Providing
Support and
Leadership
for the
Catholic Charismatic
Renewal

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Southern California Renewal Communities
November / December 2019

Paradise is Not Heaven by Fr. John H. Hampsch, CMF

A young priest boasted to his pastor, "I feel that my sermon was really anointed today. I had the people glued to their seats."

"Well," said the Monsignor, "I guess that's one way to hold an audience."

One time, as a young priest, I foolishly tried to "hold an audience" by subsuming the persona of Bishop Sheen, impersonating him and quoting him almost verbatim, from a recorded sermon he gave on the gospel about Christ the King, whose great mercy was dispensed from his Calvary throne to the repentant thief traditionally known as Dismas. Theatrically aping Bishop Sheen, I even quoted his description of Christ the King as "our Merciful Monarch," and Dismas as "the thief who stole paradise from the King as he entered his kingdom." In a climactic flourish, I rhapsodized Bishop Sheen's insight dramatically: "If this be the spark, dear God, what be the flame?"

All theatrics aside, the thrust of that epithet was to show God's infinite merciful love conveyed by a single sentence of forgiveness—like a flame or a conflagration hidden in an igniting spark, or an embryonic oak tree in an acorn.

While I was researching material for my book, The Awesome Mercy of God, I learned that God's mercy is mentioned more than 400 times in the Bible, I found the many scripture pericopes on divine mercy to be really awesome; hence the book title. Not just in the Jesus-Dismas event, but in all the Bible's mercy references, I felt a kind of spiritual "awe," as in Luke's classical triad of mercy parables: the lost sheep, the lost coin, and the lost son known as the prodigal son. (By the way, I think the prodigal son parable should be called "the prodigal Father parable," for his prodigal mercy overshadowed the prodigality of the son in spending an inheritance on prostitutes and a life of debauchery.)

The Jesus-Dismas dialog lends itself to a seldom explored aspect of theology, or, more specifically, soteriology, since it unearths a rarely viewed aspect of God's redemptive mercy. The science of soteriology probes the two-sided coin of redemption-salvation. Redemption is God's action of giving ("redemptio means payment). Salvation is the human act of receiving the payed-for gift of heavenly reward, conditioned, of course, on repentance).

Christ as King often spoke of heaven as the kingdom of heaven, but when Dismas asks to be remembered in Christ's kingdom, Jesus doesn't speak of heaven but

only "paradise," which was not heaven. Why? Because heaven is centralized on the direct "faceto-face beatific vision" of God, mentioned in 1 Cor. 13. In paradise God was known only obscurely, as in our present earthly state, that is—to use Paul's words—"as in a mirror." (Remember, ancient mirrors consisted only of polished metal, which of course reflected images obscurely.) Jesus words, "this day with me in paradise" could not have referred to heaven, for Jesus would not arrive there until his ascension. 40 days later, when heaven would be opened to all worthy pre-Christian souls, ransomed by Jesus' death. In Hebrews 9 it says that Jesus, the mediator of the new covenant, died to remit the sins of those under the old covenant. Those "old covenant sinners" resided in a most blissful state which Paul himself experienced (2 Cor. 12), when he was "caught up into paradise." In Luke 16 Jesus himself refers to this "paradise," this abode of blessedness, as the "side of Abraham"— the premiere saint of God's people, who awaited with him for their future vindication. This paradise, often referred to as the "limbo of the patriarchs," was an "abode of the righteous"; it provided limited but blissful

Paradise continued on page 4

SCRC Annual Banquet

of Praise

~ SCRC ~

Southern California **Renewal Communities** invites you to a very special Banquet to benefit SCRC's ministry outreach



at the beautiful and historic

Oakmont Country Club 3100 Country Club Drive Glendale, CA 91208



10:30am sharp All Soul's Day Mass

11:00am Social Hour Luncheon Exquisite Raffle Gift Baskets Silent Auction \$1000 Grand Prize Raffle Drawing

Special Guest Speaker: Sister Regina Marie Gorman, OCD Carmelite Sisters of the Most Sacred Heart of Los Angeles



Sister Regina Marie, O.C.D., a native of Detroit, was raised in Los Angeles where she entered Carmel in 1972. Come hear her powerful testimony of how the compelling call of Jesus transformed her life. Her witness and her service is a "Hymn of Praise" in response to God's love and mercy.

All Soul's Day Saturday, November 2, 2019

10:30am-2:00pm

Dress Code Required: Business attire. Please no jeans or khakis

 Reservation Deadline: Tuesday, October 29, 2019or when capacity fills Complimentary Valet Parking Included 	Enclosed is my payment for the following: OtyLuncheon Tickets at \$75.00 each \$
Please mail meRaffle Ticket Book(s) for the \$1000 Grand Prize Raffle Check or Money Order (please make payable to SCRC) Credit Card: VISA MasterCard Discover AmExpress Credit Card orders may be faxed to: (818) 771-1379	□ I wish to reserve one table for 8 people = \$600.00 □ I wish to reserve one table for 10 people = \$750.00 (Please list the names of your guests on a separate sheet) \$
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Address	TOTAL: \$
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Table seating will be assigned. Please list on a separate sheet those individuals who are definitely attending with whom you request to be seated at your table. Note: SCRC is unable to provide refunds after Tuesday, October 29, 2019.

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to all the volunteers and to all those who fasted and prayed for spiritual victories and breakthroughs at the recent SCRC Catholic Renewal Convention.

God's grace was very evident throughout the entire three days.

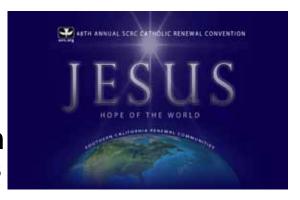
The Holy Spirit was present in a number of astonishing signs and wonders. We humbly request that you continue to surround with your prayers and sacrifices the numerous outreaches of the SCRC ministry. God Bless You!







2019 SCRC Convention Prophecies



"My people, lift up your hearts to Me. Turn your face to Me and I will turn My face to you. For I love you. You are My people. You are mine. I am your God. I am your Savior. There is no one other. There is no one else who can give you life. Put all your love in Me. Put all your trust in Me. Put all your hope in Me. And, follow Me."

"My people, I have set the earth ablaze and on fire with My Spirit. I have come to set the captives free, to heal the sick, to bring hope to the hopeless. I have come because I love you. You are dear to My heart and I will love you from everlasting to everlasting.

"My people, It is I. I am here amongst

you. I am the God who loves you. I am the God who is faithful to you. I am here to let you know that I am still in control of the world. The world is in darkness but I still reign. I still hold the world in the palm of My hand. I am still the hope of the world, no one else. It is I, the hope of the world. And, I care for you. Continue to love one-another. Continue to live in peace and harmony with one another and there will be peace on the earth. I love you My Children."

"My beloved, you are here with a heavy heart. I know all your burdens. Be at peace. I am with you. The mountain you are facing down will cast out into the sea. Behind the dark clouds that you see is My bright light. The river blocking your way will divide to clear your path. The storm blowing in you will calm down. The rocky road you are walking will smooth out. Come as you are and be still in My presence. I have many things in store for you. Be at peace, my beloved."

"My beloved children, what great joy it brings My heart to see you praise and worship My son Jesus. Know that your Mother Mary is with you as all the saints and angels are with you also."

My people, I set you free that your lives may shine with My glory. I set you free so that your lives may shine with My love. I call on you to be the face of Jesus for the world, to be My people of joy, of peace and of love for the world."

"Beloved, stand firm in your faith so that My divine light may shine through you to the world to give hope. Pray fervently, pray for one another, for your families and for the world. Then, sing praises, sing praises of joy and praises of thanksgiving and I will dance and celebrate with you."

Paradise continued from cover page

fulfillment for the heaven-bound.

Jesus descended before he ascended: the classic Apostles' Creed says that "he descended into "hell"—that is, Hades, the abode of the dead-certainly not the hell of the damned (Tartaros). This "nonheaven" "hell" called paradise had no resemblance to the infernal hell. except for the souls' non-access to heaven (temporarily), and the absence of the direct vision of God (temporarily). St. Thomas, in his Catena Aurea, says that Christ's separated soul and entombed body both encased his divinity, yet in neither one could heaven's Beatific Vision be seen, even in any transfiguration. Hence, Dismas did not directly see Christ's divinity in paradise, but he did encounter the created human soul of Christ, visiting there between Good Friday and Easter Sunday.

Because souls in paradise lacked complete fulfillment, the first pope (1Peter 3:19) refers to this

place as the "prison" into which Jesus' "spirit" descended (that is, his human soul, separated by death from his entombed body). In this excursion Jesus evangelized its denizens, for Hebrews 2:3 reminds us that they had not been evangelized. Peter then describes Jesus' mission as teaching these souls about salvation, and about baptism as the normative means of implementing it. That was divine mercy by enlightenment!

Thus, this gospel displays a trilogy of episodes of mercy exercised by Christ the King—the Merciful Monarch: his mercy extended to the living, to the dying and even to the dead. First, he forgave the living—the brutal soldiers and "rulers" who challenged his royal kingship, publicly emblazoned on his bloody throne, Rex Judeorum. Second, he forgave the dying Dismas, with a promise of bliss in paradise; and third, mercy to the dead in paradise, exciting their hope of being "transferred to the

kingdom of Gods son" (Col. 1:13) at his Ascension. In the psalmist's words, "He leads forth the prisoners with singing "(Ps. 68:6).

On his blood-splattered throne, Jesus, by his sacred Passion became King of Martyrs. Mary by her com-passion became Queen of Martyrs, as St. Alphonsus reminds us. By way of parallel, our Merciful King promises to be with us, like Dismas "in his kingdom" through our own daily passion of suffering and our compassion for others. How? "Take up your cross daily and follow me." Let us foster the hope articulated in a liturgical post-Communion prayer: that we may share in the glory of Christ our merciful King in his heavenly kingdom. The words of the saintly Oscar Romero say it all: "Jesus' kingship is not a despotic regime, but a regime of merciful love."

For more information on the Claretian Teaching Ministry/Fr. John Hampsch, CMF, please visit: catholicbooks.net

November, 2019



Thanksgiving!

SANTA BARBARA REGION Saturday, November 23

"St. Padre Pio: Modern-Day Mystic and Wonder Worker" 10:30am-1:30pm with presentations by Dominic Berardino. Topics: The Extraordinary Life of St. Padre Pio; St. Padre Pio's Stigmata & Miracles. St. Padre Pio's Stigmata Relic Glove will be on display with Veneration. Day includes two presentations, Blessing & Healing Prayer with St. Padre Pio's Relic Glove at St.Mark University Church, 6550 Picasso Rd., Goleta, CA. \$15, before

Nov. 20. (see page 6 for info) To register, please go to scrc.org SAN FERNANDO REGION Saturday, November 2

SCRC Banquet, "Hymn of Praise" with special guest speaker Sr. Regina Marie Gorman, OCD sharing her personal testimony at the Oakmont Country Club, Glendale. (see page 2 for info) Thursday, November 21

Mass & Healing Service, 7:30pm with Fr. Budi Wardhana at St. Joseph the Worker Church, 19855 Sherman Way, Winnetka. (Praise 7:00pm)

Thursday, November 21

Mass & Healing Service with Fr. Anthony Thekkanath at Our Lady of Grace, 5011 White Oak Ave., Encino.

SAN PEDRO REGION Monday, November 18

Mass & Healing Service, 7:00pm at St. Linus, 13915 Shoemaker Ave., Norwalk. **Monday, November 25**

Mass & Healing Service, 7:30pm at St. Cornelius Church, 5500 E. Wardlow, Long Beach.

ORANGE DIOCESE

Friday, November 8
Mass & Healing Service, 7:30pm with

Fr. Kerry Beaulieu at Mission Hospital Conference Center, Rms. A, B & C, 26726 Crown Valley Pkwy., Mission Viejo.

Monday, November 25

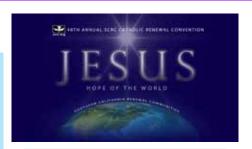
Mass & Healing Service, with Fr. Roch Greiner, 7:15pm at St.Angela Merici Church, 585 S. Walnut, Brea.

December, 2019

ORANGE DIOCESE

Saturday, December 7

"Beautiful Mother, Beautiful Child: Prepare Your Heart for Christmas" 10:00am-4:00pm with Fr. George Reynolds and Dominic Berardino at St. Angela Merici Church, 585 S. Walnut Ave., Brea. \$20 before Dec. 2. Catered chicken lunch is included. Mass included. (Please see page 7 for info). To register, please go to scrc.org



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Dulce Rodriguez

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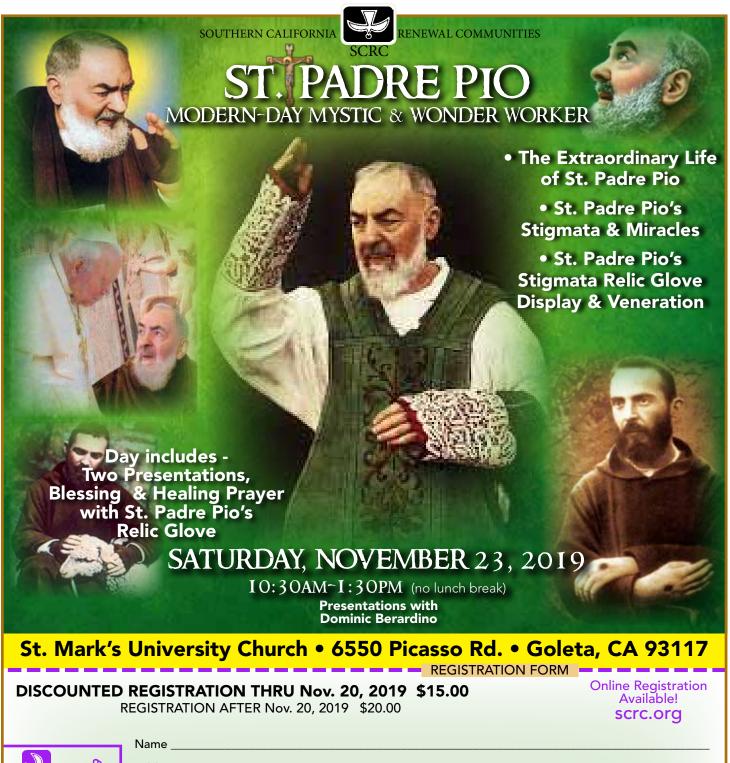
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Visit www.ralphs.com to enroll in the Community Contribution Program and select SCRC-Southern California Renewal Communities (#BW773) to begin helping make known the transforming power of Jesus Christ in the Holy Spirit to the Glory of God the Father!

Attn: Existing Ralphs Community Contribution Participants:
Please re-register for the NEW Contribution Cycle starting September 1, 2019.

Thank you and God bless you for participating in this program for the next year! It greatly assists the SCRC ministry!



	Name
turn completed registration rm with payment to: SCRC Padre Pio Event 95 Cabrini Drive, Suite 208 Irbank, CA 91504-1740 Ill & Chris Luna (805) 403-7847 18) 771-1361 FAX (818) 771-1379	Address if new address, check box, and list former address State
\$ 5 2 2 9 4 6	Signature



Prepare Your Heart for Christmas

Beautiful Mother, Beautiful Child

- How Mary's Obedience Untied the Knot of Eve's Disobedience
- Mary's Immaculate Conception and the Visions of St. Bernadette and St. Catherine Laboure
 - Mass Included



Fr. George Reynolds Assoc. Pastor, St. Cornelius, Long Beach, CA



Dominic Berardino President, SCRC

Saturday, December 7

10:00am-4:00pm

St. Angela Merici Church 585 S. Walnut Ave., Brea, CA

DISCOUNTED REGISTRATION BEFORE December 2: \$20

ORE December 2: \$20 Includes catered chicken lunch (after Dec. 2 or at the door: \$25)

Luncheon guaranteed for those registered by 12/02/19. If you plan to register at the door, place call or small for lunch count. (Registration is the same price, with or without lunch).

Register Online: scrc.org

please call or e	email for lunch count. (Registration	is the same price, with or without I
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Spiritually enriching Books, CDs/DVDs and gifts will be available for purchase throughout the day.

SAVE THIS DATE! • MARK YOUR CALENDAR!



Growing As a Disciple
What Do You Seek? • You Will Receive Power
Teach Us to Pray • You Will Be My Witnesses
I Will Give You Rest • That They May Be One



January 3-5, 2020

Sacred Heart Retreat House 920 E. Alhambra Road, Alhambra, CA



Fr. Bill Adams, CSsR
For more information, please go to: scrc.org (818) 771-1361



Fr. Bill Delaney, SJ spirit@scrc.org



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