



Shrine of Saint Jude Thaddeus

Dominican Friars

April 15, 2018

Dear Friend of St. Jude:

*“Only after the Last Judgment will Mary get any rest;
from now until then, she is much too busy with her children.”*
– St. John Vianney

Once a mother or father, *always* a mother or father. Children, especially teens, may hate to hear this, but such has been the truth since the dawn of mankind on Earth. God, through Nature, has programmed this into the very being of our souls such that we still consider a mother or father to be lacking something in their parenthood if they are not involved in their child’s life in some way, even if it is just with prayers or support from a distance. The Animal Kingdom is famous for mothers, especially, defending their young to the death (God help anyone caught between a mama bear and her cubs!), but that zeal passes when the offspring go on their own. The human mother and father have a longer outlook, long past the children moving on into their own, even stretching into the eternal, for mothers and fathers will often see to not just their children’s temporal needs but their spiritual needs as well.

Accordingly, many of those who visit the Shrine of St. Jude spend time on their knees praying for their children: for a young man caught up in drugs and gangs; for a young woman, once faithful, who fell in love and drifted away from the faith; or for a brother and sister who are no longer on speaking terms, tearing the family apart. These petitioners come to the Shrine or write to us asking us to pray for them. **Our Mother’s Day novena (May 5 – 13) and Father’s Day novena (June 9 – 17)** are for them, as well as all the other parents (by blood or adoption) who try their best to look out for the eternal welfare of their children. Whether they are still with us on Earth or passed on to their Eternal Reward, we pray for them, fulfilling the Lord’s Commandment of love: *Honor thy father and thy mother.*

Like the Blessed Mother, like *any* good mother or father, we will not rest until all God’s children are safely home. And so we are beginning a new initiative to support the efforts of fathers and mothers, especially: we will launch a **Novena to St. Monica this year from August 19 to 27**, preached by Fr. Terence Crotty, a well-known preacher from the Irish Province of the Dominican Order. We will send more information out in the coming months.

St. Monica, as you may know, was the mother of St. Augustine. Married to a terrible husband, she by her saintly example eventually won him to the faith. Likewise her son. She was troubled by his loose ways and wanderings far away from the faith, and at her wit’s end, so St. Monica pleaded with St. Ambrose, asking what she could do for her child. St. Ambrose patiently listened to her and consoled her: “It is not possible that the son of so many tears should perish.” He also advised her that, since her constant pleading seemed only to drive Augustine further away, she should speak to God about Augustine more than to Augustine about God. It was

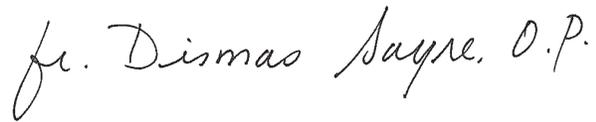


prudent advice. She won her famous child not just back to the faith, but as a faithful priest, bishop, and Doctor of the Church.

The day before the novena starts, we will offer a series of talks to help individuals and families learn how better to help win back friends and family members to the faith. The speaker will be Denise Bossert, a wife, mother, and Catholic speaker and author. Denise is also a convert, daughter of a Protestant minister, and has published in dozens of Catholic newspapers, appeared on EWTN (the television network), and writes a regular column, *Catholic by Grace*. We look forward to her insights on this important topic.

So this May and June, then, we focus especially on our parents, but we will not abandon our family and friends in the darkness of the world. We will not rest. We will not cease to pray. That is our ministry and calling, like that of any good mother or father.

Sincerely in Christ and St. Jude,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Fr. Dismas Sayre, O.P.".

Fr. Dismas Sayre, O.P.
Shrine Director