

Transcendentals

Triple Crown

A DIGITAL CATHOLIC JOURNAL



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NEWS FROM THE FRONT

Welcome back and thank you, dear reader, for your continued prayers and support. This issue is smaller compared to most, but it certainly makes up for it with its quality.

Our theme for August is dedicated to Mary, the Mother of God. We celebrate her Assumption into Heaven but also her Coronation as Queen of Heaven and Earth. Her "triple crown" is meant to represent her being crowned by God the Father, the Son, and Holy Spirit. Our Special Guest Contributor, Patrick Peori, shares his thoughts on the Blessed Virgin and how we must continuously go to her for our spiritual needs. For when we go to her, she immediately points us to Jesus.

It has been one calendar year since the founding of *Transcendentals*. From an idea amongst friends to monthly online publications, the journal is truly seeing a resurgence of Catholic art amongst young Canadians.

Thank you for those who helped found it, contributed to it, and prayed for its success. We cannot wait to see what will happen in this next year.

Pax Christi.

Transcendentals

BRING MARY INTO YOUR LIFE

by Patrick Peori



“When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing beside her, he said to his mother, “Woman, here is your son.” Then he said to the disciple, “Here is your mother.” And from that hour the disciple took her into his own home.” (John 19:26-27)

One cannot be a disciple of Christ, that is to say, a Christian, without accepting the immensely important role of Mary.

Mother of our Saviour. Queen of all saints. Help of Christians. She is our advocate, our hope, and our mother.

Mary goes by many titles and she plays many roles in our lives. But before any title or any role we must bring her into our life. Only when we allow her in do we come closer to Jesus.

At the cross, Mary was entrusted to John, and John likewise was

entrusted to Mary. That entrustment extends to us. It is necessary that we also take Mary into our home and our heart.

Mary is the Mother of the Church, Mother Most Pure and the Cause of our Joy. We are able to bring her into the home of our life through each of these titles.

Mother of the Church

What is most universal is also most personal. Mary is the universal Mother of the Church.

As members of the one holy Catholic Church, that means personally she is also our own Mother.

Reflecting on this reality in 1997 during a Wednesday general audience dedicated to the title 'Mother of the Church,' now St. John Paul II said:

"The faithful first called upon Mary with the title 'Mother of God', 'Mother of the faithful' or 'our Mother' to emphasize her personal relationship with each of her children. Later, because of the greater attention paid to the mystery of the Church and to Mary's relationship to her, the Blessed Virgin began more frequently to be invoked as 'Mother of the Church.' The title 'Mother of the Church' thus reflects the deep conviction of the Christian faithful, who see in Mary not only the mother of the person of Christ, but also of the faithful."



Today, as in all times, the Church is rocked by scandal, persecuted, and even hated by some. It is in these times we need to be closely united with Mary, the Mother of the Church. Along with Jesus, she offers us support, wisdom, guidance and care to the holy church and each of her members. We can be sure that just as Mary walked with Jesus at Calvary she also walks with us, the members of the Church, on good days and bad days.

Mother Most Pure

In order to love Jesus and others in the best way, we need the grace and virtue of purity. It's easy here to think of purity just as sexual purity. However, Mary demonstrates for us what it means to be totally pure of heart. Being pure of heart means placing God above everything



else and being totally focused on Him and His ways. We can be sure that Mary was undivided in her love of God. She placed Jesus above all else. She gave her whole self to Christ.

It was at the Annunciation she exclaimed, “Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word,” (Luke 1:37).

In fact, it was her purity that made her most sterile. Venerable Thomás Morales (1908-1944), founder of a number of movements dedicated to Our Blessed Mother, in a reflection titled ‘Virgin Most Pure, Mother Most Life-Giving’ said:

“The most pure virginity, the most fertile maternity. A human paradox, a divine miracle: virginity and maternity appear to be antithetical and irreconcilable categories, but everything is possible with God. From the most pure Woman who ever existed is made the Mother most fertile.”

Mary’s yes or fiat is a model for us of what it means to live totally sold out for God and totally united to His will. It’s only in following His plan do we experience a life that is true, beautiful, and good. In bringing Mary into the home of our life, we are able to give our daily yes to God and “do whatever he tells

you,” (John 2:5). Our purity of heart will bear fruit in our life and the lives of those around us.

Cause of our Joy

It was when Mary visited Elizabeth that “...the child leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit and exclaimed with a loud cry, “Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb,” (Luke 1:41-42).

It was then Mary rejoiced and said, “My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, for he has looked with favor on the lowliness of his servant,” (Luke 1:46-48).

Mary, so full of joy, the cause of our Joy because she brings Jesus into the world for us. Jesus is our ultimate joy. She demonstrates for us that in all things, the highs and lows, we can and should be full of joy. Uniting ourselves to Jesus through Mary, we have our ultimate peace and joy no matter the circumstance.

Let us go to Our Blessed Mother and bring her into our home and our heart. She who is the Mother of the Church, Mother Most Pure and the Cause of our Joy. Bring to her your hopes, dreams, trials, and sufferings and make way for a miracle.

Holy Mary, pray for us



**"Humanity looks to works of art to shed light
upon its path and its destiny."**

ST. POPE JOHN PAUL II
LETTER TO ARTISTS



ST. MAXIMILLIAN KOLBE

ARTIST: JOSHUA TERPSTRA

MEDIUM: DIGITAL PAINTING (PROCREATE)

ORIGINAL SIZE: 8.5" X 11"

St. Maximilian Kolbe is an important saint for me. St. John Paul II referred to him as “The Patron Saint of Our Difficult Century”. His model and courage is one that I believe is just as relevant today as it was in his saint-making moment.

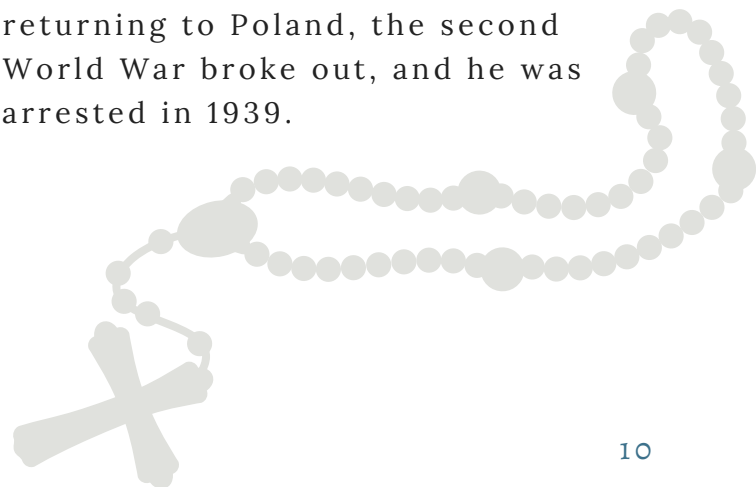
Many of us know the ending of the story of this great saint’s earthly life: at a moment of bravery, he gave his life for that of a stranger in Auschwitz. Maximilian Kolbe was taken to a cell in Block 11 to be starved with a small party of 9 other men. It was noted by other prisoners that prayers could be heard from the cell, and whenever someone came into the cell, they were immensely calm. After two weeks, only Kolbe remained alive in the cell, at which point his guards poisoned him to clear the cell.

Prior to his sacrifice in Auschwitz, he joined the Conventual Franciscans in 1907 with his older brother, Francis. During his novitiate period, St. Maximilian was sent to Rome to study philosophy. During his time there, in response to witnessing the threat of the Freemasons and their public shamings of the Pope, he established the Militia Immaculata to work for the conversion of sinners and enemies of the Catholic Church. His devotion to the Virgin Mary was not only evident here, but

also in the taking of “Mary” as a second name in committing his final vows to the Franciscans. He further encouraged his fellow Franciscans to consecrate themselves to Our Lady.



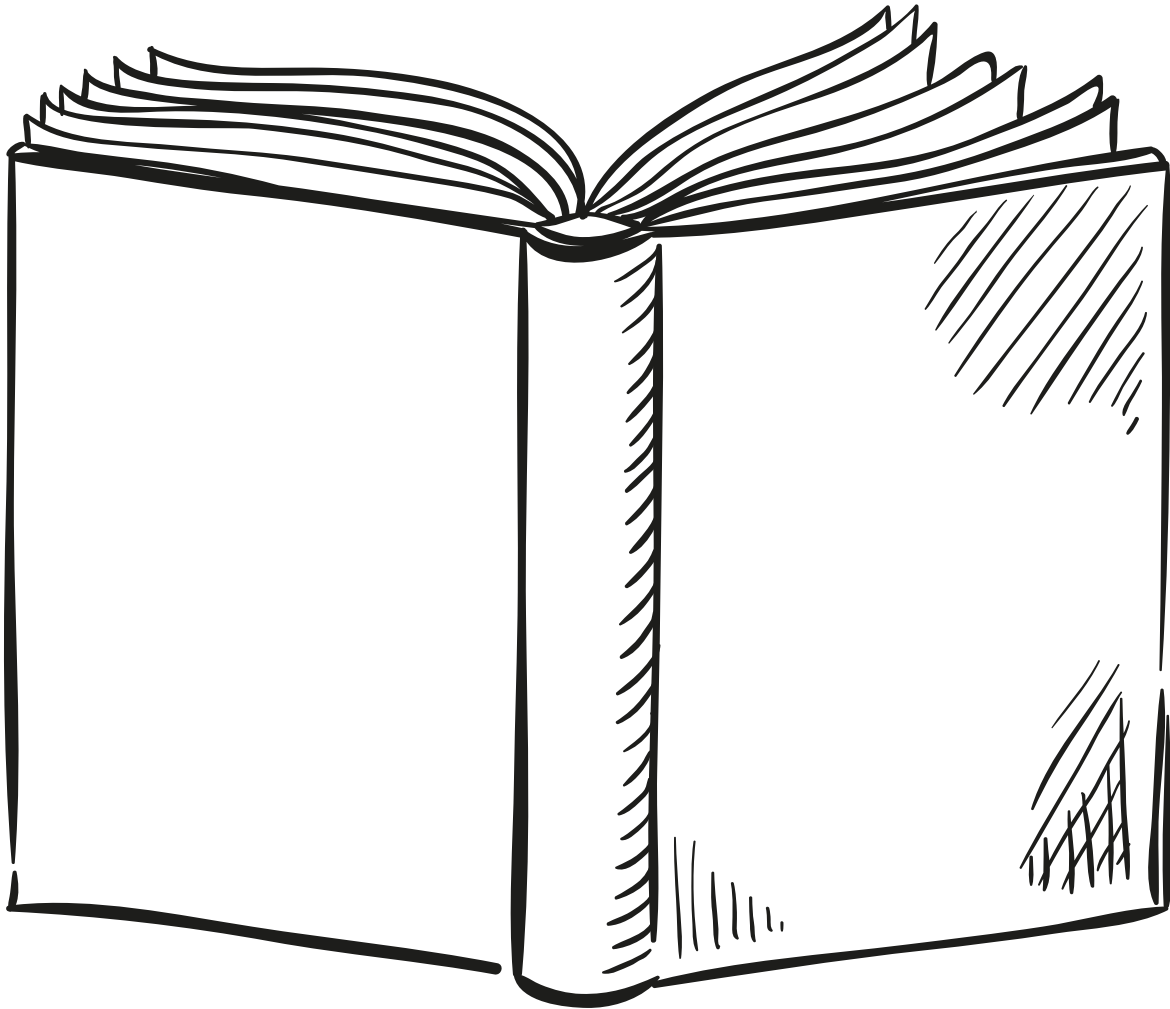
This Saint spent many years doing missionary work in Asia, forming monasteries in Japan in India, and forming publications around the Militia Immaculata in Poland and Japan. Soon after returning to Poland, the second World War broke out, and he was arrested in 1939.



In my own life, I was privileged to live in a small community of Catholic men during my university studies. In the second year of the house, we consecrated our house to St. Maximilian Kolbe, a strong model of authentic masculinity, bravery, and the living out of fidelity to the Church. His patronage inspired a conglomerate of men who strived to build each other up, to emulate a strong life of prayer and fraternity, and to be leaders within our own mission fields and communities. These men have each touched my life in profound ways, and I thank God for the ways in which they have called me to greatness. I pray that I may have done the same.

In the current climate of the Church, St. Maximilian's act is an example of what true unity looks like; a collective, with an overlying respect for difference, working towards a shared greater end. I believe this to be a noble goal. And in the face of the cultural antagonism of our post-Christian society, this call to keep our eyes fixed on the lifting up of our Lord Jesus Christ through the intercession of Mary is one that we must be unified on. Let us hold fast in the trials, and exercise the wisdom, prudence, integrity, and fidelity of St. Maximilian Kolbe.





"An open mind, in questions that are not ultimate, is useful. But an open mind about the ultimate foundations either of Theoretical or of Practical Reason is idiocy. If a man's mind is open on these things, let his mouth at least be shut. He can say nothing to the purpose."

—

C.S. LEWIS
THE ABOLITION OF MAN

DISCERNING IN A PANDEMIC:

LOVE LIKE THERE IS NO TOMORROW



JAMES CYFKO

Two years into seminary formation, I felt frustrated. This frustration stemmed from constant wrestling with the question of whether I was called to the priesthood or not. Marriage had always been attractive to me, and I wanted to get on with that if it were my calling. I would play out different scenarios in my mind, spend long hours in prayer,

and scrutinize the desires of my heart to figure out my destiny.

My spiritual director sensed my stress and posed a question to me that I have never forgotten. He asked, “James, how about focusing on loving more?” At first I thought, “What does this have to do with figuring out my vocation?” I soon realized that the

answer was, "Everything!"
Consciously striving to increase in love gave me the vocational clarity I craved. In this time of pandemic, this prescription for discernment confusion only increases in relevance.

I can imagine how difficult it is to discern while being quarantined. We cannot frequent the Sacraments, pray before the Blessed Sacrament, volunteer in our home Parish, meet vocations directors in person, and there is no possibility for a physical visit to a seminary, convent, or house of discernment. It is as if we are on a forced retreat from all of the active ways to discern a vocation. With those regular activities gone, there is an even greater necessity to discern by growing in love. That is something everyone can do in the domestic Church, in each home.

It is easier said than done, especially at home. But that is exactly the point! I found I had been scouring for the answer to my vocational question outside the walls of the seminary, at the expense of loving those I lived with in the small ways. My spiritual director told me to seek out practical ways to be charitable to my brother seminarians, like helping one with a philosophy paper, clearing a plate after dinner, or checking

in on a guy who seemed down. I did not have to go to a food bank, serve at the chaplaincy, or pick up litter off the street. Charity began at home. In this time where we are spending (sometimes unbearable) time with those who live with us, we are given the same divine mandate of loving one another. And it starts with the smallest actions.

How does this help me find out where I am called in the end? Well, I could never *find* my vocation by grasping at my future. Instead, I *received* my vocation when I was finally open to the Lord. How does one become open, then?

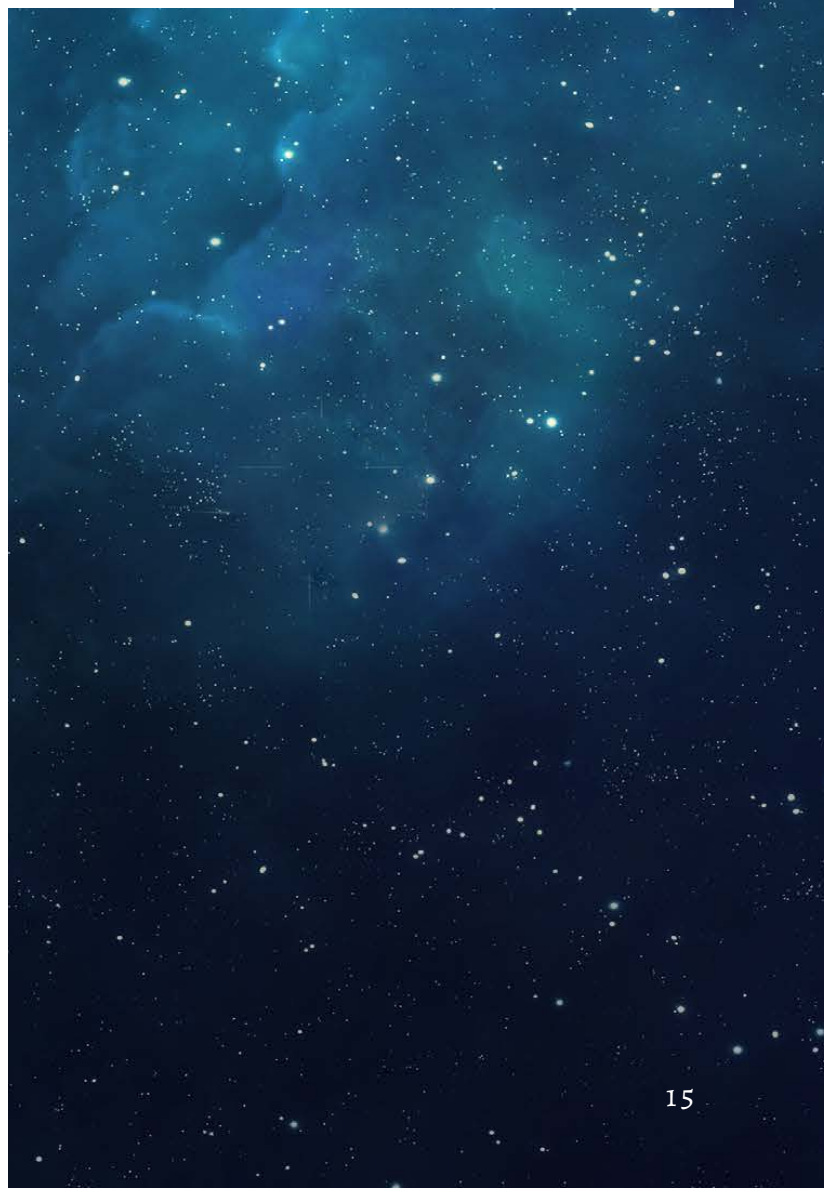
Openness grows as love increases. That is why St. Thérèse of Lisieux said, "My vocation is love!" Obviously she became a nun, but her openness to *that* call only came as a result of her commitment to increasing in charity at home. When I love in small ways, God guides my heart to the place where I will be able to best love Him with my life. And that is my vocation. The funny thing is that it comes without noticing, as my attention is occupied by trying to love while He takes care of the rest.

Helpful for social distancing,
Mother Angelica said,

“Hospitality is not only inviting someone into your home, but it is inviting someone into your heart.” An invitation to a home requires the door to be open. In the same way I can ask myself, is my heart open to loving others? If my heart is open to others, I can only imagine how open the Sacred Heart is for me. Even though the physical Parishes are closed, His hospitable invitation into the depths of His Love remains open. Diving into His Sacred Heart will hold the truth of my future within, for my heart is the home where the Lord dwells as well. Relationship with God is mutual longing for and belonging to each other.

While we deal with COVID-19, there is uncertainty about the future. We are confronted with our mortality, the reality that we may die sooner than we often think. This should be motivation to enter wholeheartedly into our vocations *today*. We should literally love like there is no tomorrow, for tomorrow may never come. In that, I do not have to stress out to find my ultimate vocation. If life is just a string of present moments stitched together, then St. Thérèse of Lisieux is on point when saying, “My vocation is love!” Through that, we can be in our future vocation in the present moment.

The priesthood is not the life of a recluse. It is a life of love. Instead of panicking about where I am called, my best bet for discernment in quarantine is allowing my heart to burn more fiercely with the Love that gives me my destiny in the present moment. Like a flame which increases in temperature due to the pressure of the furnace walls, my love can increase in capacity while stuck with those around me. There lies my future, my path to the unlocked heavenly home waiting for me.





**Don't lower the wave of my heart,
it swells to your eyes, mother;
don't alter love, but bring the wave to me
in your translucent hands.**

—

**SAINT POPE JOHN PAUL II
*JOHN BESEECHES HER***

TO MY 1948 HERMES BABY

RYAN DIAZ

These keys are pregnant with stories to tell
And the ink is soaked through with memory,
In them the long forgotten past still dwells-
Longing to be pried free from the page's shell,
Rescued from the den of obscurity,
These keys are pregnant with stories to tell.
Who will hearken to their ancient spells,
Who will drink deeply of their revelry.
In them the long forgotten past still dwells,
Deep in the bowels of their bardic wells-
A song from eons past longs to be free,
These keys are pregnant with stories to tell.
And as I type, the words rise like the swells
And I am guided by their mystery,
In them the long forgotten past still dwells.
Listen for the knell of the carriage bell
And the steady percussion of iron keys,
For these keys are pregnant with stories to tell,
In them, the long forgotten past still dwells.

BIOGRAPHIES



James Cyfko

James is a seminarian from St. Augustine's Seminary going into his seventh year of formation for the Archdiocese of Toronto. He is serving at St. Mary's Parish in Barrie for the summer. Before entering the seminary, James played competitive hockey and in the hopes of attaining an NCAA scholarship.



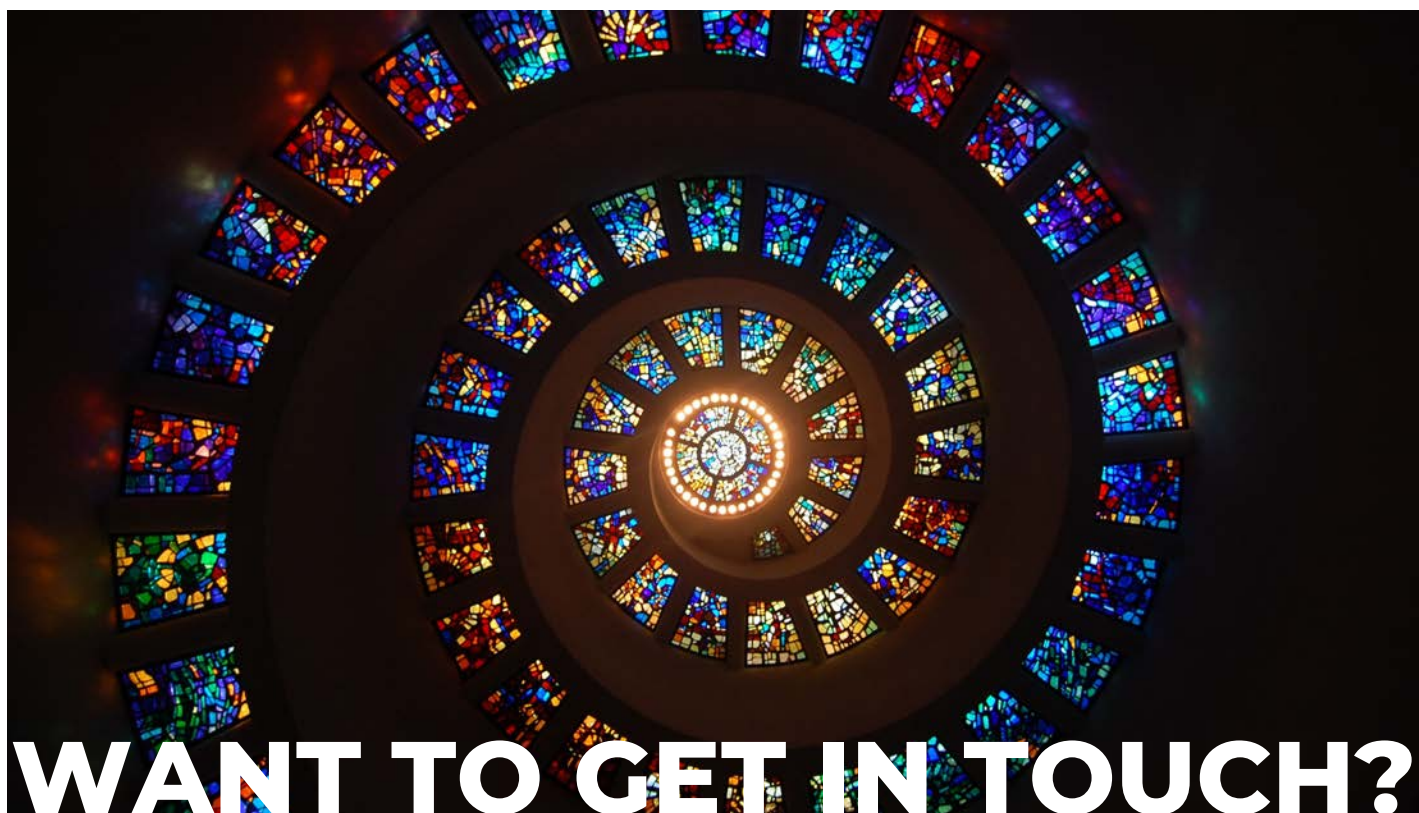
Ryan Diaz

Ryan Diaz is a poet, writer, and theologian from Queens, NY. He holds a BA in History from St. Johns University and is currently completing a MA in Biblical Studies. Ryan's writing attempts to find the divine in the ordinary, the thin place where fantasy and reality meet. He currently lives in Queens, NY with his wife Janiece.



Joshua Terpstra

Joshua was raised in Belleville, Ontario, where he was received by a loving Catholic community in some of his formative years. His years in youth ministry coincided with a developing love of the arts, both in the theatre and in his sketchbook. Since beginning his studies at the University of Ottawa in 2017, not only has he found a community where he has been able to thrive, he has been led to travel across the world to Singapore, Cameroon, and Mexico to serve and to learn. As he finishes his psychology and theatre degree, he is teaching visual arts, drama, french, and english to elementary students at a private Catholic school.



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