

JANUARY 24, 2025



There has been dramatic growth in the eastern panhandle since the year 2000. Three new, large church complexes were built from scratch. I was invited to say a few words at a Catholic Charities Fundraiser in September 2013 in Martinsburg, WV as the newest priest in the Vicariate. This is how I began my remarks. “When I was named the Pastor of Saint Leo the GREAT (think of Tony the Tiger) I felt proud of being a priest in Inwood. But then I learned that the Church in Charles Town was called Saint James the GREATER. I felt sad until I realized they were talking about how much in debt the parishes were?”

During the long history of the Catholic Church, there have been only a few saints given the title of “Great” for their contributions to the church. Three saints who were popes customarily carry the title “the Great”: Pope Leo I (reigned 440-461), Pope Gregory I (590-604), and Pope Nicholas (858-67). Other “Greats” include Anthony, Basil, Leo, Albert, and Gertrude. The Church has never officially granted the title “Great” to any of these saints; they have been designated such by popular acclamation at the time of their deaths and by the witness of subsequent history.

Today – Friday, January 24 - is the Feast of Saint Anthony. There was a write-up about this oldest living known saint who is believed to have been 105 years old. Last Friday - January 17 was the birthday of Mohammed Ali who styled himself as “The Greatest.” A great many saints teach the most important virtue for becoming a saint is humility. Saints credit God’s grace for all the good they accomplished through their words and actions.

Here are two of the best definitions of humility I’ve heard through the years. First, “humility is seeing yourself as God sees us,” That is, lovable, gifted, and - yes - imperfect but trying to become and be who God wants us to become and be. Second, CS Lewis wrote. “Humility is not thinking less of ourselves but thinking of ourselves less.” In other words, denying our gifts and putting ourselves down is not being humble. Humility is thinking of God and others before ourselves.

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<https://www.blessedsacramentwv.org>

<https://faithinwv.org/latest-bulletin/>

<https://bible.usccb.org/bible/readings/012625.cfm>

Noteworthy News

ADULT FAITH FORMATION begins a new video series on The History of the Catholic Church. It will be Sundays between the Masses including 30-minute video followed by discussion. Come to any episode because you will learn someone new.

Blessed Sacrament Parish Staff and Pastoral Council invite and strongly encourage you to complete **THE DISCIPLE MAKER INDEX SURVEY**. This program has been extremely helpful in parishes and dioceses throughout the world. You can fill in the 20-minute survey online, or on paper after this Sunday's 9am Mass. You may also take it online here: <https://portal.catholicleaders.org/dmi/survey/x1a236>. Please take time to do so. Time is running out.

POEM Think of Yourself as Nothing

Think of yourselves as nothing, and
totally forget yourself when you pray.
Only have in mind that
you are praying for the Divine Presence.
You can then enter the Universe of Thought,
a state that is beyond time.
Everything in this realm is the same,
life and death, land and sea . . .
But in order to enter the Universe of Thought
where all is the same,
you must relinquish your ego,
and forget all your troubles.
— Maggid of Merzeritch

A PRAYER for HUMILITY

Most humble Jesus, give me a share of your humility. Take from my heart everything that displeases you; convert it totally to you, so that I may no longer will or desire anything other than what you will. Amen.

CARBONATED GRACE

A truck loaded with thousands of copies of Roget's Thesaurus crashed yesterday losing its entire load. Witnesses were stunned, startled, aghast, taken aback, stupefied, confused, shocked, rattled, paralyzed, dazed, bewildered, mixed up, surprised, awed, dumb-founded, nonplussed, flabbergasted, astounded, amazed, confounded, astonished, overwhelmed, horrified, numbed, speechless, and perplexed.