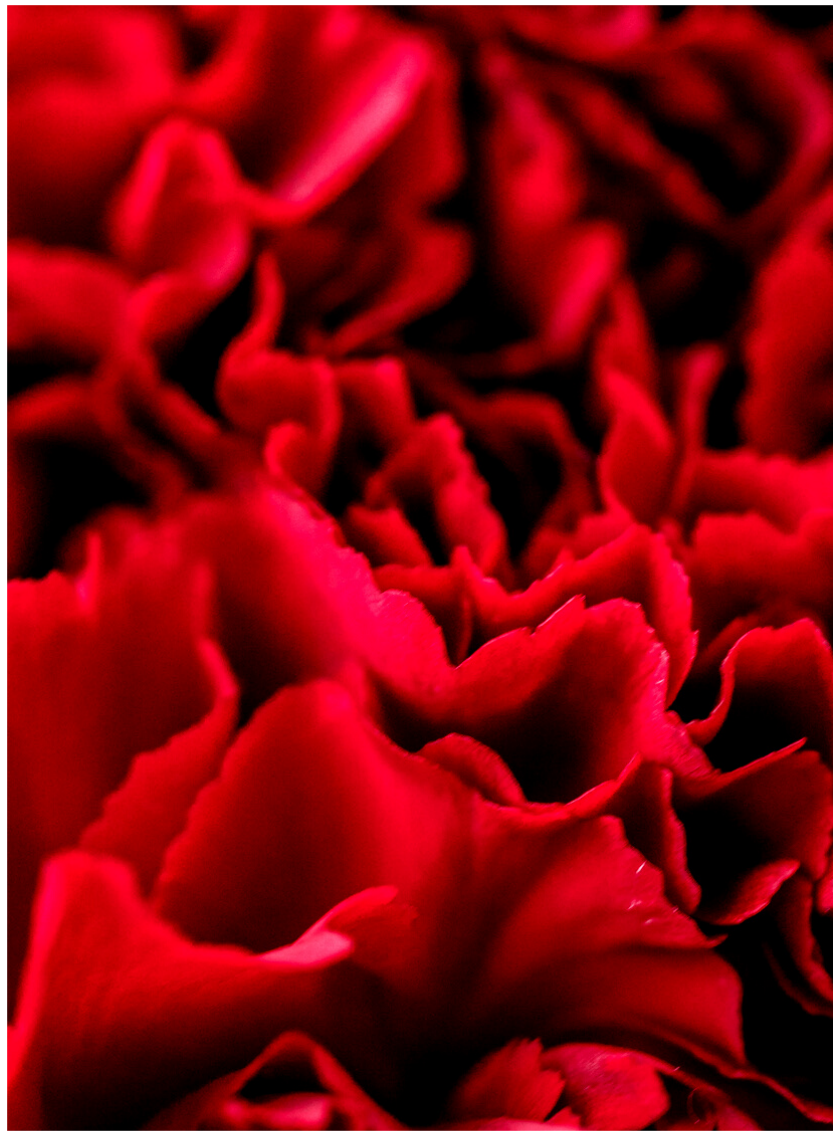


Transcendentals

Blossom from Blood

A DIGITAL CATHOLIC JOURNAL



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NEWS FROM THE FRONT

Welcome back to *Transcendentals*! We hope you are just as excited as we are in getting back to promoting Truth, Beauty, and Goodness in our culture.

This month's theme is "Blossom from Blood." We felt it was an appropriate title given that the month of July is dedicated to the Precious Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Moreover, we have put the major feasts of Easter and Pentecost behind us and are now living in Ordinary time. The liturgical colour of said time is green, representing the new life that was made possible from Jesus' resurrection. Thus, our new life that is blossoming was made possible by the shedding of His blood.

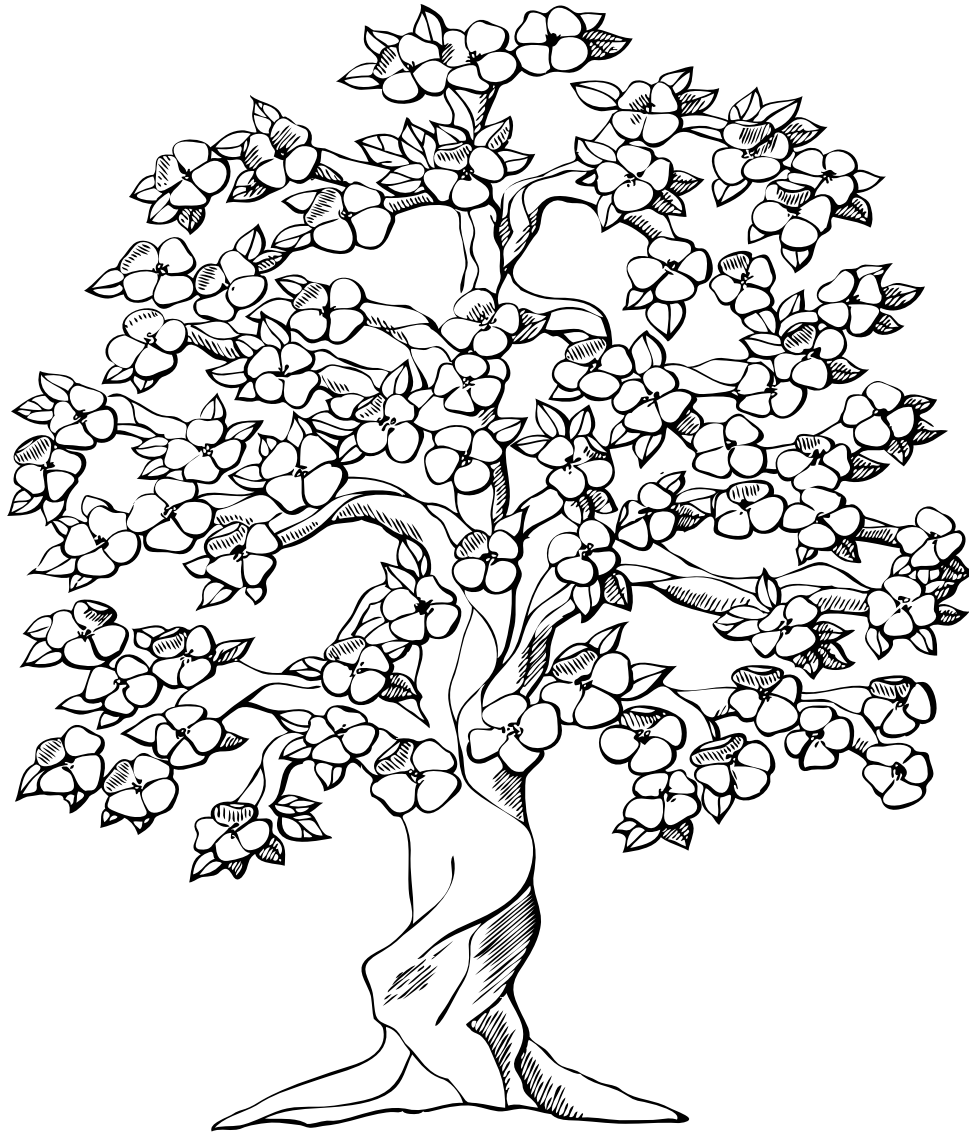
Our publication has two wonderful pieces by brand new contributors that submitted pieces even while *Transcendentals* was dormant. We wanted to personally thank Ruth and Abby by making their work the focal point for this month.

On another note, we are excited for the Throneway Conference hosted by St. Augustine's on August 20th in Oakville. We hope to see you there for some talks, praise and worship, adoration, and mingle time!

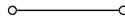
Again, thank you very much our dear reader and we hope you are as excited as we are.

It's good to be back.

Transcendentals



**"The purpose of art is nothing less than the
upliftment of the human spirit."**



ST. POPE JOHN PAUL II
LETTER TO ARTISTS



OUR LADY, THE HOMELESS

ARTIST: RUTH O'REILLY

MEDIUM: DIGITAL ART

ORIGINAL SIZE: 2000 PX BY 2000PX

“Our Lady, The Homeless,” though it was created as part of a series illustrating the various titles of Mary, is not one of her official titles. The phrase came to mind one day during prayer, and it stuck with me. I kept picturing Mary homeless during the flight to Egypt. She would have nursed Jesus to sleep on roadsides, and slept on rock and grass. Her clothes would have become stained. She probably smelled.

Most images of Mary are pristine. Her skin is flawless, her clothes beautifully arranged. I wanted to capture a different side. In all her apparitions, Mary appeared in the race and style of the local people, a testament to her universal motherhood through Christ and her unique care for

her children. It mattered that they saw themselves in her. I think it matters too to have depictions of Our Lady that are far from perfect. If we only look at the pretty and the clean, we may forget to see God in the uncomfortable and the messy.

There are a number of homeless who I have met and spoken with over the years; there are many more who I, in my own business, fear, and indifference, have passed on by. Our Lady, who was homeless on the road to Egypt, must have a special heart for those so cast aside. Praise God who still sees them! May he give us a greater courage and selflessness to reach out to our brothers and sisters in need of compassion.





"If you look for truth, you may find comfort in the end; if you look for comfort you will not get either comfort or truth only soft soap and wishful thinking to begin, and in the end, despair."

—

C.S. LEWIS



THE ABUNDANCE OF THE CROSS

ABBY SLATER

“Everything I have is yours”
- (Luke 15:31)

If the parable of the Prodigal Son portrays the Father’s generosity with this statement, Jesus encapsulates it. But when I recently heard it read at Mass, I was compelled to revisit these words persistently. I wrestled to reconcile them with the losses that had marked my twenties: loss of my desired career path, loss of my favored hobbies, and loss of my health which had previously enabled me to pursue my proclivities as I pleased. In college a rare connective tissue disorder disrupted my endeavors, caused multiple surgeries in succession, and chronic pain to become my new normal. In a short amount of time, I’d felt emptied of all I’d once prized and to which I’d clutched so tightly.

The Cross didn’t appear to be synonymous with richness, but if

I trusted God as I claimed, somehow I had to believe it was immeasurably fruitful. My faith had to be firm enough in the seeming deprivation to have confidence that in God’s gratuitous goodness, I lacked nothing and everything of His was mine. There truly is a limitless wealth of grace that pours forth from the Cross, and this abundance is shared with us when we embrace suffering. Thus partaking in Christ’s ultimate mission, His ultimate victory, and His ultimate expression of Love.

Through the Cross, we join Christ in the ultimate mission of the Church. It’s through His salvific sacrifice that mankind is redeemed and the sacraments flow. While He completely effects redemption, in His munificence, He invites us to participate. This provides intention and consoles when sorrows feel

desolate or purposeless. Pope Saint John Paul II, in his message for the First Annual World Day of the Sick, assured that “Sufferings, accepted and borne with unshakeable faith, when joined to those of Christ take on extraordinary value for the life of the Church and the good of humanity.” This has been echoed repeatedly in Scripture and Tradition. St. Therese of Lisieux, with her audacious confidence in Christ, despite any sin, further bolsters this cardinal teaching: “Let us save souls. Let us suffer for them, and, on the last day, Jesus will be grateful. We shall give Him souls!” This harvest of souls is indeed plentiful, and when we embrace our pains, we labor for them with redemptive suffering. If we’re tempted to consider a headache, the grief of loneliness, or any distress we must tolerate as too small to be useful, let us study the words of Cardinal van Thuan. He was imprisoned by North Korea’s communist regime in the 1970’s and assures us that it’s often the moments we feel most inadequate that are most powerful. He said that on the Cross, Christ, “was immobilized. He too was helpless.” And yet, “it was from there that He performed His greatest deed: He redeemed us sinners.”

Our endeavor must be with the attitude of Christ, which is totally focused outward. Everything Jesus underwent was for our sakes, freely given for our benefit. He allows us to likewise willingly accept difficulties, handing over our crosses, so He can use them for the reclamation of mankind.

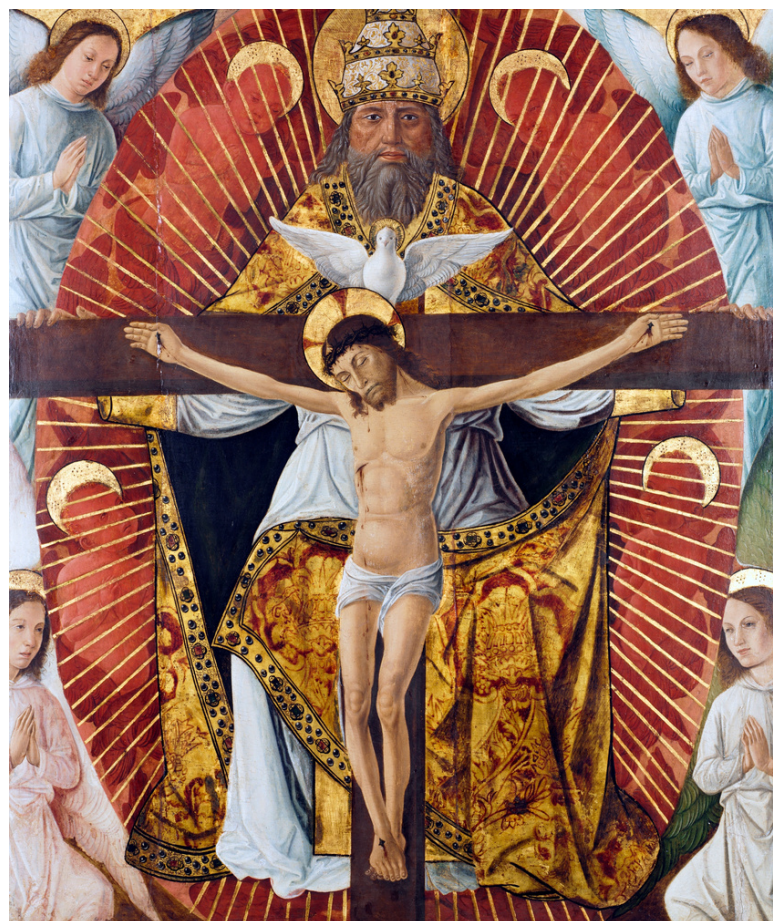
The Mass, as an extension of the Sacrifice of the Cross, is the most powerful means of lifting up Christ to the Father, and ourselves with Him, for the deliverance of souls. Likewise, the Chaplet of Divine Mercy provides the opportunity to present Jesus’ own Body, Blood, Soul, and Divinity to God on behalf of others. While recovering from a recent operation, unable to attend Adoration as usual, I began to eagerly await three o’clock, the hour of great Mercy, during which Jesus requested special prayer remembering His Passion. I knew that even if I was too fatigued to do anything else the remainder of the day, the ways He could use my brief invocation of His omnipotent compassion for sinners were fathomless. And so I daily prayed, “For the sake of His sorrowful Passion, have Mercy on us and on the whole world.” This knowledge of His Merciful Love emptied out from the Cross is indeed a privilege

and the responsibility of binding ourselves to it, a mission.

The grace of the Cross is also experienced through confessing it as the ultimate victory. The battle is already won, so illness and trials, even death, are not the end; we can anticipate what follows: “the glory to be revealed for us” (Romans 8:18). When we endure suffering with this hope, we’re “held firm by the indestructible power of Love,” as Pope Benedict XVI says in his encyclical *Spe Salvi*; “only this kind of hope can then give the courage to act and to persevere.” We can look to Christ in His agony and remember He is Risen and continue towards Eternity with Him by our sides, with Him within us. He does not merely spectate as we struggle with our burdens, but in becoming Incarnate, He permitted these wounds to be carved into His own flesh. His presence is our hope, and “hope does not disappoint” (Romans 5:5).

Our hope emanates from the Cross where Christ’s triumph originates and is most acutely displayed, counter-culturally in the God Who deigned to identify with us in our torments. I sometimes find it arduous to look past my circumstances when they are particularly

turbulent or desperate, especially when persistent and may not be perfectly remedied while on earth. But, surrendering them to Christ assures they won’t be wasted for He is more constant than any pain, however incurable, and can emanate His light through even the most broken of situations.



This wisdom of God reminds me of the song "It Is Well" that was courageously penned by Horatio Spafford amidst family tragedy. The lyrics, “My sin, not in part but the whole, is nailed to the Cross, and I bear it no more! Praise the Lord, praise the Lord, O my soul!” Without fail, I

simultaneously evoke tears while embedding in me the joy of true freedom. This freedom is only possible because God has willed to save His creation; He has conquered evil. So when He asks us to experience its effects in suffering, He invariably beckons us to join Him in savoring the subsequent victory.

The Cross is most importantly the ultimate expression of love. Christ calls us to this highest form of love, saying, “No one has greater love than this, to lay down one’s life for one’s friends” (John 15:13). Lest we confine it to a demand for martyrs, suffering is also a way to share in this supernatural charity. We lay our lives down for others when we render unwanted afflictions to God joined with Jesus’ own Sacrifice. This Sacrifice on Calvary is the ultimate libation, an offering totally used up, with nothing left over. So letting God draw us into the Cross is a perfect way to be entirely consumed in love.

Dealing with chronic pain often feels very wearing; it’s outwardly the same struggle daily, nights provide little respite, and yet upon waking, the burden still re-presents itself to be shouldered again. Sister Lucia of Fatima defended the Rosary to those who think it tedious saying, “What is missing

in the people who think the rosary monotonous is love.” I think it’s true, also, in pain, or in any form of ailment, that love erases monotony. If we remember the love with which Christ suffered, and in our troubles love Him in return, it will always be new. It will always be wholly for Him in each moment. That does not mean it removes the difficulty, but it will strengthen and encourage us. It makes the yoke easy and the burden light by turning our gaze away from ourselves and towards the One Who bore it first. Most of all, it gives it meaning, as Sister Lucia went on to say, “Everything that is not done for love is worthless.”

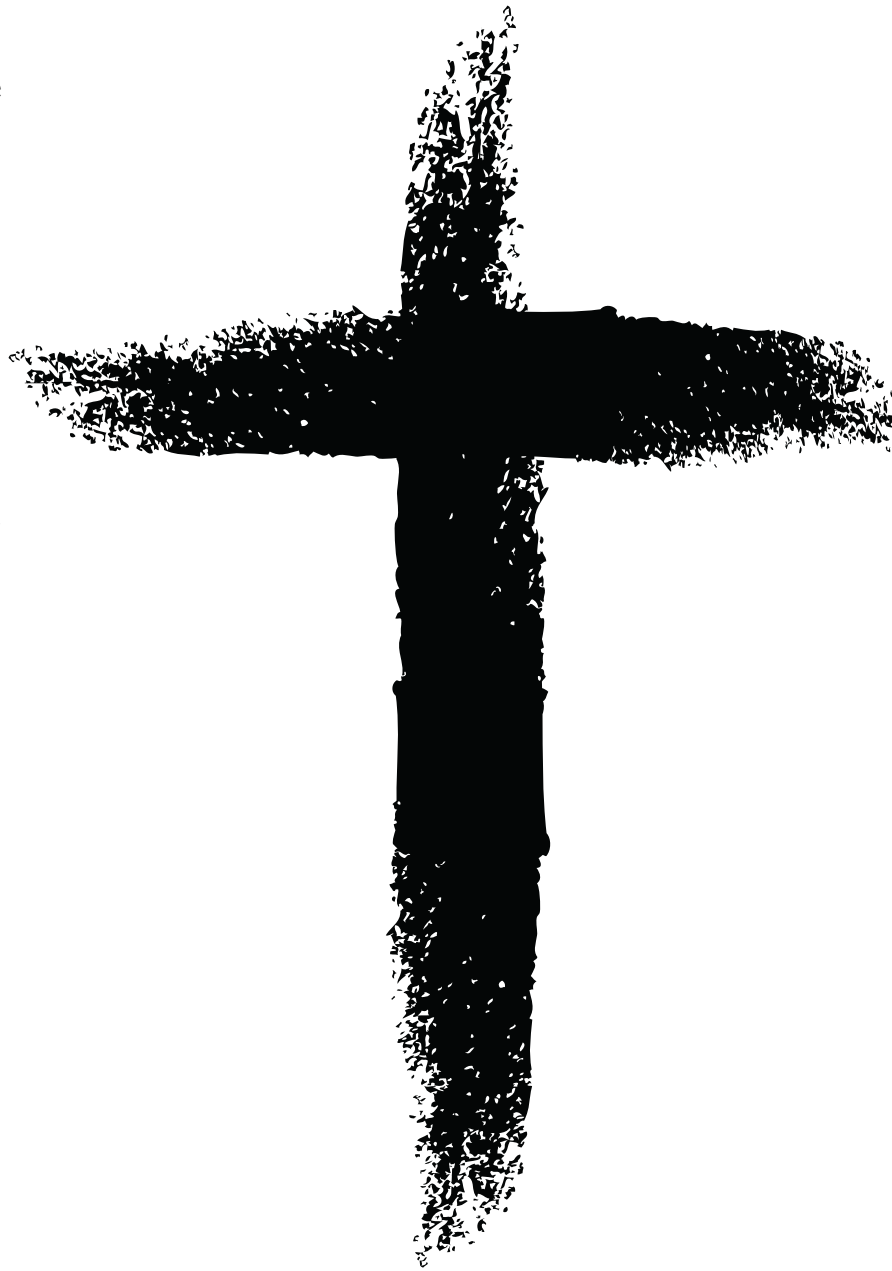
Offering our misfortunes for the sake of others gives them a purpose of love. Surrendering our miseries with trust returns Christ’s love with love.

The immense grace of this is that love remains; love continues beyond this age that is passing and will be fruitful forever. Our hardships will not last, but the love with which we surrender them back to God will. That love is eternal.

Before my first major surgery, I desperately entered a tiny chapel, trying to phrase my request for healing convincingly. I distinctly remember looking up at the Crucifix, anguish etched

into the Body of my Savior, Who chose scourges without resentment. As I made my supplication repeatedly, I very clearly heard Christ's voice in my heart saying, "This is for you." I recall this often when I feel too weary to persevere. His Cross is for me, and it's there He gives me everything He has, imploring me to receive it as mine. His Cross fortifies His magnanimity. "Everything I have is yours," He pronounces, and there can be no suspicion. If He would lay down His entirety for me, how could His plan for me be anything other than my ultimate good? It's expanding my capacity to be filled by Him and to intimately enjoy perpetual beauty with Him forever.

Although the Cross is fraught with pain and sorrow, we can depend on the graces that come through it to sustain; they'll never be exhausted, for in His infinite nature, God is endlessly abundant. He opens His pierced Heart, the store of His treasures, and lavishly shares them with us when we accept splinters in love. In them our Savior draws close, and in this life and the next. What more is necessary?





**Lead, Kindly Light, amidst th'encircling gloom,
Lead Thou me on!
The night is dark, and I am far from home,
Lead Thou me on!
Keep Thou my feet; I do not ask to see
The distant scene; one step enough for me.**

**SAINT JOHN HENRY NEWMAN
*LEAD, KINDLY LIGHT***

A WOODLAND WANDER

BARNABAS NEY

I walk in the woods:

A timeless wander,
To think and ponder.
Captive of the trees,
Enthralled by the breeze.
To here I elope.
Here I dare to hope.

I think what I could:

My heart's desire within my chest heaves,
And its passion is echoed by a sea of leaves.
All my hopes and dreams
Are intertwined in the wooden themes,
As timeless as years,
That float past my ears.

I know all I should:

All my tasks and all that I should do,
Are written in the moss by patterns of dew.
And out of a jade pool my life stares at me,
Hinting at the secret to be free.
Like a deer in the wood I see my road.
Like a branch in winter's burden I take my load.

BIOGRAPHIES



Abby Slater

Abby has a background in theater performance and is currently studying Theology with the hope of forming a ministry of redemptive suffering, particularly for those experiencing chronic pain. A Minnesota native, she finds joy in nature and tries to soak up enough sunshine during the summer to last through the winter.



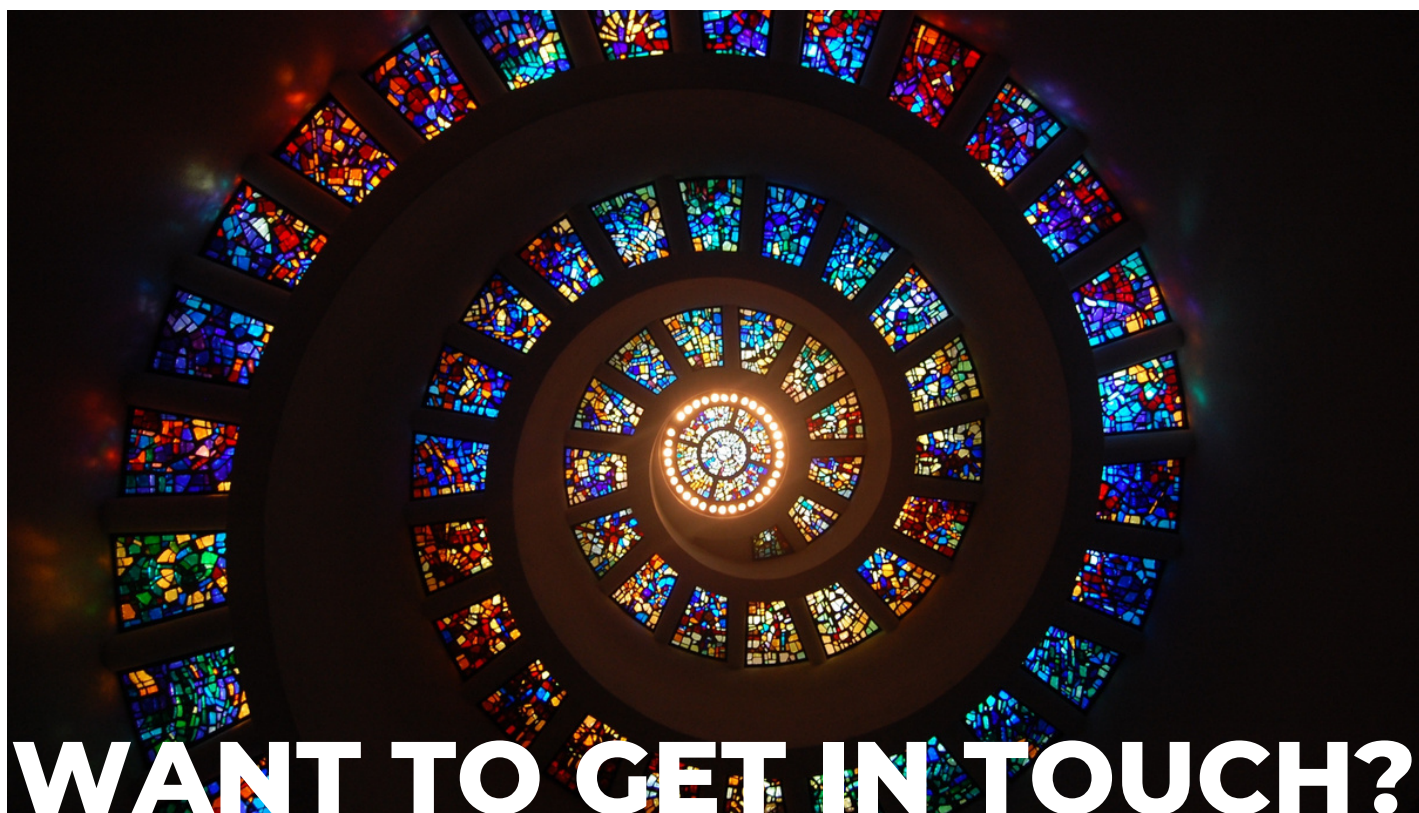
Barnabas Ney

Barnabas enjoys adventuring in the wilds of his native Vancouver Island, but is even more excited to be serving Christ and His Church as a campus missionary for Catholic Christian Outreach. While he holds an MA in Economic Policy, his real joy is in pursuing and contemplating beauty and its One true source.



Ruth O'Reilly

Ruth is a prairie girl with a passion for beauty, truth, and the Lord. Years of doodling in the margins of notebooks and reading everything she could, including toiletry labels in the bathroom, led to a deep love for art and the written word. She currently works as a freelance writer, and uses her free time to write fiction and poetry, cry over how the Divine Word Became Flesh, and create digital art.



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