



# THE RAY

*The newsletter of Our Lady of Grace Catholic Spirituality Center*

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Our Lady of Grace Catholic Spirituality Center  
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*From the Desk of Mary...*



Warm Advent greetings from Our Lady of Grace Catholic Spirituality Center where the sacred work of spiritual direction continues to flourish thanks to your generous support over the past year.

On All Souls' Day, November 2<sup>nd</sup>, we were blessed with a visit from a wonderful friend of the Center, Father Luke Strand, Vice Rector and Director of Human Formation at Saint Francis de Sales Seminary in Milwaukee. Father Luke has been offering a Mass at the seminary quarterly for the intentions of our benefactors, directees and volunteers since 2018. It was a great joy to welcome him.

As a newly ordained priest in 2009, Father Luke was assigned to Holy Family Parish in Fond du Lac, Wisconsin where he served as an associate pastor until 2012 when Archbishop ListECKI appointed him Vocation Director for the Archdiocese. In this role he served with dedication and apostolic zeal for the next nine years. In 2016, four years into this demanding vocations work, he accepted the added responsibilities of serving as Vice-Rector and Director of Human Formation at the Seminary until 2021.

When Father Luke entered the seminary as a young man in 2003, there were a total of twelve seminarians on campus. Today there are sixty-six. Forty-five of them are preparing to serve as priests in Milwaukee and the others are training for other dioceses.

In our conversation, Father Luke emphasized that currently at Saint Francis de Sales Seminary, spiritual formation is of utmost importance, from love of the Liturgy to spiritual direction. The men at this seminary are being formed in a solid environment of love of God and the Church. Their liturgies participate in this mission of forming young people spiritually.

Father Luke Strand is one of three brother priests. His youngest brother, Father Jacob Strand, is Pastor of two parishes in Kewaskum, Wisconsin. The middle brother, Father Vincent Strand, S.J., is currently pursuing a Doctorate in Systematic Theology at the University of Notre Dame with a dissertation on nature and grace. We are so fortunate to have two of these three beloved brother priests serving in the Archdiocese of Milwaukee and ask God's special blessing on all of them.

Turning now to the theme of this issue, I selected "joy", one of the Twelve Fruits of the Holy Spirit, to help us prepare for Christmas. For your consideration we include a special

piece by Monsignor Charles M. Mangan on Mary's joy entitled, "Cause of Our Joy". We are so grateful to Monsignor Mangan for this beautiful article.

Speaking of gratitude, for all the many ways in which you supported the Center in 2021, we are so very grateful. We are honored to share this sacred mission with you, and indeed, could not do it without you.

From our hearts to yours, from all of us at Our Lady of Grace Catholic Spirituality Center, we wish you and those you love Our Lady's Joy this Christmas, and a Happy and Healthy New Year.



Father Luke Strand during a visit to the Center on November 2, 2021

## *Masses for Your Intentions in 2022*

In gratitude for your support, Holy Mass will be offered in 2022 at Saint Francis de Sales Seminary for all of our benefactors, directees and volunteers on the following Marian feasts:

- February 11, 2022 Our Lady of Lourdes
- May 31, 2022 The Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary
- September 8, 2022 The Birth of the Blessed Virgin Mary
- December 8, 2022 The Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary

# Cause of Our Joy

Monsignor Charles M. Mangan



The mere thought of Mary the Mother of God has caused faithful Christians the world over to exult in joy. Why? Because she, the humble maiden of Nazareth, freely and cheerfully accepted her august role in the redemption of men wrought by her Divine Son. Consequently, it is possible for a human person to become holy!

The Collection of Masses of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Volume I (New York: Catholic Book Publishing Co., 1992) offers the traditional rationale for why the Ever-Virgin Mother of Christ is venerated under the glorious title of Causa Nostrae Laetitiae ("Cause of our Joy"):

*The Church as the Bride of Christ has always found joy in its (her) Bridegroom and returned His love with ever-increasing joy. Since Jesus had come to us through Mary, the Church came gradually to understand that the Blessed Virgin, because of her cooperation in the Incarnation of the Word, is the cause or origin or source of this great joy; the Church has known too that the sorrow brought into the world by Eve's disobedience has been changed into joy by Mary's obedience, and so it began to honor her with the title "cause of our joy." Devotion to our Lady under this title has developed especially in France and Canada (Notre Dame de Liesse).*

In the Litany of Loreto, we hail Mary as "the Cause of our Joy," recognizing her submission to the power of the Holy Spirit, resulting in the Second Person of the Most Blessed Trinity coming to earth. Jesus Christ, the God-Man, makes us joyful because of His influence over our destiny. We now have the opportunity to inherit everlasting life, thanks to His unsurpassable Incarnation, His selfless Passion, His agonizing Death, and His jubilant Resurrection. Mary also makes us joyful because we acknowledge how her fiat changed the course of human history. Her "yes" broke the chains of death established by Eve's haughty "no."

Sadly, the word joy, like love or charity, is often misused in modern discourse. Authentic joy (which is one of the Twelve Fruits of the Holy Spirit), writes Father John A. Hardon, S.J., in his helpful Modern Catholic Dictionary (Garden City, New York: Doubleday Company, Inc., 1979), is "the feeling aroused by the expectation or possession of some good." This is true spiritual joy, which "is possessed by angels and human beings, and its source is the rational will." One may speak about the joy of baseball or cooking; however, spiritual joy is quite a different reality.

Mary does really cause us joy because through her legacy we hold the expectation of the good which she has won through her fidelity to the inscrutable plan of the Almighty, namely friendship with Christ (for us, now here on earth; for Our Blessed Lady, now in Paradise).

It has been said that real joy is contagious. Saint Teresa of Calcutta often quipped that she could immediately discern - even without looking - when several members of the Missionaries of Charity were present: the spiritual joy which they experience is tangible. Moreover, that very joy is waiting

to be shared. Undoubtedly, the close connection which these pious religious have to the Immaculate Heart of Mary continually inspires them to be consecrated religious striving to imitate the abundant joy found deep in the words and actions of Mary.

To ponder the role of Mary in our redemption leads to astonishment. How good God has been to His people! How trusting Mary was - and remains today - in the Word of the Lord!

The Opening Prayer of the Mass of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Cause of Our Joy, not only asserts the truth of the belief that, indeed, Mary is the cause of our joy but also offers the hope that we - the children of the Mother of Jesus - will benefit from this reality:

*Lord, our God, You were pleased to bring joy to the world through the incarnation of Your Son. Grant that we who honor His Mother, the cause of our joy, may always walk in the way of Your commandments with our hearts set on true and lasting joy.*

## The Fruits of the Holy Spirit

The Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC) teaches (§1832) that in the tradition of the Church there is a total of twelve Fruits of the Holy Spirit. "The fruits of the Holy Spirit are perfections that the Holy Spirit forms in us as the first fruits of eternal glory." (CCC §1832) They are the concrete ways in which the seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit that are conferred at Confirmation shine forth in the actions of our lives as we grow in virtue on our journey to Heaven. Can you name all twelve Fruits of the Holy Spirit?

- |                       |                           |
|-----------------------|---------------------------|
| 1.    _ _ a _ i _ _   | 7.    g _ _ _ _ _ _ _ y   |
| 2.    _ o _           | 8.    g _ _ t _ _ _ _ s   |
| 3.    _ _ a _ _       | 9.    f _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _   |
| 4.    p _ _ i _ _ _ e | 10. m _ _ _ _ _ y         |
| 5.    _ i _ _ _ _ _   | 11. s _ _ _ _ c _ _ _ _ l |
| 6.    _ o _ _ _ _ _   | 12. c h _ s _ _ _ _       |

6.    goodness	12.   chastity
5.    kindness	11.   self-control
4.    patience	10.   modesty
3.    peace	9.    faithfulness
2.    joy	8.    gentleness
1.    charity	7.    generosity

Answers:

## As Always ...

This newsletter is made possible through the generosity and skills of Miss Nicolette Bardele.

We are so grateful for any donation to the Center. All donations are tax-deductible and may be made payable to **Our Lady of Grace** and mailed to:

**Our Lady of Grace Catholic Spirituality Center**  
**c/o Josh Gentine**  
**1912 NW 21<sup>st</sup> Street**  
**Oklahoma City, OK 73106**

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<https://snwbl.it/OurLadyofGrace>