



A Newsletter from the Missions Office/Pontifical Mission Societies in the United States
Catholic Diocese of Columbus, Ohio

The Secret of the Ages was First Revealed to a Five-time Divorcee

***To monthly mission donors:
“Thank you for your support!”***

On behalf of His Excellency Frederick F. Campbell, the Bishop of Columbus, and Father Andrew Small, OMI, the National Director of the Pontifical Mission Societies in the United States, I would like to thank you for your prayers, sacrifices and financial support for the missions.

She had been married to five men. Her life was a mess, until she encountered Jesus.

On a particular day she went to the well at noon. Why did she not go in the morning? Maybe she did and she just needed extra water that day.

Or, maybe it was the other women that she wanted to avoid. Walking under the hot summer sun was a small price to pay to escape the other women’s sharp tongues.

So she came to the well at noon. She expected silence and solitude. Instead, she found Jesus.

Jesus asked her for water. But she was too streetwise to think that all Jesus wanted was a drink. “Since when does a Jew like you, ask a woman like me for water?” She wanted to know what Jesus really had in mind. She was right: Jesus *was* interested in more than water. Jesus was interested in her heart.

They talked. She could not remember the last time a man had spoken to her with respect. Jesus told her about a spring of water that would quench not the thirst of the throat but of the soul.

That intrigued her. “Sir, give me this water so that I won’t get thirsty and have to keep coming here to draw water.” ...“Go, call your husband and come back,” Jesus told her.

Her heart must have sank. Here was a man with a gentleness she had never seen before. And now he was asking her about her husband. Anything but that. Maybe she considered lying or changing the subject. Perhaps she wanted to leave – but she stayed and told the truth.

“I have no husband.” Kindness has a way of inviting honesty. You know the rest of the story.

The woman must have wondered what Jesus would do next. She must have wondered if Jesus’ kindness would cease when the truth was revealed. She must have wondered, “Will he be angry? Will he leave? He will think I am worthless?”

If you have the same anxieties, pay attention.

“You are right. You don’t have any husband. The man you are living with now is not your husband.”

No criticism. No anger. No “what-kind-of-mess-have-you-made-of-your-life” lecture. No. It was not perfection that Jesus was seeking – it was honesty.

The woman was amazed. “There is something different about you. Do you mind if I ask you something?”

Then she asked the question that revealed the big hole in her soul. “Where is God? My people say He is on the mountain. Your people say He is in Jerusalem. I do not know where He is.”

Can you imagine the expression on Jesus’ face when He heard the question? Of all the places to find a hungry heart – Samaria. Of all the Samaritans searching for God – a woman. Of all women hungry for God – a five-time divorcee.

And of all the people chosen to personally receive the secret of the ages – an outcast among outcasts – the most insignificant person in the region.

Jesus did not reveal the secret to King Herod. He did not reveal it to the Sanhedrin. It was not in the colonnades of a Roman court that He announced His identity.

No. He revealed it in the shade of a well in a rejected land to an ostracized woman. Jesus’ eyes must have danced as He whispered the secret: “I am the Messiah!”

Pope Francis' July Prayer Intention:

That our brothers and sisters who have strayed from the faith, through our prayer and witness to the Gospel, may rediscover the merciful closeness of the Lord and the beauty of the Christian life.

The Charismatics help turn the tide around in Latin America

The USCCB designates one collection every year to help the Church in Latin America. In the diocese of Columbus, the collection will be taken on the weekend of August 5 and 6. Please be generous.

Though two thirds of the world's Catholic population lives in Latin America, the identity of South America as a "Catholic Continent" is fading and has been so, for a long time.

It does not mean that Latin Americans do not identify themselves as Catholics, because many of them do.

But the ability of Catholicism to shape the culture is in decline. Catholicism faces some significant competitors - Evangelicals, agnosticism, and atheism.

Many Latin Americans who identify themselves as Catholics, describe themselves as at odds with the Church's teachings on some key faith and moral issues.

They say that they left the Catholic Church because they were looking for more assertive teaching on moral issues; that they adhere to more conservative positions.

Regular Mass goers cleave much more closely to Church teaching than those who don't.

Many ex-Catholics say that they became Evangelicals because Evangelicals are generally committed to a life of prayer, regular worship, and other church-based activities.

The Charismatic Renewal Movement, which is popular in the region, helps turn the tide around.

But it is important to remember that the Catholic Church is not about gaining market share in a given population. Rather, the Church is in the business of proclaiming the Truth.

Tidbit...

For a couple years I've been blaming it on lack of sleep and too much pressure from my job, but now I found out the real reason: I'm tired because I'm overworked.

The population of the USA is 237 million. 104 million are retired. That leaves 133 million to do the work.

There are 85 million in school, which leaves 48 million to do the work.

Of this there are 29 million employed by the federal government, leaving 19 million to do the work. 2.8 million are in the Armed Forces, which leaves 16.2 million to do the work.

Take from the total 14,800,000 people who work for State and City governments and that leaves 1.4 million to do the work.

At any given time there are 188,000 people in hospitals, leaving 1,212,000 to do the work.

Now, there are 1,211,998 people in prisons. That leaves just two people to do the work. You and me. And you're sitting at your computer reading jokes.

(Author unknown)

A joke a priest can tell: LOL!

At the end of the age when all the believers were standing in line waiting to get into heaven, the angel Gabriel appeared and said, "I want all the men to form two lines. One line will be for the men who were the true heads of their households. The other will be for the men who were dominated by their wives."

Gabriel continued, "And now we need all of the women to report to Mary and Martha on the other side of the gate."

The women left while the men hurriedly formed two lines. The line of men who were dominated by their wives was seemingly unending. The line of men who were the true head of their household had just one man standing in it.

Gabriel said to the first line, "You men ought to be ashamed of yourselves. You were appointed to be the heads of your households and you have not fulfilled your purpose. Of all of you, there is only one man who obeyed."

Then Gabriel turned to the lone man and asked, "How did you come to be in this line?"

The man sheepishly replied, "My wife told me to stand here."

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