

HER LOVE OF GOD WAS AS VIBRANT AS HER SONG

Servant of God Sister Thea Bowman, pray for us

In 1989, just months before she died, Servant of God Sister Thea Bowman spoke to the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops on what it means to be Black and Catholic. There are many videos on the internet of her in this moment. They feature the beautiful, vibrant, genuinely boisterous, and sincere woman singing “We shall overcome” bringing the US bishops and archbishops to their feet, with arms crossed together, hands held, and swaying side to side as they sang in unison. But as powerful as this moment was and still is today, it is what Sister Thea shared prior to that moment that revealed her spirit.

She addressed the crowd not only as bishops, but as “Church” for we are all the Church.

Whatever your heritage or background, Sister Thea’s message should be heard with open hearts and minds. She speaks to build up the Church, to build up all of us.

Her opening remarks that day quickly went into song,

“Sometimes I feel like a motherless child... a long way from home....”

She said, “Can you hear me, Church? Will you help me, Church?”

“A pilgrim in the journey looking for home.

And Jesus told me that the Church is my home, and Jesus told me that heaven is my home..., please help me to get home.”

She eloquently and boldly cited the honest and strong history of being African American in the Church and in the United States.

She went on to say, “What does it mean to be Black and Catholic? It means that I come to my Church fully functioning. That doesn’t frighten you, does it? I come to my Church fully functioning. I bring myself; my Black self, all that I am, all that I have, all that I hope to become. I bring my whole history, my traditions, my experience, my culture, my African American song and dance and gesture and movement and teaching and preaching and healing and responsibility - as gifts to the Church.” And she added, “A spirituality that knows how to find joy even in the time of sorrow - that steps out on faith. That leans on the Lord.”

She spoke of discrimination, weaknesses, and how our Catechesis is to be multi-cultured, but we are failing to do

so. While we have come a long way, we need to keep moving forward.

“Today we’re called to walk together..., to celebrate who we are and whose we aren’t. If we, as a Church, walk together - don’t let nobody separate you,” she said.

Servant of God Sister Thea Bowman died of cancer on March 30, 1990. Her cause for sainthood was opened in 2018. Today we honor her love of God, which was as vibrant as her song.

A documentary of her life is expected to be released by New Group Media in the Fall of 2022. The film’s working title is

“Going Home Like a Shooting Star - Sister Thea Bowman’s Journey to Sainthood.” Portions of the film was shot at her childhood home that featured a welcoming red front door in Canton, Mississippi.

The daughter of Dr. Theon Bowman, a physician, and Mary Coleman Bowman, a teacher, Thea wanted to convert to Catholicism at the age of nine. By the age of 15 she had joined the Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration. She was the first non-white member of her congregation in Wisconsin. She was proclaimed a “holy woman” in the hearts of those who knew and loved her.

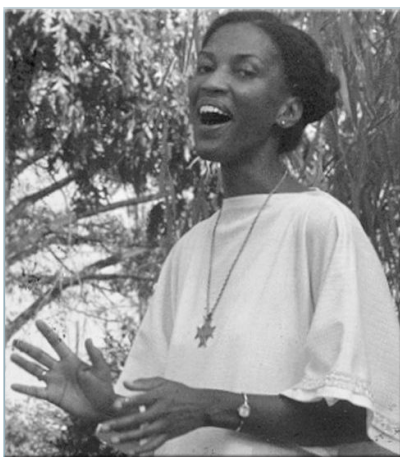
Before being diagnosed with cancer in 1984, she made an average of 100 appearances each year at charismatic lectures and workshops, where she shared her message of joy and hope. Even after her diagnosis, she insisted on living and giving until she was not physically able.

She described herself as trying to be “the bridge over troubled waters,” referring to being a peacemaker bringing all people together to work, to pray, and to play as God’s children.

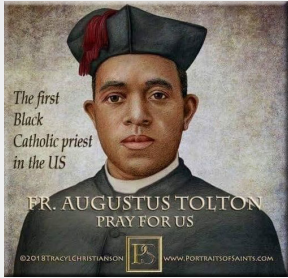
Before she died, she said that she wanted “She tried” to be engraved into her headstone, explaining “I want people to remember that I tried to love the Lord and that I tried to love them.”

Let us try - to imitate her love for the Lord and all children of God with a joyful spirit and great compassion as brothers and sisters in Christ.

For more information on Servant of God Sister Thea Bowman go to: WWW.SISTERTHEABOWMAN.COM. To watch her speech to the USCCB go to: [YOUTU.BE/uOV0nQKJU0A](https://youtu.be/uOV0nQKJU0A)



CALL FOR THE INTERCESSION OF GOOD FATHER GUS ON HIS BIRTHDAY



April 1 is the birthday of Venerable Fr. Augustus Tolton. He lived from 1854 to 1897, and was the first Roman Catholic priest in the US. A former slave, Fr. Tolton was ordained in Rome and served as pastor of St. Boniface in Quincy, Illinois. He was known as “Good Father Gus,” who had eloquent

sermons and a beautiful signing voice.

The Archdiocese of Chicago presents a beautiful picture of him, “Father Tolton shows us in his own life’s pattern that we can find blessing in everything, even what is most painful. His story is one of suffering service. Through his experiences of racial negation by a society that would separate black and white by force of the law and lawless custom, Tolton found the love of God, found his own vocation and ultimately has received his reward from God as a figure of Christian faith in action, indiscriminate love of neighbor and pastoral charity despite the bigotry that was thrown at him.”

Read and see more at TOLTON.ARCHCHICAGO.ORG/ABOUT.

On his birthday let us pray the prayer shared by the Archdiocese of Chicago:

“O God, we give you thanks for your servant and priest, Father Augustus Tolton, who labored among us in times of contradiction, times that were both beautiful and paradoxical. His ministry helped lay the foundation for a truly Catholic gathering in faith in our time. We “in the shadow of his ministry. May his life continue to inspire us and imbue us with that confidence and hope that will forge a new evangelization for the Church we love.

Father in Heaven, Father Tolton’s suffering service sheds light upon our sorrows; we see them through the prism of your Son’s passion and death. If it be your Will, O God, glorify your servant, Father Tolton, by granting the favor I now request through his intercession (mention your request) so that all may know the goodness of this priest whose memory looms large in the Church he loved.

Complete what you have begun in us that we might work for the fulfillment of your kingdom. Not to us the glory, but glory to you O God, through Jesus Christ, your Son and our Lord; Father, Son and Holy Spirit, you are our God, living and reigning forever and ever. Amen”

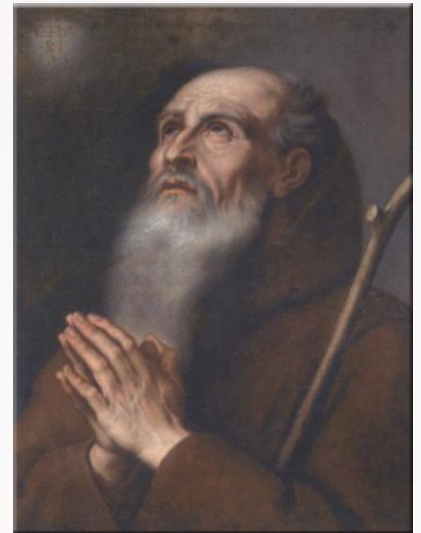


“FIX YOUR MINDS ON THE PASSION”

April 2 is the Memorial of St. Francis of Paola. These are his words shared by the Vatican and taken from the *Letters of St Francis of Paola, Hermit* (Letter AD 1486):

“May our Lord Jesus Christ, who repays most generously, reward your labour. You must flee from evil, and drive away dangers. We and all our brothers, although unworthy, pray constantly to God the Father and to his Son Jesus Christ, as well as to Mary the Virgin Mother, to be with you as you seek the salvation of your souls and your bodies.

“Brothers, I most strongly urge you to work for the salvation of your souls with prudence and diligence. Death is certain, and life is short and vanishes like smoke. Therefore, you must fix your minds on the passion of our Lord Jesus Christ who so burned with love for us that he came down from heaven to redeem us. For our sakes he suffered all the agonies of body and mind, and did not shrink from any torment. He gave us a perfect example of patience and love. For our part, we too must be patient when things go against us.



“Put aside hatred and hostility. See to it that you refrain from harsh words. But if you do speak (to) them, do not be ashamed to apply the remedy from the same lips that inflicted the wounds. In this way you will show each other mercy and not keep alive the memories of past wrongs. Remembering grievances works great damage. It is accompanied by anger, fosters sin, and brings a hatred for justice. It is a rusty arrow spreading poison in the soul. It destroys virtue and is a cancer in the mind. It thwarts prayer and mangles the petitions we make to God. It drives out love and is a nail driven into the soul, an evil that never sleeps, a sin that never fades away, a kind of daily death.

“Be lovers of peace, the most precious treasure that anyone can desire. You are already aware that our sins drive God to anger, so you must repent of them, that God in his mercy may spare you. What men conceal is open to God. Turn to him with a sincere heart. Live in such a way that you bring upon yourselves the blessing of God, and that the peace of God our Father may be with you always.”



NEWS FROM CATHOLIC CHARITIES WEST VIRGINIA

COMMUNITY SHINES LIGHT ON THE PATH OUT OF DARKNESS

"The person is not only sacred but also social." -United States Conference of Catholic Bishops

Humans rely on one other. We are created to live in relationships. We need each other as we celebrate or mourn; when we're struggling or thriving; as we give and receive.

And yet, community and encouragement can elude us in our darkest moments. We may feel afraid to reach out, or ashamed that we need help in the first place. People struggling to overcome substance use disorder often feel this acutely before coming to Catholic Charities West Virginia (CCWVa).

CCWVa and Jobs and Hope West Virginia have partnered to meet the unique needs of people recovering from substance use disorder. Jobs and Hope West Virginia refers clients to CCWVa for wrap-around social support services, such as helping clients meet their goals of obtaining housing, a photo ID, job training and more.

Community is absolutely essential for people in recovery. "Jeff's" story illustrates this truth beautifully. He went from jail to self-sufficiency through the blessing of nonjudgmental support and an employer willing to give Jeff a chance.

Because the community rallied around Jeff and helped him find tools to succeed, Jeff has been promoted twice since March 2021 and is currently a general manager. He continues to achieve new goals through his perseverance and the support of Jobs and Hope West Virginia and CCWVa.

Pope Francis reminds us: *"Local individuals and groups can make a real difference. They are able to instill a greater sense of responsibility, a strong sense of community, a readiness to protect others, a spirit of creativity and a deep love for the land. . . . Social problems must be addressed by community networks and not simply by the sum of individual good deeds."*

To learn more about Catholic Charities West Virginia, please visit www.CatholicCharitiesWV.org.

The Mission of Catholic Charities West Virginia: *Guided by God's love, Catholic Charities collaborates with community partners, parishes, and families to provide caring and compassionate services to people in need and work toward lasting and meaningful change.*

Catholic Charities West Virginia
Shining a Light on Hope

VIRTUAL GALA

Save the Date
April 21, 2022



FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT

This week's readings

First Reading Joshua 5:9a, 10-12

After 40 years of suffering in the desert the Israelites are able to celebrate Passover in the promised land.

Responsorial PSALMS 34

"Taste and see the goodness of the Lord."

Second Reading 2 Corinthians 5:17-21

Go be ambassadors for Christ. He has forgiven us. Share the joy of reconciliation with others, so, they too may know His mercy.

Gospel Luke 15:1-3, 11-32

The story of the prodigal son. God is waiting for us. Even in our sinfulness, when we fall in shame and truly repent, our Heavenly Father is there for us with open arms of mercy and ready to celebrate you.

Full scripture text for today's readings can be found at:

BIBLE.USCCB.ORG/BIBLE/READINGS/032722-YEARC.CFM

PRAYER INTENTIONS

For the Church, as we continue walking together through the synod, may we continue to encounter, listen, and discern what God is calling us to do for the good of the people – the good of the Church, let us pray to the Lord. . .

That leaders of nations invest in human kindness, protecting God's creation so fresh food and clean water be accessible to all people, let us pray to the Lord. . .

For those here today, that we choose to be ambassadors for Christ, sharing with all God's mercy and the love that awaits them in the Eucharist, let us pray to the Lord. . .

For all preparing for the sacrament of reconciliation, that they may be a beacon of hope for others, let us pray to the Lord. . .

Lord hear our prayer

#FaithInWV



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It begins with prayer.

Faith In WV provides resources to help inspire and refresh your prayer life.

Enhance your prayer life through

- Family Devotions
- Finding Peace
- Catholic Tradition
- Resources

Inspire your life by reading stories about fellow Catholics throughout the state of West Virginia spreading joy and sharing God's word.

FaithInWV.org



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of FAMILIES**
JUNE 22-26 2022

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Check your local parish for Fish Fry
& Lenten Dinner schedules



Liturgy of the Hours
LITURGY OF THE HOURS

Pray the prayer for this day, this hour!

EBREVIARY.COM **LITURGY OF THE HOURS**

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Purgitsville	FM	98.7
St. Marys - Parkersburg	FM	105.3
Star City - Morgantown	FM	89.7
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WV Catholic Radio www.WVCatholicRadio.org		

ENROLL TODAY

WV Catholic Schools

*Empowered
by knowledge.
Transformed
by faith.*



Register today

wvcatholicschools.org



MASS ONLINE

Saturday 6pm Masses will continue to be livestreamed from the Cathedral of St. Joseph, and will be available on our website each Sunday at DWC.ORG.

Below are four options for enriching your spirit through daily Mass online.

- EWTN airs daily Mass from Our Lady of Angels Chapel, in Irondale, Alabama, at 8am, noon, and 7pm:
[HTTPS://WWW.EWTN.COM/TV/WATCH-LIVE](https://www.ewtn.com/tv/watch-live)
- St. Patrick's Cathedral in New York has daily Mass live streamed at 7am: [HTTPS://SAINTPATRICKSCATHEDRAL.ORG/LIVE](https://saintpatrickscathedral.org/live)
- Catholic TV also streams its daily Mass: [HTTP://CATHOLICTV.ORG/MASSES/CATHOLICTV-MASS](http://catholicTV.org/masses/catholicTV-mass)
- Daily Mass Online at Notre Dame' Basilica of the Sacred Heart is live at 11:30 am Monday-Friday:
[HTTPS://CAMPUSMINISTRY.ND.EDU/MASS-WORSHIP/BASILICA-OF-THE-SACRED-HEART/WATCH-MASS/SPECIAL-MASSSES/](https://campusministry.nd.edu/mass-worship/basilica-of-the-sacred-heart/watch-mass/special-masses/)