in end of each month.*

Goal: *20 lbs.*

Dream: *Build and tone upper body.*

Deadline: *Spring 2025*

Goal: *Spend time with my youngest son.*

Dream: *Learn to use a video game controller.*

Deadline: *July 2025*

Goal: *Spend time with my middle son.*

I believe the *objective* is not to set too many goals or deadlines lest you accomplish nothing at all. Small, realistic, attainable goals should be the objective. I can start with these four.



Monday 123024 8:31 AM

Peace be with you!

"From today on, my own will does not exist. From today on, I do the will of God everywhere, always, and in everything." (Jesus to St. Faustina, Diary 372).

Closing out 2024 Just one day left of the current year ... 2024. This has been a challenging year for Matthew. Leading up to June, Matthew was angry and searching. He bucked me where he could which for any parent whose child is an adult living with you is far more challenging than when they are children.

I lost my patience with my son on two occasions which for me are two occasions too many. Thankfully my son Joshua was there to help me deal with my impatience properly.

In early June, perhaps late May, Matthew began to show signs of mental disorder. This first occurred in 2021 one month after moving in with us.

This second round was more intense. The event in 2021 ended once he was placed on medication (Risperidone) which he stopped taking a year later.

Thankfully, Matthew seems to be doing better. The reason for that could be a combination of factors: prayer, medication, removal of the kidney stone (twice in the same year) and the love, patience and care that Joshua and I have provided from the very beginning.

This has not been easy for my son Joshua. It was rough early on (in the beginning) dealing with Matthew's psychosis, eventually diagnosed as *Schizophrenia*, and Joshua's own struggles.

Matthew's first surgery related to his kidney stone occurred October 14th at Ascension/St. John's in Broken Arrow

On June 3rd we took Matthew to *Parkside Psychiatric Hospital & Clinic* located at 1239 S Trenton Ave, Tulsa, OK 74120. My oldest son Michael accompanied us.

This was the same hospital Joshua, and I had taken Matthew to in 2021. However, due to a *policy change*, Parkside could not admit Matthew because he was over the age of 30.

After assessing Mathew, Parkside recommended that we take Matthew to an emergency room where he could be transported to another facility.

The mistake Parkside made was releasing Matthew to our care to transport to St. John's. According to St. John's, Parkside should have transported Matthew by ambulance to the ER.

Mistakes happen.

From St. John's, Matthew was admitted to the *Tulsa Center for Behavioral Health* located at

2323 S Harvard Ave, Tulsa, OK 74114. He was in this facility from June 4th through the 28th.

This facility is located next door to the *Family & Children's Services* Harvard offices.

At some point between the time Matthew was discharged from the *Tulsa Center for Behavioral Health* he was in an out of the *Family & Children's Services Crisis Care Center* on three or four occasions before he was assigned to the *Family & Children's Services Pact Team*.

Prior to that, Matthew was already meeting with various staff members at *Family & Children's Services Harvard Office*. He was receiving his oral medication as well as a monthly *injection* of *Invega Sustenna*.

A second *injection* of *Poloxin* (which is the liquid version of Fluphenazine) was prescribed. He now receives both injections monthly.

In addition to his visits to the *Crisis Care Center* which on average lasted about a week to almost two weeks, there were the multiple visits to the *Ascension/St. John Broken Arrow Emergency Room*, one visit with *Clare Roarty* of *McClure and Associates*, one visit with his primary physician (*Dr. Michael Sayler*), two visits with the dentist (*Flawless Smile Dentistry*), one visit to the eye doctor (*Eye Mart Express*) and several visits with the urologist (*Urologic Specialists*).

In the seven months between June and December, Matthew had two *kidney stone* operations with the second operation taking place at the *Oklahoma Surgical Hospital* located at 2408 E 81st St # 300, Tulsa, OK 74137 on Monday, Dec. 23rd.

In addition to all of that, Matthew was prescribed two pairs of glasses, had one cavity filled, his teeth cleaned, had a visit with his primary

physician, received *Sooner Care* Medicaid, had his *food stamps* reinstated, was assigned to a *Pact Team*, attended one *Group Therapy Session* with the *Pact Team*, and applied to attend the *Crossroads* program.

Admittedly, it has been an intense seven months, but the one good take away from this is that this brought me and the boys closer together. You cannot put a price on that. God is good indeed.

I am not certain where we will go from here, but wherever it is, we will walk that journey together with God.

Notable Events (2024): Here is what comes to mind for me. Not in chronological order.

- 1 Brother "G" moves out a fourth time.
- 2 I resign my seat as a member of COHO (Coalition of Hispanic Organizations) board to devote time to my son.
- 3 I applied for employment with two local entities to help supplement the income. *Status: still pending.*
- 5 First *Social Security* payment is received in February.
- 6 Credit score jumps to an all time high.
- 7 I was approved for a line of credit at *Hibdon's Tires*.
- 8 Urologist signs me off for another year. The PSA test was good.
- 9 At the invitation of Deacon Ken Saveth, I am privileged to partner with him on his *Saintly Sips* project and future podcast.
- 10 President Jimmy Carter passed away Sunday, Dec. 29th.
- 11 Pope Francis announces that 2025 will be a *Jubilee* year of *Hope*.
- 12 Rebranding project gets underway. I removed the words *Communication Media* from *Carlos Michael Communications Media* and will move forward with *The Carlos Michael Studio/Coffee House Productions* instead.

13 The following *domain* names have been established: *thecarlosmichaelstudio.com*, *thecarlosmichaelstudio.online*, *thewrinkledcup.com* and *thewrinkledcup.online*.

14 I turned 63 on December 28th.

15 Matthew begins to show signs of mental disorder in late May. He was diagnosed with *schizophrenia* in June. Struggles with the disorder continue from June through December.

16 The *Coffee Break w/Carlos Michael* podcast posted December 28th on Facebook is the highest viewed show to date on Facebook with 162 views as of 123024.



Tuesday 123124 6:30 AM

Peace be with you!

"From today on, my own will does not exist. From today on, I do the will of God everywhere, always, and in everything." (Jesus to St. Faustina, Diary 372).

Happy New Year's Eve! What am I thinking about. I am thinking about my son Matthew. Why? He was in and out of distress via his *schizophrenia* on Monday. This is the third time he

expressed his *frustration* with Joshua (youngest son) and me.

Last night, as Joshua and I were mainly sitting with Matthew waiting for his mother to call and encouraging him to take his evening medication, he exhibited moments of anger or frustration. He was having difficulty settling down (an obvious side effect of the medication he is taking).

He had that look in his eyes. He was seeing something that wasn't there, wrote something in his recliner using a fingernail, insisted that Joshua was sitting in the recliner when Joshua was in the kitchen fixing dinner among other things.

Getting back to his frustration at the point when we were insisting that he take his medication, Matthew stood up, walked toward the closet door and said in anger, *"I have a right to miss someone if I want too!"* (referring to his mother). He also said right after, *"I am tired of being here and I am tired of you guys!"* (something he has said before).

He also seemed angry with Gary because Matthew stated that he sent Gary a text asking how he was doing or "what" he was doing, all Gary said in response was, *"I am applying for jobs!"*

According to Matthew that is all Gary said. No "hello." No "how are you doing." Just "I am applying for a job."

Of course, I am not blaming Mathew's state of emotional distress on Gary, nor am I convinced that what he has stated to me and Joshua is entirely true. Meaning, it may be true to a point, but the rest is either associated with Schizophrenia or the medication he is taking or both.

Thankfully his mother called him sometime around 9:30 PM (Oklahoma time); 7:30 PM (California time). They chatted for a while before Matthew gave me the phone to talk with mom. We chatted briefly before I gave the phone back to Matthew.

At one point, Matthew put his shoes and shorts on and kept going in and out of his bedroom. Later, with his door closed, he sounded as if he were crying or was upset...enough for me and Joshua to check on him. It was obvious that Matthew was still frustrated or angry.

What we did manage to get from Matthew is that he misses his mother, and he wants to move back to California. This is something I will have to discuss with Amy. If that is what Matthew really wants to do, then I will not hold him back...*if that is what he truly wants!*

I won't waste these pages expressing what or how I am feeling at this moment. This is not about me. This is about my son and what he is going through.

This must be what is meant by being at the *crossroads*. A decision must be made concerning which of the four road options to take.

Ugh!

--

Not Feeling It. I am not certain that I am ending the year on a good note. I know better than to give in to how I am feeling but I'll be darned if I am not feeling well (emotionally).

Chalk it up to a *cornucopia* of events, situations, personalities, etcetera. Despite all of that I am going to choose to fight this with the grace of Christ. I do not want to let these feelings steal the joy that is in my heart.

No one (other than the Lord or His Mother) to talk to about this, so I figure it is best to keep it in my heart and leave it to God.

He will see me through this.

Not my will but His be done. Amen.

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I created two graphics for *The Wrinkled Cup* and *Corree Break Catholic*. I decided that I will keep the look of both similar with subtle differences. Hopefully this will work.



I also changed the motto for *The Wrinkled Cup* from “Seniors on the run!” to “Seniors Having Fun!” I agree with Gary and Janet, the latter works better.

Family History:

Padilla Family ...

Paternal Grandfather/Grandmother:
Timoteo Padilla (d.1976).
Reason: Unknown.
Age. 93.

According to dad, Grandpa left Sonora, Mexico, entering the United States through Texas. He was married to his first wife and had two daughters: Jesus and Ignacia at the time he came to the states. He settled briefly in Kansas City (not certain if Kansas or Missouri) before moving to New Mexico.

While in New Mexico, grandpa lived with a woman and fathered three more daughters, one of them being my Aunt Sophia who later moved to southern California. She and her husband (Augustine) are the parents of my cousins: Johnny, Rosanne, Augie, Rudy, and Rosemary.

Grandpa then moved to Irwindale, California, and married my grandmother (**Maria Cruz**). According to mom, grandma was a little girl at grandpa’s first wedding in Mexico. Grandpa built a house on Hidalgo Street and together with grandma raised the following children: *Carrie, Katy, Julia, Lucy, Gloria, Jenny, Margaret, Mary, Joe, Carlos, Tim* and *Tito*.

Grandma passed away in 1984.

Both grandparents passed away at *Queen of the Valley Hospital*, West Covina, California. Their

funeral masses were held at *Our Lady of Guadalupe Catholic Church* (Irwindale), and they were interred at *Queen of Heaven Cemetery* (Rowland Heights).

Memories of my grandparents:

Grandma was devoutly Catholic. She and grandpa slept in separate bedrooms. Grandma slept in the master bedroom. Standing at the entrance to her bedroom, I can still see her bed (full-size), closet doors (on the left), window (just over the bed) and assorted statues, especially one large statue of the Sacred Heart of Jesus (to the right).

Three things that stand out for me with respect to grandma are her apron, sweater and Rosary. For as far back as I can recall, she always had her apron and brown sweater on and a Rosary in her hand. She prayed the Rosary religiously—something I am truly grateful for. Her devotion to Our Lady and the Rosary was second to none, except for the Lord.

She was known for keeping cookies in the food pantry and was a very good cook. Her homemade tortillas were the best.

Grandma loved her Chihuahua’s. To the left of her bedroom was an entryway that led to a very small bathroom, and I believe the shower, and a pen toward the back wall where she kept her Chihuahua’s.

Each time someone would use the bathroom; those little nippers would bark something fierce.

When she wasn’t praying, entertaining or taking care of the house, grandma enjoyed sitting in the living room watching her novellas.

She wore glasses and often had her hair pulled back. Her pride and joy were her plants which were everywhere. Of course, the rock structure

that grandpa built for her plants that included all sorts of plastic animals, houses, etc., meant everything to grandma.

You didn't dare touch her arrangements or else.

I can see where my father got his love for plants from because in many ways, he was very much like grandma than he was grandpa. Dad did love his parents and family. I suppose that is why I feel as I do about my family; the love I have for them because I saw that in my father.

The only other experience I recall with grandma was when she asked dad why we don't speak Spanish, when was I going to get a haircut (not that I was running around with long hair), not to eat our food with just tortilla's (although grandpa thought otherwise) and the time I walked home with her at 3 to 5 years old from the old Catholic rock church on Irwindale Avenue to the house. It wasn't a far walk but I do remember visiting the church and holding grandma's hand on the way home.

One regret I have among many that I am ashamed of but will share, is the day I arrived home in 1984 and saw my brother Frank crying on the porch. I don't recall why but I was not in a good mood. When I asked Frank why he was crying, he told me that he had just heard that grandma had passed away.

While I felt bad, I was completely indifferent to his feelings at which I made a crude remark that was not only unkind, not charitable and wrong, in some ways I responded with indifference thinking only of my concerns at the time.

What a terrible person I was then. Always angry and self-concern. Thankfully my brother never stopped loving me and God (in His Merciful love) never gave up on me.

Please believe me when I say that I am not proud of who I was and how I acted at those times. I only pray that in my confessions over the years that was one of the behaviors I needed to confess.

Grandpa was a character. A real hoot. He was also a grandparent who would chase you with a rubber hose (more as a joke than to discipline us) if discipline was necessary.

For as long as I knew my grandfather, he was never sick except for the two weeks leading up to his death in 1976.

Grandpa used to like to tinker with things, especially cars. He would take them apart and what he did with the parts, I don't know.

I suppose you could say that he was the Mexican Fred Sanford of his day.

Fred Sanford was the main character in a television show "Sanford and Son" (1972-1977) played by the late Red Foxx (1922-1991). His television son "Lamont" was played by Demond Wilson.

Here is what I remember about grandpa:

He loved to tinker, had a sense of humor, made great tasting Kool aid, loved watching "Lucha Libre" (wrestling), did everything with his hands, was a hard worker, found a way to provide for and love all his children, built his house, was one of the first pioneers of the city of Irwindale.

In fact, in 2016 (not certain how accurate the date is) a Metrorail station and street is named after the "Padilla" family which is know as "Avenida Padilla" or "Padilla Avenue" in the city of Irwindale.

I am going to need to conduct further research on this as well as consultation with any remaining living relatives who can recall the events leading up to “Avenida Padilla” being dedicated.

I never thought too much about this honor until the time of this entry (8:37 AM on Tuesday 010725).

Three events or trips that I recall taking with dad, siblings (Frank and Cindy) and my grandfather were to *El Monte Legion Stadium* to watch “live” wrestling that aired on KCOP-Channel 13, a trip to *Sonora, Mexico* and a trip to *San Jose, California*.

At the wrestling event I recall seeing the following wrestlers: Andre the Giant, John Tolos, Black Gordman and the Great Goliath, Svengali, Victor Rivera, Pork Chop, Pak Song, and Kenji Shibuya.

I recall grandpa being so excited about going that he couldn’t get his shoes on with dad’s assistance.

The trip to Mexico was a unique experience. The only vivid memory I have from the trip was how hospitable the family was that we visited, the number of flies, the dusty roads, the simple inn (hotel) that we stayed at heading home and that delicious authentic “Hecho en Mexico” food.

I don’t recall too much about our trip to San Jose except for the fact that we visited Uncle Henry, Aunt Julie and family and had a great time. In fact, my brother big (Frank) and I performed our living dummy or whatever we called him routine for our cousins.

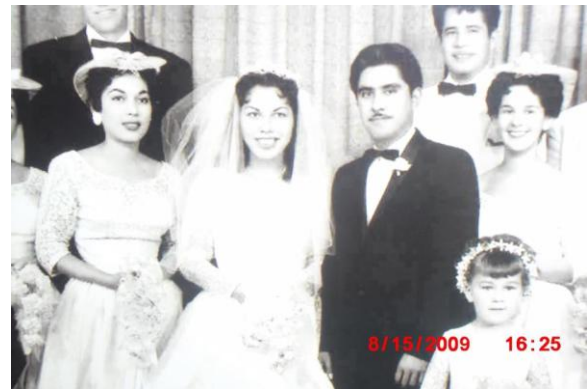
I would insert shoes into my hand and Frank would stand behind me (covered up) acting as my arms and hands and we would perform a skit. That is a memory I love thinking about that I shared with my big brother.

Grandpa was a soft-spoken man but a man’s man in the truest sense of the word. He was rarely without his hat and on occasion would speak what words he could to us kids in English.

There was once upon a time when I was ashamed of the Padilla name and my heritage, but by the grace of God I am truly grateful with all my heart that I came to my senses all those years ago and learned to love and embrace not just my family but my heritage as well.

In the 2025 journals, I will share what I remember about the *Salcido* family, mother’s family.

Basic Information



Date Parents Married:

November 22, 1958

Best Man: Adolph Cruz

Maid of Honor: Magaret Salcido

St. Joseph’s Roman Catholic Church, La Puente, CA.



Date of birth: December 28, 1961.

Time of birth: 5:52 AM.

Location: Los Angeles County General Hospital
1200 North State Street, Los Angeles, CA

Parents: Carlos C. Padilla (28), Mary A. Padilla (23)

Address: 511 North Barbara Ave, Azusa, CA.

Certificate of Live Birth #7053-59831

Baptism:

February 18, 1962
Our Lady of Guadalupe Catholic Church
16025 E. Cypress St., Irwindale, CA 91706
Rev. Patrick M. Hughes (Pastor)

First Communion:

May 2, 1970
Our Lady of Guadalupe Catholic Church
10625 E. Cypress St., Irwindale, CA 91706
Rev. Patrick M. Hughes (Pastor)

Confirmation:

February 18, 1979
Carlos Francis Padilla
Our Lady of Guadalupe Catholic Church
16025 E. Cypress St., Irwindale, CA 91706
Rev. Patrick M Hughes (Pastor)
Most Rev. Thaddeus Shubsda (Presider)
Ralph Salcido (Sponsor)



Marriage:

First Date: October 21, 1988
Outpost Wedding Chapel, Adelanto, CA.
Carlos S. Padilla
Amelia D. Casas

Renewal of Vows:

May 7, 1991
Home of Christopher and Kim Haley, El Monte, CA.

Best Man: Christopher R. Haley

Maid of Honor: Kim S. Haley

Church: Universal Life Church, El Monte, CA.

Minister: Dr. Martin Jerome Lopez, D.D.

License and Certificate of Confidential Marriage
#11293

Month of Separation:

August 1996

Dissolution Of Marriage

Filed October 24, 2001
Los Angeles Superior Court
Case Number: VD44660

Filed by: A-Plus One Legal Document Center
15235 Springdale St. Huntington Beach, CA
92649

Filed by Carlos S. Padilla Jr.
10737 Tolliver St., Adelanto CA 92301
760.246.3102
In Pro Per; LDA 028

Superior Court of California, County of Los Angeles
12720 Norwalk Blvd., Norwalk, CA 90650
Southeast District

Petitioner: Carlos S. Padilla Jr.
Respondent: Amelia R. Padilla

Declaration of Nullity (First Marriage)

Case: Padilla – Lambrecht
No: LF-92/0000
Issued by the Curia of the Archdiocese of Los Angeles, California, June 29, 1982.
Rev. Gerald B. Fessard, M.A., J.C.L.

Decree Of Invalidity In Lack Of Form Case (Second Marriage)

Case: Padilla-SASAS (Casas)
Prot. No. T.L.F.-21/18
Given in Tulsa, OK on June 14, 2018.

Rev. Michael J. Knipe, J.C.L., Judicial Vicar

Children:

Carlos Joseph Michael Padilla, 030589,
Doctor's Hospital, West Covina, CA.

Kristian Justine Marie Padilla, 031590,
Doctor's Hospital, West Covina, CA

Matthew Phillip Andrew, 101191,
Doctor's Hospital, West Covina, CA

Joshua Joseph Brandon, 073094
Victor Valley Global Medical, Victorville, CA

Father:

Carlos Cruz Padilla
B. April 4, 1933
D. August 24, 2020
Internment: Queen of Heaven Cemetery,
Rowland Heights, California

Mother:

Mary Alice Salcido-Padilla-Flores
B. September 6, 1938
D. December 27, 2018
Internment: Queen of Heaven Cemetery,
Rowland Heights, California

Siblings:

Frank (1959), Cynthia (1964), Kristina (1969),
Ralph (1970), Manuel (1973), Jesse (1973)

*Frank passed away in August 2013. He was 53
years old.*

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Health & Medical Conditions:

1966: **Mumps, Appendectomy**
County General Hospital, Los Angeles, CA.

Sometime between 1967 and 1969:
Tonsillectomy
Queen of the Valley Hospital, West Covina, CA.

Bedwetter: 1961 – 1973
This event stopped following a visit to Dr. J.D.
Thordason, West Covina, California. Dr.
Thordason prescribed medication that corrected
the problem.

Foot Procedure (Date unknown)
Visited Dr. J.D. Thordason, West Covina, California
due to a callous type of circular structure on left
foot that was raised and hard. Dr. Thordason
injected a local anesthesia into the left foot and
removed the object by burning it off.

Ear, Nose and Throat
Due to chronic earaches, I was referred to a local
ear, nose, and throat specialist by Dr. Thordason
whose name was Dr. Morgan. His office was
located across the street from the Edgewood
High School campus on West Merced Avenue,
West Covina, California. Visits with Dr. Morgan
resulted in 2 or 3 ear surgeries and in-office
procedures such as suctioning out a substance
from the ears and the insertion of tubes in the
eardrum.

Heart Concern. Sometime during the mid-to late
80s, I periodically visited the emergency room out
of concern that maybe I was having heart trouble.
It was discovered that I had "Mitral Valve
Prolapse" that was treated with medication via a
cardiologist. One ER physician suggested that
maybe I had a slightly enlarged heart, however,
the cardiologist did not address it.

Weight: Struggled with weight most of my life. In
1985, after seeing myself in a picture holding my
niece Geanine, I decided with the assistance of a
former roommate to begin jogging to lose weight.
We began jogging one mile every day, changed

how I ate, and I dropped down to a 32" waist. That was the thinnest I had ever been.

Since 1985 my weight has gone up and down. In 2022, I cut back on carbs and sugars, watched my serving portions and continued to walk in the garage losing almost 20 lbs, in the process. The lowest I got down to was 213 lbs.

As of 01.05.25 my current weight is 224.08 which means I have gained back between 2023 and 2025 all the weight plus one pound that I lost in between February and December 2022.

UTI (Urinary Tract Infection): Sometime between September 2022 and December 2023, I experienced multiple urinary tract infections, one visit to the ER, several rounds of antibiotics and a visit with two different urologists.

Since my last visit with Dr. Paul Hagood (November 5, 2024), my PSA test was good. No signs of UTI or other conditions related to a UTI. Dr. Hagood said he would see me around the same time in 2025.

I **smoked** from 1976 to 2013.

Family Health & Medical

Dad: At the time of dad's death, he suffered from **diabetes** and **dementia**. I am not certain what the cause of death was. Although not a chain smoker, dad **smoked** until about age 33. I do not know how old he was when he started smoking. According to mother, when dad was younger, he was placed in a facility due to **tuberculosis**. I don't recall how long he was there. Sometime between age 35 and 50, dad suffered a mild **heart attack** and required surgery.

Dad's oldest brother Joe, passed away from **cancer** in his early 50s.

Mom: The health history on mother's side of the family includes **hypertension, heart disease, high blood pressure** and **diabetes**. I am not certain what medical conditions mother had, including at the time of her death. One year prior to her death she required stints to be placed in her leg or legs. She also fell and broke her hip. While at the physical therapy facility she contracted an open wound just above the buttocks that was due to sitting in her urine for at least three hours. This wound remained present until her death.

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Current Medication:

Spring Valley Norwegian Salmon Oil
1,000 mg per soft gel, 2 daily

Equate Aspirin
Pain Reliever/Fever Reducer
325mg, 1 x daily

Tamsulosin (Urination)
0.4 MG, 1 x daily

Lisinopril (Blood Pressure)
40 MG, 1 x daily

Amlodipine Besylate
5 MG, 1 x daily

Atorvastatin (Cholesterol)
40 MG, 1 x daily

Education:

Orangewood Elementary (1966-1971)
1440 S Orange Ave, West Covina CA 91790
626.939.4820

Willowood Junior High School (1972-1975)
2021 W. Alwood, West Covina, CA 91790

Edgewood High School (1976-1980)

1625 W. Durness St., West Covina CA 91790

Bassett Adult School (1981)

943 Sunkist Ave, La Puente CA 91746

626.931.3100

GED and Diploma

St. Louis Community College (1982)

3221 McKelvey Rd., Bridgeton, MO 63044

314.539.5000

(Did not complete)

Essex County College (1983)

303 University Ave, Newark, NJ 07102

973.877.4477

(Did not complete)

University of Phoenix/Tulsa (2007-2011)

14002 E 21st St Ste 1000, Tulsa OK 74134

918.622.4877 (Permanently Closed)

Bachelor's degree: Human Services Management

University of Phoenix/Online (2012)

4025 S Riverpoint Pkwy, Phoenix AZ 85040

844.937.8679

Master's degree: Education with a specialization in adult education and training

I began driving and working at age 16 (1977).

Closing Thoughts

There is much that I can complain about but to what end? If life has taught me anything, it is that it [life] is besieged with victories, challenges, and losses.

All three we can each count on experiencing at one point of our life journey across our timeline. There is no escaping it.

However, it is in how we embrace the experience, be it good, bad, or indifferent as a gift or blessing from God that, I believe, helps us to move forward

as God has designed on the other side of the experience.

I can sit here and raise my fist in anger at a God I have not physically seen and angrily assault him with useless words because this situation or that situation did not bode well for me.

But what does that get me?

Nothing.

Whence I have completed my tirade, the reason for the anger in the first place is still present. So, what good did all that wailing and shouting and fist-raising (or pounding) get me?

Again...nothing!

That is the equivalent of, please pardon my French...masturbating but missing out on the creation of life.

Sure, it feels good (in the moment) but in the long run not only did my action deny the gift of life [which is a miracle when you think about it] it was selfish, arrogant, ignorant, and a slap in the face of creation.

*The last seven months of 2024 were anything but pleasant. That is not to say that I did not experience great moments of joy in that time because I did. However, with the onset of my middle son's diagnosis of **Schizophrenia** in June, my youngest son and I were forced to learn the following:*

Schizophrenia is a terrible condition of the mind. As a caretaker of the Schizophrenic family member, great demands are placed upon you that you did not plan or were ready for.

Schizophrenia is a terrible disease of the mind. The things it does to the patient, especially those

voices that never seem to go away. That must be daily torture.

The endless trips we had to take to three different hospitals and psychiatric facilities. The multiple trips to the Ascension/St. John, Broken Arrow emergency room and the Family & Children's Services Crisis Care Center.

The daily dispensing of medication and the parade of professionals that are part of the Family & Children's Services Pact Team in and out of the house [of which I am grateful.] The Pact Team and the medication have been a blessing; however, the side-effects of the medication have been trying on my son and, to a degree, us as well.

There is drooling, restlessness, outbursts of frustration, indecisiveness, constipation, lethargy, mood swings, etc.

How terrible all of that must be for my son and others like him.

My heart and prayers go out to him, his suffering contemporaries, the caretakers and professionals who must deal with this disease on a constant basis.

Please forgive me, I forgot where I was going with this.

I thought the first half of this year was challenging enough, what, with Matthew being angry at times [perhaps justifiably], the drama at Church, the medical and financial issues, my other son losing his job, me not being able to secure more work to help offset the expenses...the list is endless.

There were times during the year when I collapsed and hid in "the box!" That is where I go [in my mind] although sometimes physically by leaving the perceived source of contention and moving to a different location—where I go to think things

through, to pray, and maybe even seek guidance from a trusted source.

When I was a child, whenever I felt as I just described, I would run to a large refrigerator box that my father had given me and sit in there for hours. There was something about the condensed, small space with the smooth walls and the quiet stillness of that box that helped me to cope with many challenging situations until one day when the box was destroyed.

That's another story for another time.

Yes! This has been a challenging year, but it has been a rewarding year as well.

I think what I found the most rewarding is the continuous relationship I have with the Lord through the Church and His Mother.

I know, 'Here he goes with the God thing again.'

Well, no, not exactly. But I am not going to deny the love and belief I have for God either.

Many, not most, people today would have you believe in something other than God because He is just a myth [like the Greek gods] that a bunch of old men with long beards conjured up for the sake of fear and control.

No, I don't think so.

I cannot explain God. I cannot prove God. Not in the physical sense like I can when I see a plant, a tree, or even a pair of underwear and say, 'See, those are real because I can see and touch them.' But God, where is He?

My heart tells me that He is everywhere. He is where I saw him at three years old and He is still present today.

As a young boy, I saw God everywhere: In the flowers, trees, the blades of grass, the water, the insects buzzing around, and yes, even in the traffic signal.

'What is that!?' you ask – the traffic signal? You see God in the traffic signal?

Yes, I do. Not in the actual signal itself but in the individuals who ran the machinery, designed the blueprints, and structured the wiring in such a way to make the traffic signal work.

Where there is life, there is God! So, when I see anything that is or was "created" I see God because I believe that life just didn't happen. I believe life was created by a master builder; the author of the perpetual story, a one true Living God who needs nothing to be something but created everything because of love.

Now, before you begin asking all the usual questions such as, "If this God is so loving than why all the pain and suffering?"

It's a good question. In fact, a legitimate question but one that is beyond my pay grade. I do not pretend to know what I do not know.

All I know is that I believe in the one true living God, a supernatural being of infinite power and existence who has always been since the dawn of time and will always be.

"But can you prove that' you ask?"

'No, I cannot!' No more than one can prove the existence of air even though we know it is present because it is necessary for our survival.

I accept or base my belief in God on faith. If when my time comes and there is no God as others would have us believe, it won't matter because I will be dead. It will stop there.

But if I am right in believing in the Father Creator on faith, then when that day comes, I will know and that brings me great joy and comfort because I will get to live on in eternity in the fullness of the Father Creator where only He will matter.

I always think it ironic how hard an atheist works to get one to disbelieve in a being that they claim not to believe in. If that is true, then why call

yourself an atheist? Why spend your life trying to discredit that which you believe does not exist?

That's okay. I love my brother and sister atheists just as much as I love my faith believing brothers and sisters because God loves both even more than I can ever love them.

St. Thomas More (Tulsa)

I never would have thought it possible but my relationship with the Deacons at the parish has been nothing short of amazing. How I do love our Deacons: Deacon Isidro, Gustavo and Ken. Oh, but that also includes the parish community, the staff, and of course, our priests: Fr. Briones (pastor), Fr. Ismael, and Fr. Daniel.

How funny when I think back to my telling the Lord that I did not want to leave Saint Patrick in Sand Springs for St. Thomas More mainly because of the language barrier. As I always like to remind everyone, 'Just because I look the part does not mean I speak the language.'

I don't recall exactly when I first began attending Mass at St. Thomas More, but I would say sometime not long after Father Todd Nance (former pastor of St. Patrick) was reassigned to southeast Oklahoma. I believe Fr. Todd has been away from St. Patrick about 3 or 4 years now, more like 4 which puts the timeline from St. Patrick to St. Thomas More around 2020 or 2021.

I remember just before making the decision to change parishes I said to the Lord, 'Okay, I will go. It will be a shorter drive, but I don't want to get involved with anything nor do I want to develop relationships with anyone. I just want to sit as far in the back that I can and be unnoticed.'

Oops! God, who obviously has a sense of humor, deigned otherwise. You know what they, "His Will be done. God always gets what He wants, not the other way around."

Since that time, I assisted briefly with helping the RCIA Coordinator (Joni Madson), sang with the

choir at the invitation of the Choir Director (Leda Diedrich), became the Communications Director or Coordinator to the English community (depending on the person you are talking with), received permission with Fr. Leo Morales' assistance and blessing to begin the First Saturday Devotion and had the privilege to honor several members of the parish community at the 2023 Teresa-Rogers Good Neighbor Awards held at The Property Event Center in Broken Arrow with a special recognition of Fr. Briones and Fr Leo.

So much for sitting in the back unnoticed!

But even more important than all of that are the relationships; the friendships that have been established with priests, deacons, and laity from Christ The King to Saint Patrick to St. Thomas More.

I was even privileged to present one of dad's high desert hand-made walking sticks to Bishop David Konderla through my friend Dr. Janet Bassett. What an honor that was for me. I am certain dad was pleased as he smiled down from Heaven.

Sadly, in 2024, I had to make the decision to resign from my position on the board of COHO—an acronym that means: Coalition of Hispanic Organizations. I was serving in the position of Second Vice-President at the time of my resignation.

Trying to balance my time between the Church, the board and the responsibilities at home became too much. I had to let something go and that something was my position on the board.

While I cannot say if incoming former President Trump is the answer to prayer, but I, of course, entrust his presidency and the pulse of the nation to God the Father. All I know is that the country could not continue to go in the direction it was going, but that also means that we individual faith-believing Christians need to make changes in our lives that will please God, not neighbor or self.

The operative theme being, "Back to God!" I like that. In God will I trust. On to 2025!





MONARCH OF THE PLAINS
A symbol of the enduring
friendship between the
people of Boulder and the
University of Colorado









I'M WITH
CUPID

The
Boozy Bandits















Image Credits:

Page 188: Mark Bergner, Boulder, Colorado (2020)

Page 189: Claymation image of my son, Joshua.

Page 190: Family Portrait (L-R) Back: Dad (Carlos Sr), Carlos Jr., Frank. (Front): Ralph.

Page 191: Family Portrait (L-R) Back: Cynthia, Mom (Mary), Kristina. (Front): Jesse and Manuel.

Page 192: Los Angeles Cupid Underwear Charity Run, 2015. (L-R) Terry Edward Stephens (d.2017) and Carlos Jr.

Page 193: Mom (Mary) and Dad (Carlos Sr.), Chino, California. Date unknown.

Page 194: Carlos Jr. (aka The Talking MexiCAN!)

Page 195: Eldest son: Carlos Joseph Michael looking towards the mountains of North Carolina. Date unknown.

Page 196: "Tache" (d.2023j. Beloved dog and friend.

Page 197: PTA: Wizard of Oz, Orangewood Elementary School, West Covina, California (1966), 6th Grade. Carlos Jr., as the "Scarecrow."

Page 198: Family Portrait (children). Hook Park, Victorville, California. Pictured (L-R) Back: Jennifer, Jaquelyn. Front: Kristina and Matthew.

Page 199: Family Portrait (children). Hook Park, Victorville, California. Pictured (back) Jacquelyn. (L-R) Front: Matthew and Michael. Our youngest son Joshua has not been born when this picture was taken. Date: Sometime between 1992-1994.