



January 2006 – May 2007

# Full Circle

Excerpts from the Journals of Ronda Chervin

Ronda Chervin

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# Full Circle

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*These journal entries follow the ones compiled in Face to Face and in Heart to Heart. They begin after I moved into the house of my daughter Carla, her husband, Steve, and the 5 children, Nicholas 16, Alexander 14, Maxi 9, Zacko 6, and Martina 6 months old. Since both my daughters don't want me to write about them in my books, I have put in only an absolute minimum. This can also seem unloving, however. How come I mention them so little? However, I have stuck to the plan of mentioning them very little in these journal books.*

January 1, 2006

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I have entitled this part of my on-going journals "Full Circle." The one after Heart to Heart I planned to call "At the Gates of Eternity," but when I moved back with this part of my family in North Carolina, I thought that "Full Circle," expressed better what was happening to me. I made the decision quickly and will be trying it for a year, but my sense is it will work long-term. Most of my life, even when living with my husband and children I thought of my primary identity as being a Catholic teacher, writer, speaker. Not because I didn't love my family dearly, but because, as a convert, Jesus seemed to be the highest and most profound reality – giving the hope without which family life would be temporal instead of eternal.

Now, in my old age (almost 68 – don't tell me that I am young at heart. I actually feel like 90) the need for the security of family love and the help they can give me (even though Carla and Steve are not yet back in the Church) as I become more and more disabled seems more important to me than reasons for living elsewhere.

I am enjoying helping the family in small ways. Taking the boys to the store to get gifts for the birthday of their father (distant because of the divorce of 2 years ago) in Los Angeles was so meaningful to me. My parents were separated (they had never married legally) and I have so many wounds from the estrangement from my father that I have a special need to see that these boys remain as close as conditions permit. I suggested they include personal individual messages of love and I added in my greeting a description of the virtues of each boy as I see them. Peter, their father, was grateful.

The house includes a large black Persian cat and two grey kittens. They can be found suddenly scooting around all over the rooms or supine occupying my desk. It is delightful to watch them. I think that is a big feature of old age – having time to just watch people or cats. After one or two tries as taking care of the baby, it was decided I was too spacey, so now I just get to watch her with no responsibility. There is that round sweet baby, sometimes crying but mostly enchanted with her large family.

Just now Steve's parents from England are visiting. His father is somewhat disabled and in pain. He is not a Catholic but agreed that his wife, who is a revert Catholic, and I, could lay healing hands on him. I was looking for a time to do it and picked out just before bed one evening. He shook his head, "I don't want to be anointed, I just want my bedtime cornflakes," he muttered. It was so sweet. As an older person I understood it so well.

Jo Jo and Richard from England being here for 3 weeks makes our household very much an extended family dwelling. He is a carpenter and she loves to fix things and clean. It all feels so old-fashioned and wholesome – the younger ones doing the work for money and the child-

raising and the older ones helping all day with what is good but not absolutely essential. I do dishes and laundry since Carla, Steve, and Richard are gourmet cooks. In the evenings we watch selected movies or play games.

Dear Jesus, Mary and Joseph, thank you for bringing me here with this decision and help us to overcome all small inevitable conflicts.

There is a conflict on my video-conferencing course involving showing a movie about Gandhi. Perhaps some in the department who think this plan is watering things down don't fully realize how without Gandhi and Martin Luther King, Jr. following his methods, we would not have the wonderful if incomplete, successes of Operation Rescue. In any case, after some chagrin I realized I have always taught in a way different from most scholars – more geared to changing the lives of the students as total persons, than going in depth into various theories. I have to accept that my more personalist methods are what have made me the teacher and writer I am and that I can't simultaneously be a scholar's scholar in teaching or writing. Oh, my Jesus, keep me from letting the devil drain my energy by making me feel like a martyr whenever anyone in authority doesn't totally affirm me.

I was very tired between travel and denture woes (still persisting) when giving a workshop this month. As usual I was thinking, it's too hard, I have to stop. Jesus, you seemed to say, "these women do so much for me and the kingdom; I want you to do what you can for them with these healing workshops – please accept that crosses that go with it. When you are too old the arms of the Church will carry you to heaven." I sensed him kissing my forehead for doing it.

Recently quite a number of the workshops involve places that are neither "conservative" or charismatic but more middle of the road with their own virtues and deficiencies. I think the Holy Spirit is arranging this, possibly because those who remain in the Church are no longer militant dissenters, many of whom have left, but are open to input from any speaker, especially on universal issues such as anger-management.

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## January 25, 2005

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My new pastor was an Episcopal organist who became suddenly disabled in one finger so he couldn't play well any more, and then became a Catholic and eventually a priest at around 50. He is now about 65. He happens to look a lot like Gandalf since he has a long grey beard and noble face. These images came to me about him.

Power

What is it like  
with only a man's fingers  
to fill a whole Church  
with a Great Fugue?  
What is it like  
with only an anointing,  
a vestment and the sacred words  
to fill a whole Church  
with the presence of God?  
And  
What will it be like  
When the vault of the Church  
lifts off to show us Heaven?  
Gandalf will know.

## January 30, 2006

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Today was a funeral Mass. The priest wore a vestment with a tapestry type of pattern including black and white and the altar cloth was white but with big black strips. I thought this was wonderful for including old and new and tapping in that way to the archetype both of solemn black grief and resurrection hope.

During the Mass these images came to me:

Alter Christus

I thought of You, Jesus

first as truth,

then beauty,

then saving love.

Today the priest did the Mass

as if anointing Your

crucified body

and our mystical one, too

so I could see, You,

Jesus, as tenderly

binding my wounds

with Your bloody shroud

and teaching me

“To those who struggle

I am soft,

Won't you be, too?”

## February 1, 2006

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These are locutions from Anne of Direction for Our Times:

Jesus

Dearest apostle, I urge you to be little in your soul. Only in spiritual humility will you see the true state of your soul and so understand the work necessary for you to become holy. Holiness is your target. If a soul is holy, I can flow great graces through that soul into the world. Do not think about your own goals, little apostle, without checking them against My goals. In this time I require many apostles who strive to be humble. This is the opposite of what the world encourages. Do you see? Study this concept and you will see that great smallness is necessary in the Kingdom of God. Souls in heaven do not tear each other down, but build each other up. My saints in heaven seek ways to affirm the struggling souls on earth. They do not consider how to best put themselves forward, but rather how to best lift a soul toward holiness. You must be the same. I entreat you to listen to your Saviour. Strive for smallness in your service to the Kingdom. Be content to allow Me to have the glory. I will gaze into your soul and see the longing for holiness and I will make you holy, but I can only do this if you allow Me. My beloved ones, you will see in my life an example of constant patience with others. I was gentle on earth and I am still gentle. Because I am gentle, I am patient with you. You must be patient with others. You must be gentle with others. You must be forgiving of others, trusting My ability to work in the soul who allows Me freedom. If a soul is willing, I will help them. I have told you this. Trust My words and pray for each other, particularly those with whom you are called to walk during this time of transition. Dearest friends of heaven, believe Me when I tell you that all

## January 31, 2006

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I have been reading many many books about different wars. I wondered why I felt the need right now to read such “masculine” books. The thought came to me, “Before I die, I want to have a God’s eye view of the whole world,” ??????

## February 6, 2006

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Fr. Ken came to bless the house. I asked the adult faith share group to pray that the family would love him so that could lead to returns to the Church or new members some day.

Carla’s in-laws, gourmet cooks, made a scrumptious dinner.

Fr. Ken was wonderful. Very gentle, humorous, appreciative of everyone, and charmingly open about his own defects, etc. Carla’s mother-in-law from England, Jo, a revert Catholic loved him. Her husband, a former Episcopal choir boy said afterward “A priest like that could make people want to turn Catholic!” Carla was her most ardent questing self which, combined with her beauty of person, drew out in me all my deep love for her. Jo said she felt such tranquility come over the house after the blessing. Fr. Ken seemed happy to be among us. Probably he will come back.....oh, oh, oh. Let it be done unto us according to Your will.

## February 10, 2005

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Joy of getting EWTN series on widows for 2007. My dear friend Anne Lassiter will be the co-host. Wrote Anne saying we old hags can strut our stuff before millions. Hearing this news, Jim Ridley of Watershed wrote back:

We whoop with glee and weep with joy for you two Wonderwidows, O Ronda and Anne, that you will soon at last become as renowned and regaled a celebrity team of apostolic teledowagers to the earthly millions as you have long been and ever shall be to the heavenly multitudes of angelic and saintly fans who are congregating now to cheer you on with avalanches of lavish grace and to chant your praises before the smiling Face of your Beloved, into whose saving embrace you will entice only He knows how many souls

just as you have done to this little family of devoted friends who joins with yours our grateful alleluias. Deo Gratias.

## February 11, 2006

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We watched the movie The Passion of Bernadette in our parish hall – alas – it seemed to me the director decided that making shy, gauche, semi-illiterate Bernadette into a twin of little Therese would work. It didn’t.

A prayer-poem:

PRIEST SHORTAGE?

Is Eucharist the easiest?

every single time

you can bring

the eternal-infinite

to every hungry beak.

Sermons?

Bounce for the bored

yet

steady for the scared;

Challenges for the complacent  
yet  
wisdom for the wobbling.  
Ministries?  
Loose the Holy Spirit  
lavishly let  
the laity lead...  
- faithful formators  
- high-energy Hispanics  
- Hmong heroes  
- unvanquishable Vincentians  
- committed cursillistas  
- knowing knights  
- surprising speakers  
so Father-man gets time  
to trust with his Savior  
and even music make!  
“With God all things are possible.”

## February 17, 2006

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I asked Fr. Ken about how people can cope with the terrible pain of vulnerable fear of rejection in connection with my book on healing of rejection.

Among other things he said that are thought provoking was that those who are overly needy are somewhat selfish only wanting to be ministered to. In the case of some, no one can ever heal them as long as they are in that state.

He thinks what is healing is not just more counsel or contemplative prayer, but also active works to help others.

We cannot do without any human love. I think that I thought if I copied Fr. Patrick, the hermit, I could live without human love, as he seems to do. Even the saints needed human love. Kind of “I was hurt once, I’ll never be hurt again.” We have to be able to be vulnerable.

Continuing with Fr. Ken’s thoughts: underlying that extreme neediness is low self-esteem. We create a self-image out of our successes and failures. Such a self-image is always wrong. People like you for other reasons. In forgiveness we discover we are made in God’s image, we discover our God-given image and begin to trust. We need to see God forgiving. We don’t have to be afraid of ourselves, we are worth more than a flock of sparrows.

God is simple, we are complex.

When we are anxious, we need to enter the presence of God.

Growing in holiness is not something you can just force. He likes an image from teaching music. The student concentrates on his fingers and then becomes stiff, we need to play with our whole body. So in spirituality we need the whole self, relaxing the body, letting God integrate us. We need to “play” with the whole person and not be divided so there is flow.

Not try to do so much consciously, let God integrate us. Accept limitations of myself and then can accept more from others and then I will be more compassionate.

Balance between thinking I can do everything or nothing.

February 17, 2006

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Answer to a letter:

Here is my present thinking about "unbreakable" relationships with non-spouses.

Because we are made for perfect happiness in heaven, our life on earth even when reasonably happily married, will seem unsatisfactory and leave us restless. Relating to a "spiritual friend" or past boyfriend or girlfriend, in a way that doesn't involve the daily boring grind of concrete needs and petty personality conflicts, "who should take out the garbage," etc. creates the illusion of that perfect love we will have in heaven.

We really are relating in such friendships to the deepest lovable self of the other, but that is only part of the person. If married to that same person we would have to deal with all the daily boring and/or conflicting sides of each other which kill or dim the vision of the innermost self of the other.

It is possible that a good Christian friendship could arise but not on the addictive basis of I have to write to him every day and make him into a pseudo-husband figure. You would need to let go of all fantasies - "what if our spouses died in the next earthquake," etc. etc., and presume you will never be married to each other and develop a friendship of sharing no more "exciting and exalted" than you now have with, say, your best woman friend.

If this seems unbearable it is because you might need a combination of psychological counseling because the urgency is based on some deprivation lack in childhood you are desperately trying to fill, as well as more deep prayer to let God's total perfect love fill your heart each day - using the same time you pour out your heart to your e-beloved to be with Jesus.

I will pray for you. God bless you, Ronda

February, 2006

A salute to the Mass of Fr. Ken Whittington:

In the Eternal Key

Post-Vatican II:

More community,

less beauty?

Sad trade off.

His guardian angel

approached the Throne.

"I have a plan:

Make a musician priest!

"He will do the Mass as Easter- journey,

an a cappella song.

Like in a performance

each word will sound the right note.

"And, without knowing why,

the people will be soothed,

and exalted."

And God said, "It's a plan."

March 4, 2006

Sense that this is a healing time. Decided for various reasons not to go to C.C. for the Fall semester. My sense is that with Carla's love, cooking, I am able to take off the red shoes at last.....Also healing that Carrie is like a redeemed warm verbal mother figure and Fr. Ken a

figure of beauty like my sister. Lots of healing joy around all this. Maybe you, my Jesus, want me to have a healing time after all the pain of my life up to now.

Our Priest  
Eagerly,  
he emerges from his door,  
not as if a cuckoo clock figure,  
but as if on urgent personal business,  
as he is.  
Intently,  
he speaks to us,  
not as if we to the distracted ,  
but as if we longed to be reached,  
as we do.  
Tenderly,  
he holds up the Eucharist,  
not as if the bread were only a symbol,  
but as if it were a body frail and broken,  
as it was.  
Carefully,  
his hands enfold the cup,  
not as if the wine were only sign,  
but as if it was the holy grail,  
as it is.  
Graciously,  
he offers us the Mystery,  
not as if a sop to the naïve,  
but as if it were pure love,  
as it is.

For such a priest there ought to be a flock of helping Sisters,  
but since they are endangered species,  
we will be his nuns.

### March 6, 2006

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Dear Janet,

Life here is very, very good for me in so many unexpected ways. Whereas up to now I hated the noise and chaos of my daughter's house with the 5 kids and TV's and games going, after those years of living alone, this doesn't bother me at all now! Strange. I just feel so, so, good being understood after coping with the various problems I only vaguely outlined for you at St. Michael's and previously at the hermitage.

the parish is the best possible liturgically because the organist does a mix of Eastern Church chant and Latin polyphony and it is sublime. I think it is the music I love at our Sundays not so much the Tridentine - maybe I am just too spacey to notice the difference.

The priest is becoming a friend. That's the one that looks like Gandolf. He is not a militant Catholic but doesn't say wrong stuff either. It is peaceful to be around less militant people – the parish leaders are mostly helper types.

I also got linked up to a Lutheran college where they accept some RC teachers. One of them is busy teaching Newman with the obvious good results! They want me to teach part time there and also be part of a prestigious lecture series called Luther/Aquinas -to speak about holiness and the saints! Yipee!

My son-in-law is a movie buff and so we watch odd movies - one is an English series called Cracker about an alcoholic/gambler psychiatrist detective who psyches out criminals of a type I would never understand otherwise - like skin heads. It is a brilliantly acted program.

So I am very connected up in a spectator way with "the culture."

And cats - a hilarious scene was where the kittens got into to my room and did their doo-doo on my beautiful quilt. I noticed a stench but couldn't locate it. Suddenly while taking a nap I saw it and let out five screeches as if it were a huge emergency. I felt idiotic afterwards. What a puritanic culture we live in if that's worthy of panic shrieks!

Thought it would amuse you.

### March 19, 2006

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Visit to Corpus Christi – torn between joy in the people and problems with certain patterns in the institutions. Fr. Ralph prayed over me. He thought that God was telling me through the problems that he wants me to go round instead of being committed to a definite place such as the college. Also he prayed for my denture problems and it came out I was able to wear them more with less anguish over the dull pain of them. In the case of an accusation I made which was right in itself, God showed me it was harsh nonetheless, not taking into account that the person I was angry at was upset himself about an unjust situation and out of his pain had to try to cover it up.

Came back and felt such a light joy to be with the family and at the parish. Lovely Hispanic Mass – felt the goodness of the international Church with these different ways – all the family coming and lots of noise but much more affection and closeness. Fr.K. looks not like Gandolf but like Don Quixote when he speaks Spanish.

Working on a video intro to Faust the question came up why does Goethe have Faust saved without his repenting? I realized it is probably because Goethe who was a weak Christian dogmatically grasped that as dogmatic religion lost its hold an era of sin would ensue but was wanting to lay out the idea of humanistic altruism, as at the end of Faust's tale, and wanting to show God blessing such altruism as sufficient for salvation. Sort of the trajectory of Faustian Western man but in the 20th century more prophetic of the sin than the altruism.

### April 5, 2006

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Roy Schoeman about speaking and the fatigue and reluctance before and joy during and exhaustion afterwards – it is because the Holy Spirit is going through you with more than you have – like a huge wattage through a small circuit.

### April 10, 2006

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Feel kind of tired and unexalted – maybe right for Holy Week. Jesus seemed to say that He wants not so much to inspire me now but to gently comfort me – I thought a kind of spiritual second childhood to be rocked in a lullaby of hope.

### April 13, 2006

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Watched The Passion again on Steve's computer. It was so intimate watching it alone and not in a diffuse space. Felt again such a willingness to sacrifice and suffer in imitation of our dear Jesus. Will make my confession today about being so legalistic about sacrifice vs. generous and holy. Oh, Jesus, you know what we are, so help me be who you want me to be every moment of each day.

### April 13, 2006

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The Holy Spirit led me to see the work at Lenoir Rhyne under the aegis of Legion of Mary work!!

### Holy Thursday

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Instead of doing the foot washing as a very set ritual as usual with altar boys and deacons and lectors at the altar, Fr. Ken did it after the stripping of the altar and asked anyone who wanted their feet washed to sit at either end of the pews. Then he came down the aisle, assisted by altar servers and slowly made his way up and down the aisles on his knees, moving on his knees between feet, and kissing the feet as he went! It was wonderful.

### April 15, 2006

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Someone uttered a prophecy for me: "Can you receive all the tears of this parish?" This was before the announcement of the transfer away from us of our beloved Fr. Ken. We are petitioning the Bishop but in the likelihood he will leave I am working with a team on a healing-grieving workshop for before he goes – thinking of things like they make a list of the qualities they love in him and then I have Scriptures for where these can be found in Jesus, but then also ask where they are in others in the parish or themselves.

### April 23, 2006

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Jim Ridley wrote me:  
At the end of Mass this morning the priest intoned:  
It is Ronda Chervin's Birthday Al-le-lu-u-a.  
Al-le-E-e-e-e-lu-u-u-a-a!  
And the congregation responded:

Thanks be to God. Al-le lu-u-a.  
Al-le-E-e-e-lu-u-u-a-a!  
And on Divine Mercy Sunday! Wow! St. Faustina is embracing you. Jesus is gracing you, and as the years are erasing you, is writing your name ornately anew within the enclosures of His open Heart.

### May 1, 2006

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At airport going to Charismatic Liason conference went to confession to one of the participant priests. He said "The Lord tells me He is crazy about you." As a penance he said I should give myself a break!

During Praise and Worship it seems Jesus lets me be a little grey right now because He is reorganizing my life here in N.C. But He wants to be so close and when I asked for a traveler's holy communion He filled me with fiery prayer of the heart.

### May 9, 2006

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Dear Fr. Ken,

In the middle of the night I woke and thought, if I was writing a novel with a priest hero who was praying about being transferred I would have such a scene:

Quo Vadis?

Unable to sleep, he rose from his narrow cot and lit a vigil candle in front of the icon of the Descent into Hell. Prostrating himself, he tried to empty his mind so that he might hear the voice of God – "if tonight you hear His voice, harden not your heart" was his prayer.

Soon came not answers exactly but a jumble of scriptural images:

"you will be a fisher of men..." He groaned and then saw upturned faces of parishioners, open mouthed as he preached.

So, Jesus, almost you have made me like the bait to catch those fish. His treasured colorful textured vestments seemed then to him like a shimmering lure. As he lay eyes closed under the icon, the metaphor shifted slightly. I dragged them into the barque of Peter for You. If a stranger removes the hook from their mouths, maybe with the last bit of life in them they will flip flop over, out of the boat, back into the sea!

He raised his head and addressed the resurrected Jesus in the icon: Is that what You want?

No answer. He almost fell asleep still lying on the rug in his private chapel when he seemed to hear the voice of Jesus in his heart: "They are not yours, but Mine!"

But he couldn't surrender.

He tried another approach. A pastor is a shepherd. That's what You told us. If my flock doesn't hear me calling them by name, they will go astray. Is that what You want?

Again silence and finally the words: "They are not yours, but Mine."

Another plea: I put out into the deep, and see the nets are bursting. The overflow is spilling out into the hall at almost every Mass. And now you want me to trudge on my weary old bones all alone hours away to a church I've never seen?

Upset instead of consoled, he rose, poured himself a little glass of brandy, and went back to bed.

Slipping toward the welcome oblivion of sleep he heard as if a lullaby his favorite Bach aria, "Ich bin Dein, und Du bist mein," and he curled up in the arms of the Father.

Letter to my sister, Carla:

Thanks for sending the article. ( By Radcliffe – a Dominican who writes in the NC Reporter about the need to overcome the division in the Church. )

I liked his spirit and style and his desire to build bridges through greater understanding.

I got it just returning from a draining but interesting experience being a group co-leader at a Great Books Retreat near here with contemporary short readings from Gogol, The Bhagavad-Gita, Rezzori, and Flannery O'Conner - the theme was Order and Chaos.

There were about 70 participants - many of whom are retired people who have been coming for 26 years! One died of cardiac arrest during this weekend. He came from a Ukrainian Jewish family who had become Protestants way back but his family came to the US around the time of our mother's family. Among the leaders and participants were atheist political activists (Jewish and ex-Catholic background), a Mennonite minister acting as a Lutheran minister part-time who doesn't believe in the Divinity of Christ, some strong Lutheran pastors and lay people, 4 "Communion" Catholics - to use Radcliffe's term, and others of less identifiable ideas about life.

Since most of them were intellectuals, I found much resistance in some to any questions that related ideas to trying to grow oneself vs. analyzing the wider scene or the lines of the readings. Others, mostly women, seemed to like a more personalist, existential approach.

I spend so much time usually with people who agree on basics, that this was very challenging and reading the article you sent just afterwards I could see that I am being challenged by this new relationships to these Lutherans at the college next Fall and now with small ventures to stretch to the "kingdom" venue?

During the weekend, I was thinking it was too tiring at my age, when an old (in their late seventies) agnostic Jewish couple approached me during the wine and cheese social. She was a sculptor and he a government contract person. One of their children, now 50, was developmentally disabled. They said this was the insoluble problem of their lives. They thought that had they developed the type of spirituality believing Jews and Catholics have they might be better able to bear this life-long blow - could I help them find God before they died. I shared as best I could and hope to continue by mail or phone. It touched my heart to be with them and got away from argument and dialogue to this more personal level. Seems related to Radcliffe's points, doesn't it?

## May 24, 2006

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A group met to discuss plans for a Sacred Arts Center in the parish area. Thinking about theories of why I am so eager to keep Fr. Ken in some capacity – and wondering if I am co-dependent I thought – not really. At a certain point, in spite of faults, people's virtues become so evident and glowing that those who love those virtues will want to have them around. People seem to love me on very short acquaintance because they see me as a survivor through faith of terrible tragedy of my son's suicide. And they like to see that hope and joy in spite of all that.

## June, 2006

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Letter to a woman who thought God had told her to have an abortion but then wanted His forgiveness afterwards:

I read your story about your abortion. It was so, so sad. Do you know of the 2 biggest healing ministries to women who had abortions WEBA and Rachel (forget the rest of the name). You might look them up to see if you could help. They probably have telephone hot lines. I think it comes under how Jesus said to the woman taken in adultery, no one cast a stone and neither will I, go and sin no more. You wouldn't have felt the need for forgiveness if you didn't know it was wrong on some level - but Jesus specializes in forgiveness.

In the Catholic Church we are taught never to do anything that is wrong and that if it seems the only way, it isn't really (as in giving babies for adoption - nowadays adopting parents will pay all expenses plus give generous amounts to the donor mother) we do have to discern, but that is between 2 good things such as - should I help women who had abortions or should I finish my Master's degree. You might want to work at a pro- life clinic...They don't use judgmental harsh people. They ask in the questionnaire for volunteers "have you ever done something seriously wrong and then known God's forgiveness." It would give you such joy to know a baby was saved because of your tremulous witness.

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## June 1, 2006

Alleluia, Fr. Ken can stay with us – tears and tears of joy – ours and his.

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## June 4, 2006

Eve of Pentecost went to Hispanic charismatic prayer group meeting since there is no near Anglo one. What energy and power. I thought “the violent bear it away!” They pray so from the heart and the gut. My new theory is that since we Anglos are contracepting and aborting ourselves out of existence, let the Hispanics take the country and may the Catholic Hispanic charismatics one day be the bridge to the Pentecostal Hispanics. And then we'll have a Catholic country!

June 13, 2006

Dear Fr. Ken,

I had a breakthrough on the Grieving book I am writing. I hit the usual 1/2 to 2/3 through moment where the book seems meaningless and the style awful. This usually precedes a breakthrough into a key insight. Anyhow, since you minister to the grieving so often, you might find this formulation helpful.

The title of the book – chosen by Word Among Us, the publisher, is Weeping with Jesus: The Journey from Grief to Hope and the new key insight that seemed to come from the Holy Spirit to me this morning was this:

Weep alone – you may drown in grief

Do not weep – you may become hardened

Weep with Jesus – you will have comfort and hope

This will be linked up to the idea that the purpose of God allowing the miseries of grieving is to gradually wean us from the world and bind us to Him who is The Way, the Truth and the Life, with each word being important – that the only way through grief is Him, and it is His saving truths and we need to hang onto in faith; and that Life is Him in eternity and hopefully reunion with the beloved ones - Life is a pilgrimage. Our home is not here on earth, but in heaven. Your tears are like a river to sail into the heart of God, etc. etc. etc.

June 20, 2006

Birth of little kittens. Joy of watching them come out. I have them in my room – very archetypal – motherhood, nurturing.

Nicholas looks like Jim Carvielez – like Jesus – such a joy and grace even if funny.

June 25, 2006

Joy of swimming in the pool. Looking at the pine tree – remembering from youth first recognizing the beauty of trees seeing an umbrella pine in Central Park, NYC.

July 1, 2006

Started working on *Called by Name: Following a Personal Spirituality* – full of buoyant energy – Contents: God's Way, No Way (when we're stuck); My Way, Their Way (witness stories of admired others), Your Way (guides for readers to search out their own), Our Way, Home Free (not that we've arrived, but that we know our quicksand and our life-line)

Then the next day a sense – this could really be my last book – make it short and sweet and be released from the pressure. Scary. What would fill the gap?

This morning awoke with this poem in my head – maybe a poet is being born out of the womb of prose?

The poem is based on Carla being away at a family reunion. We couldn't all fit in the car with seat belt laws so I agreed to stay home with Nicholas and Max and the cats and the new litter.

This poem might sound angry but is really about how choleric melancholics like myself, need sanguines desperately. Maybe the key to my marriage as well?

COMPLEMENTARITY

Hostage of their joie de vivre  
we angry drones work off our debt.

End of day, laid back  
our little feet paw the air

Then settle under our melancholy shell...  
dream of early retirement.

We awaken to the radiance  
of our queens and princesses  
drawing us back to service.

July 1, 2006 from *Direction for Our Times* – locutions to Anne:

Jesus

Be at peace, little children of God. I am with you. Do not think that you are orphans, abandoned to a world which lacks God's love. I seek to ring love into the world in a continuous stream. How My little apostles delight Me with their willingness to allow Me to use them for this purpose. I work without pause in each soul that welcomes Me. You may be asleep, or at rest in another way, and I am busy at work in your soul, preparing great gifts for your brothers and sisters who do not know Me. I am tireless. I am determined. I am forming many saints who will move up the mountain of holiness with speed in order to serve Me more completely. Do you wish to be one of these saints? Of course you do. We will work together, you and I, to move you more fully into My will. How I guard My little apostles. How I surround them with My protection. I watch your life closely so that every experience you have will benefit your soul. My little ones experience pain and carry wounds. This should not frighten you. I do not judge you for your pain. I look at your pain and remember My pain and I am compassionate. Your pain will not separate you from Me. Again I say, have no fear, I am working in your soul to bring My kingdom to earth through you. I will see to everything. Trust your Jesus and you will be at peace.

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July 1, 2006

After working on the No Way chapter of Called by Name and remembering all those tremendous mystical graces, Jesus seemed to prepare me for a big intervention by prayer of quiet during my prayer-time and then when I hit the bed. He seemed to be telling me that He is trying to trap me into talking to Him in depth all day instead of being so busy being a writer of books I plan. He seemed to say that He was lonely – very few want to talk to Him. Have I gone back to thinking He is a carpenter and not the most interesting person in the whole world ever. I asked Him whether on earth He smelled like sweat and burlap and He smiled. I had feelings of tremulous hope that the gap if I stop writing will be filled by Him.

I thought of the small priest who told me Jesus was crazy about me. Will I, so to speak, write Him if I stop writing for publication? Freer, deeper?

A long ecstasy prayer – like being seized.

Jesus: Ronda, I love reality – the cats, the wood of the house, water, trees. I want to work through your literary side, Ronda, not just the analytic side. That's why I have you surrounded by poets. I like old women, Teresa of Avila, Mother Angelica, Mother Teresa of Calcutta.

The pain in your mouth is a little piece of the crucifixion. In heaven all who suffered in their bodies will see that it was a participation in me.

I awoke with the simple thought that Jesus is asking, as it were, “may I borrow your pen?”

### July 2, 2006

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Saw Superman Returns. Delighted at how they made him more like Christ – tortured, wounded side, the world does need a savior, almost dead, resurrected, ascended. Intervention of the Returning Jesus through the inspiration of the producers?

I was talking to the real Jesus about this.

Jesus: Do not fear. It will all be all right. be very small. Fly close to my breast like Lois Lane with Superman.

### July 3, 2006

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Joy in getting Maxi to swim finally. Thought that is how the Holy Spirit feels when He coaches us to grow and we actually cooperate finally.

Talked to Fr. Ken about the graces of this week; he thought it was from God.

Finished Called by Name and celebrated listening to Mahler's Eighth selections – to bring Martin into it.

### July 4, 2006

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I confessed all the vanity about my books through the years.

Jesus: Let me hold you still and just look out and see, as if I were holding you in front of me so you see what I see. I am dissolving you into me.

Me: Transforming union?

Jesus: See the shine of the wood on the chair at your desk. I knew you would love that shine and that trees could become chairs. You like to see solids shine with light.

Me: Because you are a carpenter's son?

Jesus: The light shineth in the darkness...You have been sating your hunger for beauty through the poetry of Scripture all these years.

Me: feeling doubt about whether I am making all this up – I think: which pathos is greater: out of love for Love to believe I am loved or out of fear of being fatuous to reject even Love?

As I type these notes up from last night I feel touched. Why wouldn't my Jesus want to bring me new life in my old age through words?

### July 6, 2006

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As if confirming this new dialogue of Jesus and myself, Pope Benedict's Wednesday audience was about St. John the Apostle and how he represents Jesus being our close friend and in silence revealing himself.

Asked Jesus about Henry Fonda and Jane Fonda and Kirk Douglas and their attractive but tragic personalities in so many ways

Jesus: See how terrible it is to try to live without Me. I loved them very much and wanted them to find me.

### July 7, 2006

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Joy to have Carla and Steve and Alex and Zacho and Martina back home.

Watched a movie called Monster about a serial killer prostitute. Wondered what you thought, Jesus.

Jesus: Don't you think I forgive sins as much as a movie director would?

At the Mass was the Scripture where You are upbraided by the self-righteous for being with sinners – the sick need a physician. Help me to help all those in family or LRC I meet who don't know your personal love yet. Help me to accept the sacrifice of reaching out to people many of whom won't want to hear.

### July 7, 2006

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Reading the Amy Tan novel.

Me: Why do I like it so much?

Jesus: She reminds you of your mother, full of interesting feelings and thoughts. I want you to understand that I loved your mother with all her flaws and she is with me and she awaits you and understands you now. I want you to understand her. She suffered very much.

I felt kind of numb hearing these words in my heart. I think it is always hard for us to really, really, understand God's love for those we have had lots of difficulty with. I need to ponder this locution. Maybe write my mother a dialogue,

Dear Nonna (Italian for grandmother which we all called my mother after she became such a happy grandmother)

Are you glad I argued and witnessed so much that you finally became a Catholic?

Nonna: Yes.

Me: I was so disappointed that you became a dissenting Catholic.

Nonna: I know.

Me: I wanted us to become closer because you became a Catholic.

Nonna: It was too much of a stretch because of my guilt. I wasn't loved unconditionally as a child the way you were. I was neglected and ignored. So I didn't have the cushion of love that makes repentance easier.

Me: I didn't know how to overcome the conflicts between us except by dutiful love which you scorned so.

Nonna: I was desperate – the great loves I had in the last part of my life was that of your twins and your sister, Carla. So those were the bonds I focused on since you and I were at such an impasse.

Me: Where are you now?

Nonna: I am in purgatory awaiting your full forgiveness.

Me: I am still serving you dutifully by praying for your soul, but I will ask for the grace to forgive from the heart. I am grateful for all you gave me of so much love as a child that I have so much more strength than so many, in spite of lots of brokenness, as a resilient person, teacher, speaker, writer.

Nonna: We will be happy together in heaven one day?

Me: Yes?

## July 8, 2006

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Blaka, who did the article in the local newspaper about the Aging workshop picked up on something I said about living simply and giving to the poor. She wanted to do a feature on this. I was afraid it could seem like the right hand knowing what the left was doing and alienate everyone as a slur. I insisted she include how others help the poor hands on which I don't and helping the family counts, too. Etc. She said I could see the article first and I will let Fr. Ken see it too. Praying about it You seemingly said:

Jesus: Mother Teresa became well known because someone noticed and was inspired. Don't be afraid to be hated – "a prophet is not honored in his own town."

Me: I guess if one person becomes more simple and generous it's worth the resistance? Fr. Ken thought it would be okay – he says he preaches that our luxuries belong to the poor also.

The mother cat was missing for 9 hours. I felt awful. It was I who let her out the front door to frolic a bit – and she came back a hundred times before now. Did I let her out because of projecting onto the momma cat my own need to get out as a mother?

Finally Steve whistled and she seemed to emerge from under the house – perhaps she had gotten wild cat nip since seemed so groggy and numbed out.

I offered the Mass for her return and prayed to St. Francis and St. Martin de Porres. Thank you.

## July 9, 2006

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Thinking about the transforming union that is considered by scholars to be the last stage of the spiritual life.

Mary seems to be telling me to look into the eyes of Jesus whenever I feel anxious.

Read a wonderful passage in Garrigou-Lagrange quoting from St. Thomas, that just as an object falls more swiftly as it reaches its goal, so toward the end of our lives our love becomes more intense as we get closer to heaven.

Concerning something that happened that made me feel insecure, Jesus seemed to want to tell me that there is no security on earth. "When the earth shakes for you, hold My hand more tightly. Pray my name over and over ;Jesus, I trust in you."

## July 10, 2006

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Fr. Ken came over and we watched Ninth Configuration – Blatty’s great movie. This time round I saw one of themes as being how God uses the devil as a kind of shock treatment to show us how bad it really gets if we thwart His way.

Fr. Ken, so in the center every moment at the parish seems to like to relax and let others take over on social visits. During the night the Holy Spirit seemed to give me the lines of this reflection:

Not an ordinary guest,  
My priest is always a priest.  
He cannot not bless or pardon.  
Out of toxic waste  
He plucks flowers  
And then we wonder  
That we smell so sweet.  
He witnesses  
'be not afraid'  
And the waters  
Of our indignation  
Recede.

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### July 12, 2006

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A friend is in trouble – a sort of panic. I am going to just give it to You instead of trying to “fix” him.

Jesus: Always think I love that one you are worried about so much more than you can. Offer to Me for him the pain that comes because you cannot help as much as you want to.

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### July 13, 2006

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Relevant Radio show – interview about my conversion – with potential to reach 26,000,000 – of course that is just potential not actual listeners. I have a mixture of pride and skepticism – my background is so different, who can relate?

Jesus: The Holy Spirit uses these witness stories. Look how you are reached by Scott Hahn and Mother Angelica even though they are so different in every way from you. What moves people is that witness stories show My love – how personal my love is.

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### July 13, 2006

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Zacho’s 7th birthday. A chance to be very tender to him.

I was thinking he would be so happy – he had painful stomach cramps and digestive problems and was half the day lying sick and quiet (very unlike him) so he looked holy – but he revived and loved his presents and loved being the center of attention.

Did the Relevant Radio – delighted with all the little spots they have tucked in between programs in there about moral issues and the saints. Mine went very well. It felt anointed, strong, and there were questions that could elicit important responses. It’s a call in show. Chuck Neff was a fine interviewer – supportive and affirming. The staff liked what I said and wants to do others with me. I recommended a bunch of friends for interviews.

Finished Amy Tan book. There is a climax scene where the American tourists and the Burmese tribe have an ecstatic mystical experience based on their old pagan rituals. It disgusted me since it was not our Catholic faith.

Jesus: Love is the bridge. When you see space between you and others of alien beliefs don't think of them as enemies but see where I have laid down a bridge.

## July 15, 2006

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I can see where You had a bridge there for me with the woman at the pregnancy care center in Hickory – who seemed to be a strict firm Protestant. I was so happy she was against contraception on the basis it encourages sex outside of marriage and she teaches abstinence.

Steve came up with an idea for embellishing my web-site of which he is the web master with an audio section with me speaking my ideas from time to time into the web. At first I felt funny about it – I don't like my voice, I wouldn't listen to such things regularly even if I admired a writer.....but I prayed about it and asked Fr. Ken and it seems like a fine use of media for sending out whatever truths I am convinced of in an easy way without travel.

A Jewish convert friend was very upset about a report that Pope Benedict condemned Israel's bombing of Lebanon seeing his words as anti-Semitic. She doesn't want to go to her usual daily Mass where the priest is likely to say something anti-Israel

I wrote her: I realize I have quite mixed feelings - on the one hand I would die for Israel if it would help, and not for the United States unless against an enemy such as Hitler or Stalin - on the other hand I am ashamed of the US and Israel because of abortion - we have killed more babies in the US and Israel than any Arabs have killed our troops or Israelis, after all, and I have zilch trust in news reports about anything. It is certainly just as likely some news rep is misrepresenting Pope Benedict as not. I hope so. (Later I saw he was aware of injustices of terrorism against Israelis but was just responding to the reprisal issue.)

## July 15, 2006

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Visitor here, a poet friend of Carla. Carla spent hours trying to convince her of her beauty and power in spite of her low self-esteem issues. I thought she was being a sort of poet-therapist like a dance-therapist. I thought she did it just the way Diana, her twin in California, does and realized later that I do that too when a friend is down.

Went to visit an old friend I hadn't seen in 20 years in Tennessee. She used to run around the country doing OR and talks. She has a wonderful word-mongering tongue like talking to peace activists about how abortion is nuking the baby out of the womb. She had a great take on immigration in relation to abortion: Since Roe v. Wade we have had 50 million abortions – a third of a generation who could have been entry workers – so we need immigrants for our demographic gap and we should thank God every day they are hispanic mainly Catholics vs. Muslim possibly terrorists as found in Europe with a worse demographic problem from so many abortions.

I was amazed at how this couple I visited are helping the old father (92 years old) – she hardly able to walk from rheumatic heart, diabetes, knee problems with her father holding onto her back to get around. She also adopted a Russian baby. She is walking the walk of pro-life big time – and for an intellectual activist this is so impressive.

## July 17

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Came home and was reading Temple of the Dawn by Mishima – horrible ending where a seeming noble seeker winds up a voyeur and then lesbian sex scenes. Why do I keep having to see this, Jesus.

Jesus: To be healed. Bring it to me and Mary and Joseph who offered purity to the world in such an unusual way.

## July 18

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Boys gone to California to be with their father for the rest of the summer. It seems like their ghosts are here. I miss their unique personalities. I feel lesser even though I love the quiet in the house.

Jesus: See, you need the otherness of males around. It helps you to be more than your mind; to be a grandmother.

Reading Trocchi Cain's Book about drug addicts.

Jesus: Feel the pathos. Desperate for happiness and no hope because they don't have Me and because he is so sophisticatedly cynical.

July 19 off to ETWN – why do You want me to go off and share?

Jesus: Heaven is not a solo but a symphony.

I am thinking that Your image, Jesus, that I should give myself time to observe and drink in all the good You want me to see is a preparation for heaven.

Jesus: Don't try to resolve so many things. Let Me dissolve some of them.

July 20 EWTN

In an off moment I was sitting in the lobby of the studio looking at TV sets with the various programs being shown in Spanish language countries, and other English speaking countries. They now have a wonderful mix with great speakers, Masses, music, classical Christian art – many of my favorites. EWTN has become a repository of all the treasures of the Church, and overflowing with it. How wonderful.

Jesus: Remember Mother Angelica's motto: If you want God to do the miraculous you have to be willing to do the ridiculous.

Me: Yes, Jesus I do believe you have used and will use all my work for the kingdom and that I should just do what You seem to want me to do, without trying to figure out if it will work or not.

Visited some dear old friends. The wife is slowly becoming more disabled from side effects of diabetes. She feels awful that she is mostly sitting in a chair. It seemed to me that she was an icon of the heart for her husband who lives so much in his head and that would be enough even if she couldn't do all the many things for him she likes to do that demand more mobility.

Seeing them together gave me a sense of how much God has planned for me to be more a single person as a future consecrated widow. Jesus with me is much better than me with a husband.

## July 22, 2006

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Feast of St. Mary Magdalene – my patron baptismal saint

I had expected that some in the parish would be offended by the newspaper article about simplicity of life to give more to the poor. Sure enough someone drew a mustache and beard on my face in the article that was put up on the parish bulletin board. I laughed when I saw it. We are supposed to rejoice when we are persecuted. I never can. But in this case it is easy since it is such a small little sign of rejection.

Jesus: Good. That is nothing to what I got preaching about the lilies of the fields.

Thinking about possibility of co-facilitating Adoration prayer some day. Hostess of the Host?

Jesus: Yes. A good role for a consecrated widow.

### July 23, 2006

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Last night I went to the Hispanic charismatic prayer meeting at our parish. Full of very young people clapping and moving about – these usually so inward sometimes stolid looking folk. When I saw in the Psalm for this morning about rejoicing in the Lord I thought, they are doing it. I think it is so easy for me because it is a throw back to the Jewish worship tradition with dancing and swaying. I wish everyone would like it as much and feel so freed by it, but I suppose for those who only associate motion with popular dancing, it is hard even to want to try.

We talk a lot in my house with my daughter, an identical twin, of her need to try to cajole her husband into twin-like togetherness with her, into loving to do just what she loves. I think I have the same misplaced urgency about trying to get everyone to love what I love.

Jesus: In my house, many mansions.

### July 23, 2006

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Wanting to keep one of the kittens for myself. But ambivalent.

Jesus: It is natural to want to touch what is soft and to love animals. It is my gift. Take the kitten. I am responding to your whim.

Me: Tears. Like in the musical Cabaret the old gal sings “A pineapple for me, for me,” ....

Full circle to love of little cats as a teen-ager?

Watched an old early Ingmar Bergman movie, Shame. Wonderful acting of Liv Ullman and Max Von Sydow. Overall sense of meaning of forgiveness when both hero and heroine sin.

Jesus: Yes. Forgiving love is deeper than rancor.

Read Annie Proulx Wyoming Stories. One is about homosexual sex in two men.

Jesus: I want you to understand this more so you can “Hate the sin, love the sinner.”

### July 24, 2005

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Carla says she now prays in constant gratitude – for everything wonderful in her life – beauty, coolness of the pool, hotness of the sun, the family. What a wonderful change from years back thinking she was an agnostic. I like knowing she is praying in gratitude. A bond: I do that, too.

Signs of the Times: at a restaurant ordering a drink – all of us with grey hairs had to produce ID's with birthdates. I guess some teens wear grey wigs?

### July 25, 2006

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Inertia. Don't even want to do what I love to do such as prepare talks.

Jesus: Don't make decisions about that. Just accept it as a cross for now.

Watched an anti-war movie called Syriana with a complicated plot about mid-East politics and US strategies. I felt discouraged wondering how such types could be reached. It blended in my mind with wondering how my own family will ever find their way to You and Your way.

Jesus: I come to them in various ways to save them. From living at Star of the Sea, the Catholic village, you know there is no easy way to avoid all evil because the evil is within, not just

in the surroundings. When I lived on earth I was surrounded by the evils of the Romans but I preached more about the evils within the seemingly good people.

## July 26, 2006

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Working on Newton Catholic/Lutheran Adult Ed. Workshop on Pope Benedict's Encyclical - here are some notes:

Reading the Encyclical over again I notice how it coincides with what Jesus is telling me, that He wants me to see the world and others as He sees them as in this paragraph of Benedict:

From Benedict XVI *Deus Caritas Est* #17 Gradually His will becomes my will "The love-story between God and man consists in the very fact that this communion of will increases in a communion of thought and sentiment, and thus our will and God's will increasingly coincide. God's will is no longer for me an alien will, something imposed on me from without by the commandments, but it is now my own will...Then self-abandonment to God increases and God becomes our joy. (Psalm 72)"

Went to bed with fear about teaching at the Lutheran college.

Jesus: Don't worry about how many will like you. There are some I can reach through you. I promise. Look for the bridges.

## July 27, 2006

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Woke up feeling happy and good – more carefree. Thank you, Jesus. Then went steadily down in mood. I felt so bad that moods are so victorious in me still.

Jesus: You need to accept these mood swings without making anything of it. You're worried about Israel and the war, it's hot, Carla is upset.

I was praying the rosary quietly and almost asleep when it felt as if my body became lighter, as if my soul was leaving it.

Jesus: I am giving you foretastes of heaven to encourage you. A vacation from your worries?

This state of blissful release from the body, like coming into the center of Being. It seemed as if my soul was being knit with the souls of all those I love. This deep bliss lasted for a few hours. I came out of it the next morning feeling a little frightened. Would He put me in a trance? Would Carla be scared I had died?

Jesus, you have brought me to these beautiful states before without any more extreme graces, so I should not be afraid. Also, just I guess anything out of the ordinary slightly frightens us, even if it is blissful.

Why Lenoir/Rhyne – Lutherans? I asked again about my part time job teaching at this college.

Jesus: Look how desperate I am if I have to send out a de-fanged lioness to them?

I thought maybe this humor, my style, was proof that this was not Jesus but me, however, later I thought of St. Thomas More and the jokes about his beard just before being guillotined. High humor as sign of grace.

Later the Holy Spirit suggested I put the whole LRC mission under the guidance of Mother Mary – asking her to show me what her eyes see. I suggested to Fr. Ken that I might invoke St.

Charles Borromeo – counter-reformation doctor of the Church – see myself as a missionary from our parish. He said he could give me a missionaries blessing just before I start. Lovely.

### July 28, 2006

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Went to our one hour adoration prayer – I hadn't been because it is an inconvenient hour. Immediately went into prayer of quiet. Fr. Ken solemnly processed down the Church aisles with the monstrance blessing us, but without a word. It was so solemn. I thought it was for healing but unlike at big conferences where charismatic priests do this with lots of excitement, this was a quiet way. I noticed that my gums didn't hurt during this, even though I had the dentures on. Spoke to Fr. Leo the next day and he alluded to how God can just take away pain. He cited an example of how when he was doing Operation Rescue there was a photo afterwards shown in court of a policeman with his fingers in Fr. Leo's nostrils dragging him to the police car. He felt nothing at the time and didn't even remember but his nose was badly bruised and bleeding afterwards. He said God can lift you above the rain into the sky above the clouds when He wishes.

Saw a movie Tsotsi about a young South African black thief and murderer who gradually becomes compassionate from taking care of a tiny baby found in the car he had stolen. It seemed contrived to some degree but then I thought of you, Jesus, and the "good" thief who was surely a murderer in those days to be crucified.

Jesus: I see the heart of a man, like an X-ray. Do not fear. Movies can be like X-rays. Without the contrast of the violence that is real, everything, even religion could seem sentimental.

### July 30, 2006

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Watched a movie with a favorite Japanese actor and director Steve Seitz called Fireworks – the hero after killing many evil people kills himself when his wife dies of leukemia.

Jesus: desperate, desperate, desperate. Pray.

I have been reading of the Grimke Sisters – wonderful speakers for anti-slavery, themselves being refugees in the North from a slaveholding family in the South. Tremendous courage and oratorical ability since they were the first women speakers ever on platforms normally reserved for men.

Jesus seemed to want me to take courage from them as a woman speaker, showing me how disarming a woman speaker can be just because there is so much skepticism about them – still there today in a lesser form

Was part of a long conversation about teenagers and masturbation – the ethics and psychology of it. From the men talking about it I realized that I tend to speak of it too exclusively philosophically without enough compassion for the confusion of the mostly males with this problem.

Jesus told me about the rest that He promises to the heavily burdened:

"It is not a rest of Stoic detachment. In your turbulence, I want to stretch you toward My heart so that I can pour My love in and then you will trust me more and therefore be more serene. Let me!"

### July 31, 2006

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Feeling insecure about N.C. living situation. Jesus reminded me of His question to me: “What would you do if you trusted in Me?”

Me: I would enjoy the good, help now and cling to You alone for security about the future.

Jesus: Yes.

### July 31, 2006

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Jesus seemed to ask me: What are you running away from with all this reading and film-seeing?

Me: Fear?

Jesus: Come to me.

Had a long prayer time with Him and felt much better.

### August 1, 2006

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Funny incident with Martina picking up and clutching cat do-do. Led to conversation about why cleaning up cat mess is different from changing diapers, etc. I realize that none of the above is as difficult for me as my own excrement and the dislike of having this a frequent occurrence – to avoid thinking about it, I do puzzles, read magazines, etc. Am I thinking it will be a healing for me if I can accept cleaning up the mess of one of the kittens?

Maybe.

Feeling easily rattled by daily little stuff. Anxious about the more of these details when the college courses start. Jesus seemed to be telling me that it is normal (average, in Recovery terms) to be more anxious about details as we grow older.

Jesus: That is why I have to slow you down. Nothing is more important now than your peace, so take time to sit at My feet and let me give it to you.

Me: Yes. Trying to breathe in the holy Name, Jesus, frequently, especially when that anxious feeling comes.

### August 1, 2006

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Jesus is telling me to be very still inside – wordless. As I am falling asleep, not even the rosary, but just the name of Jesus. To practice “death.” Death to my word-monger analytic self.

I didn’t interpret this as meaning I am necessarily literally going to die soon, or that I can’t think any more, but just to have a truly quiet time in my prayer once more.

### August 2, 2006

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Family difficulties over various complications about arrangements. We came to good compromises and new plans. It feels good since I really want to stay.

### August 3, 2006

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I need to pinpoint the anxiety about LRC which is about desperate need to be liked. I have to just give this to you, Jesus, with all its awful pathos.

Jesus: Lots of people didn't like me! Just turn to me when you feel anxious.

### August 3

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Lily in the hospital. Lord help her.  
Fear  
Frantic cat  
Wanting home  
Stretched to the max  
Across the screen door  
Claws holding you fast  
Turn around  
And see your master  
Close behind,  
Ready to carry you inside!  
Frantic human  
Wanting home  
Stretched to the max  
Across the earth  
Hands holding you fast  
Turn around  
And see your Lord  
Close behind,  
Ready to carry you to eternity!

### August 4, 2006

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Feeling so grateful for Fr. Ken. Thinking about whole decades of bad and good friendships and realizing I can't really sort them out into introverts and extroverts, etc. What is really true is that good truly loving people don't go into any kind of quicksand with weaker people like myself. It takes 2 to waltz in quicksand! It is so, so, good to have a really good friendship at this time in my life.

### August 4, 2006

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Getting ready for Newton talks on Deus Caritas Est ecumenical Adult Bible Study with Catholics and Lutherans, I thought, of course, Mary is our patron for ecumenism for she loves all the Christians for loving her Son and surely wants for them all He wants to give them!  
From Anne the locutionary/visionary of Direction for Our Times

### August 1, 2006

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Jesus:  
I send My apostles the grace necessary for a calm spirit. With this calm spirit, My followers will bring heavenly calm to a restless world that trembles with unease. Live your commitment to time spent in silent prayer and I will place these heavenly graces in your soul. Others will

identify these graces in you because these gifts are contrary to the gifts offered by the world. This is another way that My apostles stand out. Do not spend a great deal of time discussing events in the world. Long discussions do not benefit the situation. Spend instead a great deal of time praying for the situation in the world. This will benefit the situation, along with those around you, and your own little priceless soul, which becomes more and more beautiful through prayer and silence. I want each apostle to understand that I have not abandoned this world. Consider this carefully. I am Jesus. I am God. I have not abandoned this world. Do not be afraid. I say this, dearest apostles, firmly. I do not want My apostles to be afraid or to communicate fear to others. Bring your fears to Me and bring My peace to others. This is your call, your divine task. Accept this call as seriously as you accept My love for you and your love for Me. Our reciprocal love is natural and right, holy and blessed. My peace in your soul is also natural and right, holy and blessed. Apostles, be disciplined in those actions that bring you peace and be equally disciplined in avoiding those things that cause you upset. Your Jesus seeks to comfort many. Very often, I will do this through you.

### July 11, 2006

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Our Lord brought me to yet another place in heaven. I saw a massive waterfall. It was majestic. It was very beautiful and filled me with awe. Jesus instructed me to look into the water. I did and was struck first by the purity and clarity of it and next by lights in it. I thought that what I saw were souls and then I thought, that cannot be right. Souls are not like fish. Why would they be swimming? Jesus said again, "Look into the water, Anne." I did again and I saw again lights in the water that struck me as souls.

Jesus began to explain. "These are souls experiencing the water fully, as you wished to experience it fully when you first experienced heaven. You asked me if you could swim and I said, of course. Anne, these souls are enjoying this creation fully, as you wanted to at that time. You see, little Anne, on earth, souls have certain fears. Here in heaven there is no fear. Each soul, united to Me, is master of creation and therefore no soul suffers from fear of any kind. You are wondering why your Jesus shows you this. You will understand at another time, little Anne. It is enough that you obey Me."

### July 12, 2006

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I saw the waterfall again. It was magnificent. The Lord left me to admire it and I listened to the power in the water as it dropped through the air and then landed with great force. I felt a surge of joy and happiness, almost like the adrenalin one feels when one participates in exciting sports like water skiing. I watched a man who was swimming or rather experiencing the water fall. He moved in and out of the stream with precision and purpose. His movements, fast and daring, had thought in that he was accurately measuring the force of the water in relation to his intended actions. There was a lot going on in his experiencing of the water. How he enjoyed himself and I laughed aloud for his joy. I glanced at the surrounding flora and fauna and noted that the growth seemed tropical and not at all like my lovely forest. I do not like tropical, as a rule, but it was beautiful here. I saw other souls sitting on rocks that overlooked the scene. They enjoyed watching. One woman had her face turned up to the sun with a look of lovely serenity.

Jesus spoke and said, "Do you see that these souls have no fear, Anne? They are not afraid because they have left all fear when they left their humanity. A soul in a human body feels fear that their body will be hurt or neglected. This is understandable but unnecessary because a

person should fear only for their soul. If a person loves Me and wishes to be united to Me, I will protect that soul and nothing can harm it. Nothing. I want My children to understand that in heaven, where they will live for eternity, there is no fear. I want My children to begin to live as though they were in heaven now by casting aside all fear through unity with My will for them. You saw this man swimming and mastering the waterfall. His movements were not those of a thoughtless fool, but of a thinking man, dignified and intellectually accurate to his goal of understanding the power and force of this particular creation of Mine. This man is not reckless and neither should My children on earth be reckless but My followers should not harbor fear about their bodies because it is their souls that will take them into eternity. August 5, 2006

Did a talk on Pope Benedict's first encyclical at Newton in an ecumenical effort with Catholics and Protestants. I was anxious about it, because I don't know if Lutherans would like me.

The Lutherans were very nice and friendly. It went very well. Immediately a Catholic man noticed my large crucifix and said he used to wear one but now keeps it in his pocket. He withdrew it and put it around his neck. Another Catholic was feeling low and it seemed my talk gave him fresh élan – he went to confession afterwards.

Jesus: Did you see that I had built bridges? The man who put on his crucifix, the French woman, the Lutheran speaker who opened up and who you will now know better when he is your colleague at Lenoir/Rhyne. See!

Letter from a Msgr. in St. Louis who liked what I said at the Charismatic Liaison Conference. He wants me to do a three talk conference for them with me as the only speaker. I feel flattered but challenged. I am not the kind of high-power charismatic speaker many love to hear – much more a teacher.

Jesus: I have given you truth that they need to hear.

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## August 6, 2006

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Finished reading Julianne's Journal book that will be for my series: En Route Witness Stories. I am in such awe of her courage dealing with terrible temptations many singles go through, succumbing but letting grace bounce her back, and her great courage in the Pro-Life Rescue movement. Wonderful ending of her finally finding true love.

Sure I should do the book but unsure if it will sell. Will others like it? St. Mary Magdalene help us.

Jesus: Yes. I will bless it, as I have blessed her. If it stirs you so much, it will stir others. Now enjoy your time in Los Angeles. Be peaceful and loving. Don't worry, trust!

Finished reading an Anne Perry novel – Angels in the Gloom. It is about World War I in Britain. The hero is an army chaplain, wounded and exhausted from a heroic time in the trenches in Belgium. There is a moment when they really think it is more probable than not that Germany will win. The question keeps coming up, how could it be worth it for young men to die in horrible circumstances of bloody horror. The Anglican chaplain is busy encouraging the women of his home town where he is brought to recover from his wounds before going back into the trenches. He does beautifully in his sensitive ministry until the end of the book where the author has him admit that he doesn't know for sure about God's love but he is absolutely sure that Jesus' teachings are the only ones that make life or death worth anything.

So, presumably, it comes down to that 18 year olds should die terrible deaths out of national sentiment, not with faith that God will reward their sacrifice, but only a wish.

I was so disappointed. It points up Benedict's thought in the Encyclical Deus Caritas Est, that Jesus is not an ideal but a Person who loves us.

An analogy came to mind – suppose a king promised that if you fought for him you would live in his castle as sons and daughters or as a bride. But then after you made the sacrifice, told you, no I just wanted you as soldiers – go and die in the ditch, you can't live in my castle.

For Jesus to promise us eternal life if there is none, just as a goad to do good on earth is so cruel. Only He could make such a promise, but if it is just a false one, then it is like a scam, and He is not the Son of God but only an idealist.

I discussed this with Carla who loved the book and thought I would love it. She said I was wrong, it was not about loss of faith but about clinging to the good even if you are shaky in your faith.

Maybe. But it also illustrates what happens to religion when doubt leads to willingness to settle for a de-supernaturalized vision.

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### August 7, 2006

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Thinking about the plan to get out witness books written by others with great stories, I thought, maybe this is Jesus' "scheme" to get me to keep giving talks even though it is so tiring – so that I can sell these books at tables.

Saw for the first time, Fr. Paul say his Mass. He is a late vocation man I greatly urged on to try to become a priest. He seemed like an eagle priest. He celebrates it out of the deep contemplative St. John the Evangelist side of his personality, not the charismatic side.

Advice from him: when a father tries to get his baby to sleep, he first relaxes her and then she can sleep. So when we are anxious, we need to pray to let God relax us and go into a sort of sleep state of grace before trying to do things that usually make us anxious.

On addictions – if a father does not have a sacred space inside himself but fills himself by means of addictions, then the children will also fill that space inside themselves with addictions.

I was visiting Diana, my daughter, who left the sacraments when she was 15. She came with me to daily Mass –saying it was just to be loving to me. But she began looking for a sign maybe to return herself – she was looking to see if anyone would be friendly after the Mass. Instead of a parishioner being friendly, an alcoholic beggar came by outside the Church and said, apropos of nothing "if I hadn't fornicated but had married in the Church I wouldn't be in the state I am now in." That seemed like a fantastic sign that Jesus wanted to forgive all the sins of D's past and get her married in the Church.

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### August 16, 2006

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Diana seems to like Fr. Joe of the parish who will work with her on getting her marriage blessed. I want to think this will lead to getting rid of all obstacles to going regularly to Mass but getting married in the Church is the only step she can make now.

Jesus: She is in my orbit. I will work through my priest. Be still and trust.

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### August 17, 2006

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LRC orientation. Jesus seemed to give me an ecstatic feeling after my nap as a sign that it will all be well there. I felt very tired just the same from the long day and drives.

Jesus: It's all right. Don't push yourself, just rest when you get home.

I thought I should offer these connected sacrifices as a penance for all the sins of Catholics that drove Luther to revolt so many years ago.

Reading writings of Frederick Douglass – so impressing.

Jesus: see how I loved him! I love each one and exult in your virtues that come from understanding the responding to Me and the Holy Spirit.

Thinking about old, old, age.

Jesus: They are living icons of the death of pride.

Yes! I should look forward to that instead of dreading it.

Life is like a maze. Suddenly you go the right way and all the lights go on, like coming home to Carla and Steve and the family.

## August 18, 2006

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Talking to Jesus about addictions:

Jesus: If someone is good and close to Me, but is still unbalanced he needs therapy, but if someone is a big sinner who is unbalanced it is because sin makes you crazy and so do destructive addictions like sex, alcohol and nicotine. Such people need Me first of all; not your psychological advice.

When they come into My orbit, rejoice in hope.

Beautiful quiet prayer at Adoration in the parish.

Jesus: I will let you be tired so that you rest by prayer. Drown in Me. This anxiety is your thorn in the flesh for this time in your life. Gently bring it to Me and say your trust prayers.

Thinking of telling my twin – sister who will come tomorrow for a visit, about my different twin theories and that Jesus is my twin, Jesus seemed to suggest: how about quadruplets: Jesus, Mary, Joseph and Ronda.

If to be a saint is to have nothing but love in ones heart, that equals nothing but Jesus and everyone He loves which equals everyone.

I feel very happy and trusting and peaceful after these beautiful words.

## August 21, 2006

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Watching Carla, my sister, doing preparations for her dance workshop at the parish – thinking how so many of us gifted creative people with lots of experience still feel so insecure. Thinking in our Sacred Arts Guild retreats we need to minister to this insecurity issue – the positive part is our interest in getting things “right” out of a sense of integrity, but the other part seems just trustless fretting.

Carla, my daughter, was talking about how the favored child of parents thinks they can easily earn love by doing what the loving parents wants with all the strain of that effort. So the less favored child should realize that he or she doesn’t have that strain. Giving up on pleasing may develop strength to stand more on one’s own or, of course, make for compulsive efforts to succeed where success seemed impossible.

I was relating this to authority issues. I think that where a child has even one parent modeling authority matched by understanding of the child’s personality, then that child is less wary of authority and more eager to obey so as to earn love. I usually, theological considerations to the side, act as if I can earn God’s love by obedience. Possibly the child whose authority did not understand him or her is likely to feel “to heck with authority, I will be my own authority,” and therefore have trouble with Church authority even when it is legitimate.

Went to LRC was delighted to see a huge wooden rosary hanging on the wall of the little student chapel and even flyers about how to pray the rosary. It is very friendly there.

A Catholic faculty member, when I told him I was planning to offer as penance all difficulties about this new little job for the sins of Catholics that Luther revolted against, said that he once

did all the things necessary to get a big indulgence which he then applied ironically to Luther's soul! That would be "burning coals" since Luther was such a hater of indulgences.

Jesus seems to want me to share the pain of how the Church is today – with those in denial of the wrongness of rejecting moral authority, etc. There but by the grace of God I would have gone maybe. Offer my pain about this to Jesus, suffer it with Him. See the goodness in dissenters in other ways such as sensitivity to pain in others, delicacy, diplomacy, hope.

## August 22

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More relaxed with my sister on this visit than before. We had a tiff early on about Church practices but then my daughter Carla insisted that it was because we hadn't really accepted our major differences, wanting so much to be twin-alike – or, as I put it, we think twins should be clones. My sister suggested we pray together about it, and then I thought we needed to forgive each other for being disappointed. Our family was so alienated and she is the only one in the world left with our background, so it is especially painful that we cannot agree about our refuge: The Church.

Jesus: Just because she has wrong ideas about me and the Church doesn't mean her virtues aren't real. Delicacy, appreciation, sensibility, yearning, loyalty to Arthur, a woman without guile, like Nathaniel.

Me: Yes. Thank you, God, for my sister.

## August 23

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Carla did a wonderful demonstration of sacred dance. An 86 year old Knight of Columbus looked luminous with joy to be following the steps. Fr. Ken loved it.

## August 24

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LRC students enjoyable, polite, friendly, fun.

Jesus: the bridge is their humanity.

## August 26

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I had more driving problems changing lanes. Not being able to change lanes fast enough I have to make detours and get panicked and occasionally even say the “s” word in frustration. Finally think – put my mental health first and never drive where there are many quick lane changes. Decided to do that – to realize that one with bad eye hand coordination just can't do it safely and that I am not just hysterical or irrational – I really can't do it well and shouldn't do it. Relief.

Jesus: Poor little Ronda. Be still and know that I am God.

## August 27, 2006

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Funny, funny senior moment. In the middle of the night my cell phone seemed to be ringing every ten minutes with no one on the line. Then I thought it was the alarm. There is a menu item that says quick alarm and lists 10 minutes, 15 minutes, 3 hours. I thought if I change into 3 hours I have to be woken up at 5 AM but that would be better than every ten minutes. Then I tried turning the phone off all together, but it rung anyhow. I tried to call the tech support on the other wired phone but the number was busy. Then I laboriously hunted for the awful instruction book. Much cursing of All Tel. Finally I thought I had succeeded in eliminating all instructions and the phone stopped ringing.

The next morning I find out it was the wired phone that was ringing for a grandson from his friend in N.H. He was calling every ten minutes as they worked to fix some kind of glitch on their chat board. I hadn't recognized that the ring was from that phone not the cell.

### August 27, 2006

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Jesus: Rest. I am taking care of you. I have inspired the family to love you. Just pray "Jesus, I trust in You."

### August 30, 2006

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Carla had a friend visiting, a poet-horseman, Dave. About relating to him, Jesus seemed to say: I am bringing you to many different people to be a woman of more seasons, to walk on My bridges.

### August 31, 2006

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St. Columban in the Office of Readings: "Let us seek the fountain of light and life and the living water by despising what we see, by leaving the world, and by dwelling in the highest heavens. Let us seek these things like rational and shrewd fish may we drink the living water which wells up to eternal life."

Just as fish don't know land but do lift their heads out of water – so we don't know heaven but can lift our heads!

This message to the locutionary Anne, Direction for Our Times, seems so much to confirm what Jesus is doing with me now!

### September 1, 2006

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Jesus

A deep peace settles upon those who serve the Lord. This interior peace, heaven's presence, connects each apostle to their Saviour. I work in each soul without interruption if that soul welcomes Me. Around the apostle, circumstances change. Others come and go in their life and perhaps there is suffering or persecution. My presence remains a constant, though, comforting, consoling, and directing. The connection between heaven and each apostolic servant is the avenue through which I return to the world. How heaven delights in each commitment. During this time many look to their Saviour with a certainty that I am calling out to them. Each apostle hears My call. You have heard My call. Consider today what your Jesus is asking of you. Consider how I am asking you to serve today. Dearest apostle, I must insist that you spend time in silence contemplating My will. I must insist upon this because I require your service in whatever way I have willed for you during this time. If you give Me your full attention for a period of time each day, I can instruct you and prompt you. Also, I can give you a very important heavenly attribute and that is the peace that I need you to possess. You must possess this for your own comfort, of course, but you must also possess this peace so that it flows through you into the world. Your world does not have peace. My peace has been rejected by your world. You, My beloved apostles, reject the world's discord and accept My peace. That is why you are so

important to Me. I am your Beloved One. You feel My presence, do you not? Truly, I am with you. Dear apostle, I want to be with everyone in this way. Will you help Me? I know that you will. Spend time with Me in silence each day and I will provide you with everything you need and everything the world requires.

## September 2

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Busy, busy, catch up day. Lots of noise in the house after long day at LRC. I love the location to the lay apostles. It confirms the way You want to work with me.

Jesus: Look to see what rattled you. You will see that I am directing you away from situations that will take away peace. You can reach people through your talks and the books but I want you to do that slowly and without haste and tension and false deadlines. See you are more peaceful at LRC with lots of free time around the classes. Start at home by putting your time with Me first.

Yes, I want Your peace.

Talent show at the parish. So American – to raise money for Krystal who was in a nearly fatal car accident. Loved all the fun in the show and the willingness to do crazy things – like Leigh doing Cancer Comedy – to help others. Felt proud to be an American because of this good kind of zany American spirit..

I am reading Zadie Smith's novel to understand contemporary blacks better. An interesting book.

Jesus says that the portrayal in such novels of his followers as mostly negative figures breaks His heart.

## September 3

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Idea came up of my living in a little trailer on the grounds if the things in the house are too noisy and chaotic. I realize that I love my room and wouldn't want to be in the confined ugly trailer.

I noticed finishing the Zadie Smith novel that whereas in the past most secular novels were about being yourself vs. conformity, now more and more are about forgiveness. This is progress toward you, Jesus, is it not?

Jesus: Yes. Jesus: Yes. I am drawing all things together. I like when you detect how I am at work.

## September 4

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Karen Miller, a mother of 12 whose last child is now off to college is feeling the empty nest syndrome. I gave her my Called by Name: Following Your Own Spirituality to read. May it help her.

## September 5

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Problems with the little group in Corpus Christi trying to start a Lay Sacred Arts Movement.

Jesus: I have taken you out of those matters. Give the beloved persons to me and don't try to be the sage.

Wonderful response to Taming the Lion Within on Relevant Radio – man writing on e-mail that for 52 years he has been hoping for such insights and felt peaceful already.

Jesus: Pause and taken in this joy of My using you these ways. Go with the fruit.

I long to have my people at peace. To do more in teachings on anger, first you must be more at peace.

## September 6

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A student asked how I became a Christian. I am so happy that they care.

Jesus: I told you I would use you there. Trust, trust, trust.

## September 7

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Feeling heavy about Daniel's frustrations.

Jesus: Entrust him to Me. I have my plans of love for him. Offer the pain to me.

Uncertainty about how to handle the Word Among Us not liking my manuscript about grieving.

Jesus: Don't worry about it in advance.

Painful cold and sinus condition. I offer it for Diana and Pete and Carla and Steve.

Jesus: Keep offering it. Pain with love redeems.

## September 9, 2006

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Feeling depleted with a nasty cold. Tossing about of ideas of a radio show on anger.

Jesus: Don't make plans when you are so low. Offer the cross and wait in peace.

Fr. Ken visited our house. I feel so safe when I see him at the parish or here visiting.

Jesus: He is mine totally. That is why you feel safe.

In a conversation with my daughter Carla, Fr. Ken said it is liberating to give up trying to understand God, but, instead, just to follow the path. He experiences this as liberating.

I recalled Fr. Luke Zimmer insisting that peace only comes with surrender.

Jesus: Surrender!

Me: I surrender. "Behold the Handmaid of the Lord, may it be done unto me according to Your will."

## September 10, 2006

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Dear Sister Judith,

It has taken me many months of pondering to unravel the knots of what happened to me in our Catholic village in Arkansas.

Now it seems to me much clearer that in God's providence I have had to try many, many, ways of life before coming back to the family; to see that other forms of community from hermit villages to Catholic villages were not what I needed most in spite of all their great gifts and advantages and freedom from some of the trials of in-close family life.

This morning at Mass it came to me that I would have left Star of the Sea much sooner without your loving friendship which was a bridge from the hermitage. Having to respect that you were really a hermit when your hermitage was finally ready, was a proof that friends are not family.

I am remembering all the very loving things you did for me with gratitude.

Love and prayers, Ronda

## September 11, 2006

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Feeling bad about Word Among us turn down of Weeping with Jesus.

Jesus: Let go of everything and respond to what comes along.

Hilarious but upsetting incident – I was following another driver to get to a destination – she got lost and I got lost following her; she found me, but then made a sudden turn and lost me again. Thinking the whole trip would only take about 10 minutes I failed to look for a restroom. An hour later stuck in an area with no gas stations I wound up in the cemetery of a large Lutheran Church making cell phone calls about directions. I thought of “relieving nature” on the grounds of the cemetery but then thought that even though there were no cars in the lot, someone could come out of the Church and there I would be, a Catholic, disgracing the grounds of my “separated brethren.” Finally I decided to use a plastic bag in the car I had been using for dirty Kleenex. Realized after awhile that I had missed the bag and done it on the mat in the back of the car. Ugh! Fear of horrible smell. Sense of shame.

Finally I just laughed and laughed and the next day found a cheap gadget in the camping department of K-Mart that serves this purpose called a portable urinal.

I described the incident to my parish Anger-group in terms of controlling my anger at the unhelpful lack of direction of woman who I was following. They laughed and laughed over it.

September 13

The college students like Voyage to Insight, my own text, being used in the class. This feels wonderful. I now feel almost certain it will work to teach there.

Jesus: Don't decide anything when you are tired. I know that the ride is tiring. Just relax when you get home, don't push projects then.

When my twins were little I started calling them squigglepusses. Now I am seeing the students as just grown up squigglepusses.

Thinking of Brecht(?) who had a poem that was something like

When I was young I hated everybody.

Then when I was older I liked good people.

Now I am old and I respect everyone just because they are human beings in pain.

## September 14, 2006

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Somehow this time it is too much. On the way to a weekend retreat I was giving, by air with terrible overbooking and other glitches, so it took me 24 hours to get from New Mexico back to Charlotte, N.C. I became convinced that I must really give up these exhausting trips – go to the ones I have scheduled – last one August, 2007 EWTN Widow Series and then stop. I asked Jesus “Do you accept my resignation?”

Jesus: Dearest one, you have served me so well as a speaker and writer. I know the cost. I am giving you more of the gift of counsel and these other openings as teacher at Lenoir-Rhyne and radio and TV. Just sink into my arms and let me carry you through the remaining talks.

I realize that part of it is Recovery technique is to see that realistically I can't change the airlines or the places I go to be good for me with all my physical problems. It is more realistic to stop going.

Fr. Ken thinks that doing radio shows instead could be good because conferences are preaching to the choir and radio reaches many others.

At Pecos touching to meet Gilbert – a Mexican American man who had seizures since youth and back pains. 60 years of trust, and then healed at 63.

Called my sister, Carla. I realize her voice is soothing to me. She was the strong one when I was little and I find her a motherly voice in her concern for my problems now.

## September 21

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Prayers for 24th Sunday “Bring us to the dignity which distinguishes the poor in spirit.” I never noticed this line before. I have no dignity because I am too rich in spirit or longing with spiritual gluttony to grab everything I can in this life?

## September 22, 2006

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I am reading a painful book about the Vietnam War that Steve gave me to read. Jesus, I am wondering what you want me to learn from it. How can we ever know what is right if we don't have the right information?

Jesus: When you read such books I want you to understand better, to have a compassionate heart for everyone. Are you a general? Of course you don't have the information. You don't have to know; you have to pray and love.

Someone sent me a forward with a rabbi pleading for peace on the basis of groups not demonizing each other; such as Jews demonizing Moslems and vice versa. It was lovely in sentiment but seemed to me weak in analysis.

I replied to the sender: It's not what the rabbi says that upsets me - it's what he doesn't say. I think it is partly because mystical writers don't think the way philosophers do in terms of strict definition of terms.

Someone says that discussions between people with different premisses are like chasing cats around a tree. Shall we make a cat dance for that?

For example - a first question is:

Do all of us agree that Satan and his legions are real entities vs. symbols of human states?

A second question is:

Assuming we agree about Satan which is unlikely, would it be correct that when Hitler made a pact with the devil several times that he chose to be demonized?

A third question is:

Why is it odd that Jews in Israel, descendents of the victims of Hitler's demonic racism, whose ancestors did not leave Germany because they couldn't believe that Hitler's demonic plans were real, and then became victims, would now, hearing daily proclamations by Islamic leaders that all Jews should be destroyed, not think they need to protect themselves?

Such leaders don't sound like delightful Sufi mystics to me.

A fourth question is:

When a military purposely stations its artillery in civilian homes (Lebanon) or puts grenades in baby's diapers and sends them toward the troops of the enemy (as it is said was done in Vietnam by the Cong) are these neutral civilian targets?

Fifth question is:

Does the devil have any part in pre-marital sex leading IN PART since 1973 to 50 million abortions in the U.S.?\

This doesn't mean that the rabbi isn't right that we need to love the enemy as Gandhi and St. Francis did, but such advice coming from someone who alludes to some of the realities I mention above would sound more real to me. I am teaching Letter to Birmingham Jail next week and usually teach Gandhi. These men knew personally what injustice to themselves was - so their urgings of non-violent resistance are more powerful. Are there American Jews being urged by rabbis to go to Lebanon in the cross-fire and practice non-violent resistance? I'm not being sarcastic. I would be thrilled to hear it was so.

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### September 23, 2006

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I am working on the Aquinas talk. It seems okay, but not quite my way. I am still anxious about it.

Jesus: Be humble. It is natural that you feel anxious since it is not your usual audience. Try to picture that I really will be there trying to enter into those present by means of the words I have given you. Just as I have made bridges at the college, so here you will find bridges. Offer to me that anxieties, much of which are from price; that you fear seeming inadequate. Forgive those in the past who didn't understand your way. I have used them in a different way. You don't have to please everyone; just Me.

Joy to finally finish the Aquinas lecture for better or worse. I was alone in the chapel of our Church waiting for Alex in Youth Ministry. I have never been alone in the chapel. I was staring at a little statue of Joseph or maybe St. Christopher carrying the child Jesus. I thought that the priest carries an even smaller form of Him, the Eucharist.

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### September 26, 2006

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Perk – pool at Lenoir Rhyne College.

Finally back after a transition to a regular prayer schedule. Jesus says: I have relieved you of many projects so you can put being close to me and following me first. And now I am giving you peace in prayer to encourage you. Otherwise you will always be harried and jumpy. I want you to be peaceful.

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### September 27, 2006

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Fr. Julio at St. Aloysius Church in Hickory said in a sermon that we should never go out to our ministries as if it is just “I am going” but always “we (Jesus and I) are going.”

Wonderful. I will start thinking this way immediately.

Battery went dead in my car and that cut off the radio. Took a day to fix it. I realized how much that music means to me. Thank you for this great gift.

## Sept. 28

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I felt better reading Anne’s Book 8, especially about You wanting so much for us to be peaceful and to be our peace.

Reading Anna Terruwe’s book about Neurosis and Depression. It is very good but frightening a little. Jesus says: What she says is true on a natural level. She is not writing about the intimate life of prayer which dissolves these knots. Don’t be afraid of it. I descend into the hell of repression. All will be well.

October 1 Reading about the Inquisition. What do you think, Jesus?

Jesus: Power is always abused. Look at my great saints Teresa and John. They lived at this time but didn’t let it touch them. Let it be a warning to avoid power and riches and positions.

Talking after Mass to a priest who was visiting Fr. Ken as they prepared to take off for a Priest Retreat. Jesus showed me that he is making me more able to talk to people from different sides of the Church.

I had a little tiff with Carla over a trifle concerning a book of mine she is desktopping for me. Please Jesus detach me from those books.

Jesus: the Holy Spirit helped you write those books, but love is more important. I will send your guardian angel to help you. Listen to him.

## October 1, 2006

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Message from Jesus given to Anne a lay apostle:

My children, I am with you. Your God, your Creator, speaks this message in so many ways. In every daybreak you must hear My voice saying, 'I am with you.' When tempted toward despair because of crosses and hardships, you must hear My whisper saying, 'I am with you.' When you look at the work you must do and find it overwhelming, allow me to move you gently into it with perfect assurance that 'I am with you.' Dearest apostles, so brave, I am with you. I do not tell you that you will be overcome. I do not tell you that you have been given work that is impossible for you to complete. Those messages do not come from Me. Instead, I tell you that you will persevere and ultimately triumph. Our mission of mercy does not falter, even though the steps of my little apostles sometimes falter. This mission pushes through the world with a steadiness that defies all attempts against it. My apostles experience fear at times. This is not a problem for Me or this mission. Fear is to be expected. Bring your fear to Me and explain to Me exactly what threatens you. If you do this, I can remove your fear. I will convince you that in My presence, with My power everything is possible. You have an expectation of your little boat crashing against the rocks. I will never allow this. If I am steering the boat that is your work, you will be carried safely. Push on into each day with courage, understanding that while you may not be able, I am able. You may lack courage, but I have courage. You sometimes walk in darkness, but I have the light with which to see exactly where your footsteps are taking you. Dear apostles, it is a time for hard work, yes, but a time for great glory, also. Rejoice. I am with you.

## Oct. 11

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Jesus: Come to me, raging lioness! what is this tempest in a tea pot? Fight with the demons here, because they are everywhere. Are you yielding to what Kierkegaard described as despair of possibility – that whenever things are rough you want to flee to a fantasy place?

## Oct. 6

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N.J.

Jesus says: Dear Ronda, I am drawing you out and in. I want you to stop doing anything you don't have to do. Stop pushing so you can spend much more time close to My heart, so that everything you do will be focused and have even more power to change hearts and minds. I will use prayer of quiet to draw you in. Don't resist, please.

Scott Hahn: God doesn't have employees but daughters and sons – therefore more time in prayer vs. ministry work.

At New Jersey talks Scott Hahn interprets Jesus saying that “greater works than this will you do,” and “what is harder to forgive sins or say get up and walk” as about Eucharist and Reconciliation!

Quoted Mark Twain: history doesn't repeat itself but it rhymes.

## Oct. 7, 2006

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Anxiety about the household. Jesus, you seem to be telling me by default not to make any hasty decisions.

## Oct. 8

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Lovely experience with Fr. Julio talking about how he told his mother who teaches catechism under a tree in a small village in Mexico not to save all her money for old age but build a chapel for them. Later in the prayers of the faithful the deacon asked that people would help Fr. Julio's mother build the church. After the Mass I whipped out \$100 from the book sales in N.J. and handed it to Father. He said no no but I said it was the Holy Spirit.

Jesus: Hold on tight to Me in anxiety. Nada te turbe...Solo Deus....

Day of conflicts at home and LRC. Students defensive. Midterm mood? they liked Renee Bentley. Other teachers talk about how the students are bad-mannered and talk in class to each other, etc.

## Oct. 10, 2006

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I am rattled by different frustrating situations. Fear LRC won't work.

Jesus: Of course you are jerked out of peace when a lot of happenings which you don't want come along and you feel frightened. All the more reason to flee to Me and trust and I will send you help; sometimes through others, Fr. Ken, family, friends, often unexpectedly. Now just open yourself to me by quietly praying My Holy Name and then I can tell you more.

See I give you prayer and quiet and it was interrupted but it was back when you returned. I am faithful. Trust Me.

Stay at LRC as long as you can, unless I give you something else with teaching. You have to teach. Now relax – be carefree.

### Oct. 12

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Encouraged by Alex and Joan Kondracki helping with a big donation for a Charlie Rich booklet. Carla is making it beautiful and funny, too.

### Oct. 13

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Why am I so jumpy?

Jesus: I have made you to be a very sensitive and relational person, like most women. You are picking up the euphoria of the students about Fall break.

Accept the pluses and minuses of your nature and keep offering the jumpiness for your deepest intentions – the family, students, but also come to Me and stay with Me in prayer until I can quiet you.

### Oct. 14

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Diana had a good talk with the priest at her parish about getting her marriage blessed. I have been offering endless prayers and crosses for this. Thank you Jesus, thank you, Jesus, thank you, Jesus. Thank you Mary and Joseph, guardian angels, St. Diana, St. Helena, St. Peter.

Kvetching about hard times with spacey or just inefficient conference organizers and someone paid me \$1000 for one I asked for only \$500! She said that the committee thought I deserved more! I felt ashamed at being so critical.

### Oct. 15

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Dear St. Teresa of Avila, on your feast day, help me to be holy. Help me really believe that “solo Dio basta” as you wrote – God alone is enough.

St. Teresa: We know you and love you. Listen little one, stop torturing yourself with worry and self-deprecation. Please, like me, let yourself sink into the arms of beautiful Jesus. Be a bride, not a fuss-pot. Now!

Jesus: I want to take you; not to ravish you but to pacify you. I want to pull you into My world, instead of the fretful world of your mind.

After this came a wonderful prayer of quiet in the chapel while waiting for Alex’s youth group to come out. Jesus said, see you need this peace I am filling you with, like a dry arid land needs the rain.

Yes, thank you, Jesus.

An analogy: Suppose parents satisfied every whim of a child so he or she never wanted to leave, wouldn’t be good; so we are prepared for heaven by foretastes and weanings.

### Oct. 16, 2006

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Sense of goodness of helping the family in small ways through this difficult time of Martina up at night, etc. Being also, in spite of my jumpiness, a steadying person for the boys.

Jesus: Try not to evaluate things every minute, but instead trust. Where there is so much love, I am there.

Reading Lily's *By Grief Refined*. Don't be jealous of Lily. She had her own crosses, you didn't have and she reaches different people and she loves you so much.

## October 17, 2006

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Dearest Lily,

First, how delighted I am to see *The Heart* will be re-published and also the book of Katey and Jules. I ordered them right away.

I got *By Grief Refined* from inter-library loan and I am rereading it in order to quote from it on this widow series for EWTN. I had read it twice before but now read it differently in order to teach it.

I was so moved by the nobility of the way you express things. This time I noticed what you said about evolving thoughts of a widow about her spouse when the marriage was less than ideal. There are many healings for me living with this daughter. I cannot help but see all the good things Martin gave to the children that I couldn't give such as his *joie de vivre* and ability to take great joy in loved ones even when doing very poorly physically. Carla has all sorts of ailments with pain, cysts, lungs, etc.

When you wrote about using the time before reunion to become more the person your husband and God wanted you to be, I was struck by how I am actually more the way he wanted me to be than when we were together. They say that the bereaved one tries to replace missing one by being more like him. So, I am a little more relaxed and enjoying of the pleasures of life vs. being too much only thinking about mission.

I hope you will pray for this EWTN venture. It is my first series. I think you would have done it better, but they have asked me and I must try to do what the Holy Spirit would want. Possibly there are as many widows out there like me with troubled marriages who will identify with those problems.

There were so many conflicts in our marriage that I have trouble thinking of the reunion even though I pray a lot for him and all the family souls in purgatory.

Thank you for this beautiful book. It is out of print, isn't it? But people can get it on Barnes and Noble, but for a hefty price, I think.

## October 18

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Aquinas/Luther Lecture

Jesus: You don't have to be anxious about this. Let Me give you peace and dignity because you are at peace speaking what the Holy Spirit gave you to say. Trust He will give what is needed to each listener.

Me: Help!

Jesus: This anxiety comes from pride. Pray My name throughout, offering any difficulties for the reunion of Christian churches.

## October 20, 2006

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So many graces at the actual conference. A parish woman from FUS prayed over me in a charismatic way just before I went on. A Pentecostal in the motel commended me for dressing as they do, long dress, and long hair! Lara Miller came running in from an auto accident where she

was in the ER but bounded out once her wound was dressed to get to hear me! I saw that God used my weakness because in my neediness for quick bonding I did reach out and bond quickly with so many of the people there. Jesus seems to say – trust, let me celebrate with you all these graces. And again, I was so envious of the beautiful style of Regis Martin and Amy Schiffrin, but many in the audience liked the change to my very colloquial style.

Jesus: Different gifts. The Holy Spirit leads some to want to be saints because of the beauty of their vision, but they are lead through you to the concreteness of the struggle in everyday life.

Some notes about the other talks:

Pastor Amy Schiffrin is a liturgist and she sung parts of her talk to illustrate points about how hymns carry holiness. Here are some of the points I want to remember:

In the elusiveness of sound, the hidden god is not exposed as an object for display, for sound...reveals without sight...In the human voice, the Divine voice sounds...sung into His sounding, the community that simultaneously listens for His voice as it proclaims His voice experiences the holiness that belongs to God alone...leading into entering into the sounds beyond human experience of the angel's at God's throne.

The sound comes in to us closer than the words, like a baby's cry. I related this to tongues or people praying the Latin Mass without knowing the meaning of everything.

The assembly's voices are the sacramental material in which God's glory/holiness is sounded. This happens in a different way when many sing together. (Ronda: another reason not to be a loner Christian?)

Regis Martin What is in common of Catholics and Protestants is the basic human hunger for God, for salvation; the sheer vertigo of the creature ordained by God to an end, a finality, he cannot obtain on his own." It is not a self-help thing, Not our charm, intelligence or even virtue can save us: only God.

Fr. Patrick Henry Reardon – a married orthodox priest, talked about how our strengths can be our doom. Especially type A personalities put the crusade, the work, the projects, above love, as did St. Paul before his conversion.

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## October 21, 2006

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Letter to my sister, Carla.

It was just extraordinary. The Lutheran pastors, and other people there loved my talk and me. I felt very loved by Dr. Yoder - the head of the department who you met. He even mentioned you in introducing Amy as if her claim to fame was being your disciple!

It was enormously interesting to me. I've never met any women pastors - you meet them all the time. I was all prepared not to like Amy but she is wonderful. We bonded instantly because of you and she might move here and teach at our college someday. She has friends in Asheville, a couple, Lutheran pastors who just became Catholics and the woman is an iconographer, so they might be good for our maybe Sacred Arts Center. Anyhow, Amy gave a beautiful talk about music and liturgy - I know almost nothing about such things. Many Lutheran pastors are moving either toward Rome or Constantinople (Orthodox). I now there is plenty of movement the other way also. One of the participants was a Lutheran pastor who was previously a Jesuit brother.

Amy talked to me a lot about how your classes brought deep healing to her - a dance where you called out the names of your demons - she called out the names of the males who abused her as a kid.

In a peculiar way I feel close to Protestant women pastors - I know 3 of them now - because they are Christian women leaders, and so like me in that regard. It is very surprising to me that I am, as it were, entering more into your ecumenical world at this time of my life.

So, the success of this talk makes me feel much surer that it will work at this college for me and I don't need to keep doing out of town talks - I only have 3 left! I am doing more locally - My workshop on aging at a retirement village and a witness story at a parish in Newton.

Steve's mother is visiting so Martina has now 2 grandmas circling her.

I was able to wear the dentures for a whole day without feeling much pain.

Love and prayers, Ronda

Dear Jesus: thank you, thank you, thank you for this wonderful conference. You must be smiling at how frightened I was needlessly since you prepared so many wonderful surprises for me. Wasn't that nice when this Pentecostal youth minister in the lobby of the Fairfield Inn said that he liked that I wore a dress and long hair which is their style!

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## October 22, 2006

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Dear Richard,

It feels strange having JoJo here and not you! I miss your wry sense of humor and gentle loving way of looking upon our crazy family.

JoJo wouldn't say what was wrong but only that you were feeling very low. I thought you might not mind my sharing a few tidbits of my ideas about this from one who struggles with low feelings a lot.

Because you are a carpenter, a tool image comes to mind. You can't do certain jobs without the proper tools, right? The ideas and characteristics that got us through life in the early years or mid-years don't always work so well for the older years. A Christian psychologist maintains that older people bemoan the fact that they can't do as much and therefore feel useless, but that is not the job, and high energy and skills are not the tools.

What is the task, then? I think it is preparing for eternity by growth in love - such as asking myself not how much did I do today, but did I smile at someone who looked lonely even though he or she was not an attractive person or did I manage to thank God for some trait of my dead husband, and think of him gratefully, that I overlooked when he was alive, etc. All this can be done from "the rocking chair." Especially I think God wants to purify my memories by showing me the good images in slow motion so I can savor the meaning uninterrupted by workaholic task-orientation jobs!

Of course, if I were you, I'd be wanting to hedge my bets by going to Church even if I had negative memories in the past. When my son committed suicide, my husband, who had converted from atheism at age 60 but only went to Church on Sundays, realized that only in Church did he get any hope, so contre coeur he started coming with me to daily Mass. It gave him some peace and hope for his son which he couldn't dredge up out of his own strength.

Suppose it is not only biology, but God's plan in old-age , to draw weakened little creatures to wish He existed and to try relating to Him even though they were full of doubts and "allergies" to Church?

I'll try not to bring this up again, but I felt impelled to write it even if you delete before you even hit this paragraph.

Love and prayers, Ronda  
From Anne, Direction for Our Times - October  
Blessed Mother

Little children, you are all safe in my Immaculate Heart. I am your mother. In a special way I protect you during this time. I shield you from influences that would lead you away from your path to my Son. You must cooperate with me so that I can protect you even more. Often a mother has information that her children do not need to know. A wise mother shares the information only when it is necessary to help her children identify danger. I am that way. I am sharing information now because I want you to know where the danger to your spirituality lies. It is good to listen to your mother because she seeks only what is good for you. I know that my Son's beloved apostles understand this and this is why I bring this information to you, asking you to spread it further for me.

Children, our enemy wishes to draw many souls into a Godless void. This is being done in a manner that is underhanded. If a person was asked directly to reject God permanently, most would refuse. People would not want to permanently remove a chance to be with God, even if their faith is terribly weak and they never serve God at all. The enemy is not forthright, however, and souls are being deceived. You know this to a degree. I intend to advise you of a specific manner of conducting yourself so that I can protect you completely. In my Immaculate Heart you will find joy and peace. In my Immaculate Heart you will find comfort and gentle correction. I am your mother and I will help you.

will be well. Your concern at this time should be to advance in holiness and you will only advance if you remain small. Be at peace in everything because My grace is more powerful than any bitter plans of the enemy. I am asking you to concentrate on your own movement to Me. For each apostle who gives Me their pride, I give the world My majesty, the majesty of Jesus Christ, your Returning King

## Oct. 24

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Visit of Fr. Ken playing games with the kids – sweet, cozy. Jesus: See I am making you more relaxed so that you don't get so rattled by trivia, so you can enjoy the people you love without needing so much to control them, be more of a background grandmother instead of the boss.

## Oct. 25

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Read Coleen McCollough, The Touch.

Jesus: You see without Me all they have is churning emotions and disillusion. Hopeless No Exit. Lumen Christi, Deo Gratias. JP II Letter to Artists, even dark writing can serve God by showing how much we need redemption.

Got into lots of anger.

Jesus: A set back. Don't be alarmed. I am using all this as a test for your teaching on anger. You were angry, but you did not sin by harsh judgments. Just breathe in My peace by saying "Jesus, I trust in you."

I realized that it is average with a set back to think all ones work on anger is for nothing. Instead I need to just humbly admit that I slipped back. I should work through each incident seeing the fear, vs. romantic ideas of having become a totally perfect person. Ask Jesus to forgive the power plays, threats. Come to Him humbly and ask help not to be so angry.

For instance, about the heating problems in the house, it is average for me to experience cold as coldness and feel it as symbolic. Let me say, instead, we will try to fix the system. Jesus, Your heart is my real warmth. No one dies of a little cold, I don't need to work it up.

Dear Mary, Immaculate Heart, help me to do this right, for my sake and theirs.

## Oct. 29

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Letter from Sister Elizabeth Seton starting an Order of Consecrated Widows. Felt jealous seeing her brown Carmelite habit. Maybe for me?

Beautiful day for Fall, about 70 degrees. I sat outside enjoying the beautiful pines, willow tree, colors, cats.

I played the CCC kiddie video about Fatima and felt moved myself.

Jesus: You prayed to My mother's Immaculate Heart for the family and there was much softening of hearts - yours and others. That is what I want for you. There will always be differences, but you don't have to be angry. The anger is coming out of fear.

Yes. I will try to just open myself to grace instead of being so anxious and angry.

Took Maxi to see Lenoir Ryne College – he was amazed at the number of books in people's offices, more than his elementary school library.

He is developing religiously. Alex taught them the basics of the rosary, and now he starts it up himself.

## Nov. 1, 2006

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From Anne – Direction for Our Time:

Jesus

I am real, dear apostles. Do not worry that you have misplaced your trust. You will be rewarded for your service and commitment. The wise apostle understands that he has already been rewarded, of course. The wise apostle understands that being close to the King as a trusted servant is a reward in itself because through the proximity to the King, the servant becomes more and more noble. I am changing you if you are walking with Me. I am stretching your spiritual capabilities. My beloved lay apostles will find that the changes in their soul are constant, but gentle. There is great spiritual progress available in this time. This is My mercy and this is My plan. Through the holiness of the few, I will convert many. Be courageous while I make these changes in your soul. Be at peace. The Savior seeks to preserve His plan by calling more and more into the field of service. Rejoice when you see many responding. Understand that this plan is for all. You are called. You are listening to My direction and you are becoming holier. Through you, I call to others. Others listen and respond, and through them, I call out again, to more and more. In this way, a multitude is drawn into the safety of the family of God. Be at peace, little apostle. All is well and heaven is content that God's plan is proceeding. I will never leave you to execute My plan alone. You will always be acting with Me if you are acting for Me. Do you understand? I know that you understand because it is simple. I am with you. I will never leave you."

This message helped me greatly as I was feeling discouraged about the student response at LRC. Partly buoyed up by the message I worked on a changed format for the class and it seemed better. As when Jesus told the disciples to “lower the net again.”

Jesus: It is usual that in a new mission territory you can't just use old methods. You have to let the Holy Spirit show you how. See how some responded to the love behind your efforts?

**Nov. 1**

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Sublime Mass for the Feast of All Saints. Deo Gratias. I felt lifted to heaven.

## Nov. 2

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Some of my friends wrote beautiful loving responses to my mini-talks on the web-site. It was so wonderful. I always think my voice is terrible because of my NY accent but people love it anyhow. Even Steve's father in England liked it. I was so grateful, also, that Steve wrote a little description of how to maximize the text of the e-books I put up there.

St. Thomas says that worry is an obstacle to contemplation.

## Nov. 4

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Glorious festival for Feast of St. Charles, our patron saint. They had tables in the Hall with some of the cooks in ethnic dress – especially Indian Saris and Guatemalan head dress and woven skirts and colorful blouses as well as Hmong Udon soup, Filipino food, Polish, German, Italian, Indonesian....etc. The food was wonderful, but especially the lovely feeling as if this was the true UN hosted by Jesus, Mary and Joseph, as it were. They also had soccer games and bilingual bingo and someone painting the faces of the kids. Great at the Mass to have more of a mix of Anglo and Hispanic. Since none of my family came I was able to sit next to Senora Magdalena and then have other Mayans on the other side. It was a real tour de force for Fr. Ken as he spoke the prayers of the Mass alternately in Spanish and English. He looked exhausted but so happy to see his family all having fun.

## Nov. 6

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Decided to renew contract with Carla and Steve for one year. It feels realistic. Got to St. Aloysius earlier than usual. Prayer of quiet. I see that this gift of prayer of quiet is like a doctor anaesthetizing a patient. He wants to give me rest from the pain of life and slow me down - to make sure I am not worrying instead of praying. Like Mary "sleeping me" her child, as Carla and Steve call it when they lull the baby to sleep in their arms.

## Nov. 7

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Students acting badly – talk and laugh in class even when reprimanded. Jesus says: They wanted to throw me off a cliff. You are going through what I did. Keep offering it up and we'll see what you should do.

Talked to other teachers and got good ideas for enforcing disciplining by threats of lowered grades.

Beautiful new cover and edition of *Widow's Walk* – so pleased and happy and grateful to Carla and Steve for it.

## Nov. 8

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Victory over student rebels with my ultimatum. I hear Jesus telling me that He needed me to see where their pride and concupiscence is, so that I can teach them better. I need to see them more realistically. These kids don't need self-expression as much as they need discipline.

## November 9, 2006

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Feast of St. John Lateran. I am thinking that the Common of Dedication of Churches coming before Common of Blessed Virgin Mary and others, is because of the Real Presence in the Church.

There is a lovely antiphon: Come let us worship Christ, bridegroom of the Church and from the Office of Readings: God wishes to enter your soul, for He promised “I shall live in them, and I shall walk in the corridors of their hearts.”

Text of my mini-talk using the microphone for my web visitors:

Me, Speaking, Instant Spirituality #2 Inter-Generational Romanticism and Anger

Dear Sisters and Brothers,

I was very pleased with your encouraging comments about my first audio mini-talk on Savoring the Good. Thank you for writing to me.

As you may know I am involved in the study of anger-management, especially the system, Recovery, Inc., devised by Dr. Abraham Low in the 1940's. In this mini-talk I would like to relate what he says about romanticism to the anger adult children have about their parents sometimes and the anger some parents have about their adult children.

Abraham Low defines romanticism as having glorious unrealistic hopes about life and especially about relationships. We all have a pretty good idea what that means in romantic love,— such as a young man thinking his fiancé will be an angel in marriage because she is so sweet and so physically lovely, or a young woman thinking her fiancé will be an ideal husband because he is so understanding and strong during courtship. The marriage may be very good and even holy but it will surely not meet the romanticized expectations of perfection each one is cherishing beforehand. This often leads into anger, hot or cold, at the discrepancy between the dream and the reality.

What I have noticed in my own life and that of others is that the same kind of syndrome comes up inter-generationally. It wasn't until my parents died in their 80's that I finally stopped blaming them for everything that was wrong with me. Behind this anger, I now realize, was a romantic notion of what a perfect parent would be like – she and he would understand the motives behind every single thing I did, always give these the best interpretation – in other words, they would adore me for the rest of their lives. Disappointed in this expectation, I was angry at them, a lot of the time, in spite of great efforts towards Christian forgiveness. Somehow I never accepted the truth that everything about our lives involves suffering as well as joy, and that one of these sufferings is having parents who do not totally affirm and worship us, and even sometimes reject us partially, or totally, because of our real faults!

Now, then, what about our expectations of our children? We imagined that each one would be perfect in a different way – one a dandelion, one a lily, one a pine tree. They would share our most cherished values, especially the Faith. If they did not enter into the same professions, what they did would still be one of our most approved professions. They would have all our virtues and none of our faults! How “romantic!” How disappointing! Guess what? They had free will. They made their own choices. We cannot exempt them from the sufferings that followed from the bad choices. Only when we stop being angry at them for failing to meet these unrealistic expectations can we begin a grateful tally of all the good qualities they possess, many of which we helped them develop. By analogy – they have some of our virtues but in a different “musical key.” Only when we stop being angry at them, can we affirm and cherish them as we should, even as we pray for grace for them to overcome their faults in fidelity to the way the Lord is leading them.

Suggestions:

1. Make a list of every virtue each of your parents or parental figures possessed and say a prayer of gratitude for how these virtues helped you in life.
2. Write or speak out a prayer of forgiveness for the negatives your parents had that hurt you.
3. Make a list of every virtue each of your children have. Thank God for these good qualities.
4. Write or speak out a prayer of forgiveness for the negatives that impact you in hurtful ways.

Heh, I did it myself to make sure I was being authentic. It felt good.

God bless you, with love and prayers, Ronda

If you found this talk insightful, you might like my book *Taming the Lion Within: 5 Steps from Anger to Peace* or the videos and CD's based on the book you can find on my website [www.rondachervin.com](http://www.rondachervin.com)

### Nov. 6, 2006

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Terrible day with disobedient LRC students – I was told tough love was the only solution, but I feel crushed and angry. I need to use my Recovery Inc. teaching: see their average not a romantic view where they would love me so much they would be perfect.

Jesus: I didn't reach everyone. I was mocked and rejected.

Me: I need your Holy Spirit to show me what to do. I don't want to give up. I don't want to fail.

Jesus: It is all right. I see your struggle and let's see what happens. You can shake the dust off your feet, but you don't have to.

I wrote a tough love letter to them – friendly but firm giving penalties for even whispering in class. I was afraid they would go on strike when they read it but they settled down very well and started getting friendly and normal again.

This is the first time I've been able to use tough love because I have too great a need to be liked.

### Nov. 11, 2006

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We did our Spirituality and the Arts workshop at the parish. Some came from Newton but the total number was low. Still it was more intimate because of that. Fr. Ken did wonderful talks. Here are some highlights from his talks and my spontaneous thoughts, and comments from the group.

I first gave my basic *Called by Name: Following Your Personal Spirituality* talk based on the booklet. I added in about how artistic types often don't fit any group spirituality. Also about Mary as dramatist stage-manager of the apparitions, and recommended JP II's *Letter to Artists*. He says that even the darkest art shows the need for redemption.

Carrie shared "I used to be an interior decorator; but now I live alone and decorate my interior!" She also says she plays sacred music when she wakes up in the night. In the old Cathedrals there were beautiful sculpture where no one could see them but God – now through photography we see them.

Someone said that modern art gives a sense of healing of individuality such as looking at Dali's eccentric clock painting. Another that art gives power to move forward.

We shouldn't be looking for a 4.0 in holiness, Fr. Ken said. Keep your eye on Jesus, not on myself, and my progress in holiness. I thought that choleric goal oriented people probably need

to think of holiness as something to strive for more than more laid-back types who do things more organically.

Fr. Ken said he thinks of knowing Jesus not “face to face” but more seeing His back as he’s walking ahead of him.” James and John are behind talking about who will be the greatest and Jesus is walking ahead saying keep your eye on the path. We should be moving where Jesus is walking.

Later we talked about this – he is neither *braut-mystique* (bridal mysticism where Jesus is known mostly as lover) nor *apophatic* (imageless spirituality) – he thought it was more like glimpses. He might be working on a piece of music and then senses God on the horizon, beckoning. Only in heaven will it be face to face; now we have the foretastes. “Noli me tangere” Christ says to Mary Magdalene. “I have not yet gone back to the Father.” I joked – we could call it *glimpse-spirituality*, but that sounds awkward.

I didn’t like that image but allowing it to reach me I realized it is like that with peace-making where I am way behind where Jesus wants to lead me.

Fr. Ken mentioned that children are fascinated with churches – a sacred space, a sense of being pulled toward the transcendent God. I think I am more immanent.

FR. KEN’S TEACHING at workshop:

Transcendentals – the good, the true, and the beautiful. Von Balthasar – need for beauty, not only truth and goodness. Ronda: The Archconservative Tridentines low the beauty of the chant so much as a balance to their emphasis on truth and morality? Beauty is the resplendence of God shining through creation. The role of beauty is to make the good and true attractive.

Lots of bad results came from the idea that beauty is in the eye of the beholder. This makes me the idol and arbiter vs. seeing that beauty is rooted in God, not in me. good is what we should do; truth what has been revealed. In the West we have separated beauty from the good and the true. If the good isn’t also beautiful then, Balthasar warns, people will seek beauty in evil. Evil can be attractive; but the good and the true are glorious. Note title: The Glory of the Lord.

Spirituality = the way we live what we believe. Moses is fascinated by the burning bush. God is a fascinating mystery that I cannot touch, or like Isaiah: a man of unclean lips – sense of distance, purging.

Holiness is a process – so we need not be discouraged because we are not there yet. Dogma is a door, not a wall. We are becoming.

It is terrible that the arts are being pushed out of the school curriculum. If we don’t have time for the arts we don’t have time to be human or godly.

The appreciators are an antidote to only wanting to eat, use, have sex. Great art brings even atheists into beauty.

But music now has become consumer oriented.

The arts can speak to you not in words. He remembers as at 14 lying on the floor doing his homework and listening to the radio – Mozart’s D Minor Piano Concerto – a mystical experience where he was taken out of himself, held there and it was as if his whole future was planned and he followed it. Music is a way to flow into the mystery.

You do the best you can. then God seems to move away. What you were clinging to was not God but where you were to be at that time, with the degree you could understand God then. The great moving away is death. \*\*\*\*\*When you die He is walking you out of life\*\*\*\*\*

Desert vs. the promised land. His spiritual director at the seminary told him “between Egypt and the promised land there is always a desert and you must cross that.”

Beauty open us to this process.

the Reformation gutted the art, but they compensated with the Cantata about the Gospel.

If poor art, like charismatic songs, helps, how much more would great art do?

We become smaller when everything is relevant instead of great.

Non-fiction is like a reporter and what we see is not very good. Great fiction brings us into another world.

We live in a culture of anger, depression – things aren't going right, great losses of people we love, loss of job....

Depression is anger turned inward.

Beethoven is great for the depressed. He was born ugly, clumsy, rejected in love, was treated badly in his profession. then goes deaf – everything in his life blood is seeping away. He was going into despair. He wrote a lamentation. He became suicidal. But he was also writing the 2nd symphony. It is full of joy, and hope, and courage and inner vitality. It is the most optimistic piece in the world. Music heals vs. wallowing in our problems. Rhythm – life, vitality. The enemy of healing is inactivity. His whole music was about overcoming, moving forward.

the Gregorian chant has some parts for the trained, some for soloists, but then also simply chant for the priests.

Fr. Ken doesn't see God as solving his problems, but pulling him out.

He prefers that people be enticed to pray more rather than feeling more obligated.

He studied the Mass in every detail in seminary so that he would feel; pulled in to it.

## November 12

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Jesus: You need to believe more that every little sacrifice you offer is really a source of grace for family and students. Believe that I will bring good out of every evil.

## Nov. 16

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Talking to Karen Miller – the thought came, how about a grandma's anonymous group?

## Nov. 17

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Heard of a granddaughter of mine across the country being stalked and threatened by ex-boyfriend. Went into terrible anxiety attack.

Jesus: dear Ronda – you found it hard to trust. I understood why you were so frightened. That is all right. You offered that painful anxiety for them. Some day you will see them all radiant in heaven. Now rest. See what good I am doing with Taming and the Widow's Walk

## Nov. 19

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Jesus: Now that LRC is winding down for the semester, please spend more time with Me quietly in trust. You are too attached to the books and to your home. I have not guaranteed these, but I have guaranteed that if you come to Me more, you will be more peaceful.

## Nov. 24, 2006

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Last night I wrote the lecture for next semester's class in philosophy of human nature. It sounded good to me, but a little too hard. During the night I begged the Holy Spirit to help. I

was almost ready to give up, thinking, hey, it would be better for the students to go to trade schools and vibrant Churches and forget about liberal arts all together. In prayer, it seemed the Holy Spirit forced me to see how hard it is for many of these college students (some are very good, of course) – such as, they hardly ever have to write in script because so much is computerized, so it is very, very, hard for them just to push their pens across the page to take notes. And, of course, they are mostly watching TV or doing web games so they don't have much vocabulary. I kept seeing the lovable faces of some who are having the greatest difficulty with college work and wanting to be able to help them so they can not only barely pass but actually learn a lot of deep wisdom.

When I woke up I was ready to simplify my lecture and assignments, make them very step by step slow, presuming much less ability.

Letter to a friend with diabetes who keeps having pieces of her feet removed.

Dear Becky,

I have been praying and praying for you, dear godchild. I keep thinking of the pierced feet of Jesus on the cross. Here are some excerpts from St. John Eudes. The whole passage is in the Office of Readings 33rd week Friday p.1269 in my book. I bet Richard has it. You would love to read from it - it is full of beautiful things.

"The Son of God wills to give us a share in his mysteries and somehow extend them to us. He will to continue them in us and in his universal Church. ...He intends to perfect the mysteries of his passion, death and resurrection, by causing us to suffer, die and rise again with him and in him. Finally, he wishes to fulfill in us the state of his glorious and immortal life, when he will cause us to live a glorious, eternal life with him and in him in heaven."

I find it helpful that it doesn't say He allows this to happen but He wills it to happen as I have always preferred to receive pain from his hand than the hands of "nature"? fate? other schlemiels like me?

Love, Ronda

Wal-Mart backed down after many said we wouldn't shop there on Thanksgiving Fri. and Sat. because funds were going to gay-marriage promotion. It gave me great hope that we won.

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## November 24, 2006

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The Holy Spirit seemed to tell me to offer this:

Dear Steve,

Whenever convenient for you, I would like to put on a new "button" on my web that would be called:

TAMING THE LION: FIVE STEPS FROM ANGER TO PEACE FOLLOW UP  
I am sticking it in Full Circle also in case someone reads this and not the web.

When they open these words they would see:

You've read Taming the Lion - in the Cafe Press Edition, or the newer one (coming out by January 1, 2007) from Simon Peter Press (Living His Life Abundantly). You want to go further. Here are some options:

Best: Find a Recovery, Inc. group near you. If you've read my book you know why. Go to [www.recovery-inc.com](http://www.recovery-inc.com) on the web - being sure to include the Inc.

If you are not near enough, try forming a group based on Taming in your parish - here is a good format:

1. Prayer
2. Leader reminds the group that this is not professional counseling. No advice is given except related to the tools. (Otherwise the parish could be sued when someone follows advice with bad consequences.)
3. Read from Taming the Lion Steps 3 and following for about 15 minutes (this will refresh your memory of the teachings). When you have read through Taming, go to books of Abraham Low - I especially recommend Peace Over Power - you can order it off the web site above.
4. Have each person give a trivial example from his or her week using the tools (phrases) in Step 4, summarized on p.56.
5. While the presenting person gives the example the others should have the list of tools handy. Each member of the group then tells what tools he or she saw the presenter using or what tools **COULD HAVE BEEN USED BECAUSE THEY FIT**.
6. When the group is really familiar with using the tools on p. 56, write to me for more tools.
7. The presenter then offers a prayer of thanksgiving for relative success using the tools or a petition for aid in future similar instances.
8. End with a general prayer by the leader.

Lastly, if neither of the above are options for you, check Dr. Ronda's web site AUDIO for mini-talks many of them about anger and/or e-mail Dr. Ronda for on-going advice on applying the tools to your situation. Dr. Ronda is not a professional counselor. She is not able to give advice about the particulars of your life, but only help you apply the tools. She cannot do this unless you have already studied the book Taming the Lion.

## Nov. 30

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A woman watching Taming on Johnnette's show thanked me so much because she doesn't feel so alone and she immediately got the book and went to a Recovery, Inc. meeting in Phoenix.

Jesus: Yes, all this work is good. See the good results of being open and honest and witnessing.

Thinking of Carla's letter to her friend who shot herself, it seemed as if the idea was that salvation is guaranteed. I asked in prayer: But, my Jesus, you don't teach universal salvation.

Jesus: You don't need to know the secrets of my mercy. You are to pray and teach and exhort; not to judge and know.

Billy Graham in New Orleans – had the whole stadium march out to evangelize the French Quarter. So great singing Saints Go Marching in. Well, we do that too with huge youth rallies with the Pope, etc.

## Nov. 27, 2006

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Feeling anxious about a family member.

JMJ: “We will take care of her. Give her to us.”

### Nov. 29, 2006

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Scripture “give Him all your worries, because He cares for you.”

Glad to e-mail Archbishop Burke about Order of Consecrated Widows of the Good Shepherd.

Jesus: I don't want you to fret about this. You are mine. That is what matters.

### December 1, 2006

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From Anne Direction for Our Times:

Jesus

I speak with determination today. I look at My lay apostles, serving so diligently to prepare others for My return, and I am consoled. My heart sighs with the rejection of some but also lifts in hope at the acceptance of so many. Little apostles, you are pleasing to Me. You are laboring for heaven and you are teamed with heaven. Together, we are bringing hope to those who were formerly without hope. This is the way for you, the path to holiness. I direct you in everything and you proceed along this path that I have marked out for you. All is well in your case. I want to explain to you why I speak with determination today. I am determined to push out further into the world. I desire that everyone have the light of heaven. I want confidence for all and comfort for anyone suffering. I send a great rush of grace for conversions at this time. This is a time for hearts to change. Because I desire this, a great many conversions, I am supplying all that is necessary to achieve this goal. You will find, My apostles, that many will be drawn to the truth of your mission. Accept this with profound humility. Show the world how small you are and they will see how great I am. This is the way to win souls for the Father. I am so pleased when an apostle accepts slights and insults with peace. I am pleased by this because it shows Me that you are truly accepting the call to imitate Me. It also shows Me that arrogance is receding and humility is spreading. Oh, what joy this gives to the infant in the manger. Accepting insults in humility is a most favourable gift for the King. Truly, I look at these offerings and I rejoice, graces flow unhindered and unencumbered, bathing the whole world. Never underestimate the power of you, the humble apostle, joined to Me, the determined God. Together we are changing the world.

I loved your message Jesus. Yes, I must be small and trust.

### Dec. 2, 2006

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Joy to give to charity. Glad of doing the print on demand version of my activist friend's book, Emma's Journal. I watched the film Gandhi and had such a sense of her being in his footsteps and how I couldn't do what she did but I can support her now.

Jesus: I want special trust right now. Just do all your small tasks cheerfully and don't push anyone. Offer up not pushing anyone. Yes, I want you to encourage Juli who has such heavy crosses now.

### December 8, 2006

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I had a crazy miserable experience yesterday and it hurt me so much in such an irrational way. I think it's funny. Lots of things that hurt are funny from another point of view.

My beloved priest friend, the pastor of our little parish, is a former Episcopal organ player. He has a long scraggly beard and looks like a Patriarch or a Russian elder or Gandolf of Lord of the Rings. I love the way he looks.

Suddenly he cut off the long beard for a Van Dyke short one and he looks like a photo of some 19th century professor type. I was stunned and realized with a bang, that friends have absolutely no power over their friends, especially new friends. Maybe it was a whim, so maybe he'll let the beard grow again. From pictures that are around and in parish directories I think he's worn the long beard for many, many years.

Carla chided me. "He's your friend, You have to love him no matter how he looks. Would you want him to give you his beard instead of himself as your friend?"

Jesus seemed to laugh at me and seemed to say: "Well, I won't cut my beard off."

I talked to Fr. Ken. He just does this once or twice a year because he hates getting haircuts and beard trims, so he does a big one but then lets the beard grow back. I am much relieved.

I think my extreme reaction has to do with the idea from childhood that men who change leave.

A WHOLE BATCH OF BEAUTIFUL LOCUTIONS FROM ANNE  
Heaven Speaks to those considering suicide.

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## November 29, 2006

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Jesus

I have many things to say to those who are considering this act of self harm. I love you. I see your pain. I understand that you long for relief from your anguish. Please, bring your anguish to Me. I can help you. You are so valuable to the kingdom and I need you to help bring Me to others.

"How?" you say, in your great interior grief. "How could I possibly be helpful to Jesus and to others?"

I will tell you. Your pain is the pain of many in the world today. Many souls feel your grief, your hopelessness. Many carry heavy crosses of illness and addiction, loneliness and hopelessness, rejection and anxiety. Many of My children look into their future and see only more grief and pain and this takes their courage from them. Dearest friend, you must not do this. Do not look into tomorrow and expect today's pain to be repeated. You are not certain of such an occurrence. You cannot be certain because I, God, could change your life during this day, today. You must remain in this day, in the present, because I have given you adequate grace to deal with your cross. It is only when you look into the future and think that your Jesus will send you no relief that you find life unmanageable. Understand this. Your life is only unmanageable if you put Me out of it. If you let Me into your heart, into your life, I will make it not only manageable, but joyful.

You are skeptical. You cannot believe in a future with joy because the present holds such pain. I understand this, just as I understand everything about you. You may not know Me well so I will tell you something about Myself that may help you to decide that trusting Me is a good decision.

I have never been known to break a promise. Never. Today, I have a promise for you.

If you ask Me to help you, I will help you. Ask Me, My beloved one. You are important to this Kingdom and I have a plan for you. I need you. I need you to serve in a way that you do not and cannot understand today, in your great hopelessness. I will reveal the plan but you will have to be courageous and allow Me to move you from this place of despair to a place of hope in your heart. I will do so. I will move you along, away from your sadness. You must trust Me just a little bit and give me just a little bit of time. Even now, as you read these words, hope is stirring within you. This hope is from Me and it is the smallest indication of what I will bring to you. I am giving you courage. I am giving you hope. Rest with Me.

Say this, "I will rest Myself against Jesus and wait for Him to send relief."

I will send relief. Do not be afraid. I am with you now and I will never leave you.

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## November 30, 2006

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St. Margaret Mary Alacoque

Dear little soul, you are in pain. Your anguish feels deep, I know. Often, the most difficult part of suffering anguish is the perception that nobody understands the depth of your pain. One can feel very alone in such pain and when one seeks out consolation from others, one is often terribly disappointed. Please listen to me. I am your sister in Christ. I experienced great anguishes while I was on earth so I am rejoicing that God allows me to help you. When you go to another seeking comfort and you find yourself in worse shape, feeling even more misunderstood and alone, you must come to me. Say, "Margaret, I need help. I need help now."

I, Margaret, will go directly to the Throne of God and I will remain there until you receive the comfort and courage you require. My friend, it is important that you know that you are not suffering alone. Jesus sees your suffering. He feels it with you and His Sacred Heart is moved to the most passionate desire to assist you. You must allow our Jesus to help you. When you make this emergency prayer to me, Margaret, you are really saying that you are willing to let heaven help you. How heaven rushes in at this time. You will know that I have heard you because you will feel a change. It may be just a whisper of a change, just a little shifting. It will be noticeable to you as a feeling of calm in your Spirit. When you feel this little feeling of calm, you will know that you have been heard, that help is on the way and that you are not alone in your suffering. You have my promise that heaven will surround you until the frightening feelings pass.

I want to say something else. It is common for a person on earth to have thoughts that are not from God. Everyone on earth struggles with this at some time. We could say, actually, that everyone on earth struggles with this each day in terms of temptations. The battle is not finished until you die in your body and come to God's Kingdom. Given this, the constant need for struggle, you must view your thoughts of suicide as temptations. Do not be alarmed by these thoughts in that simply having these thoughts does not mean there is any reason to act on these thoughts. Do you understand? Do not be afraid. We, the saints in heaven, all had bad thoughts and temptations during our time on earth and we all at times failed to fight off temptations. The temptation to commit suicide is one where you must fight hard, with everything you have because of the nature of the consequence. If you take your life, you will not be able to go back and say, Jesus, I want to do better and serve you now. You take away any second chances for yourself to convert to Jesus and try again. Dear friends, this is wrong for you. It is not the answer you are seeking.

Jesus needs you to stay in the world until it is the right time for you to come home. This is God's plan and it is always best to follow God's plan. The last day of your life is determined by God. You must not think that the answer to great pain is suicide. This act of self harm is always a mistake. Always.

## November 30, 2006

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St. Margaret Mary Alacoque

My friend, you have been hurt. I see that. I understand that you are carrying wounds that cause you to ache. You may not even understand the source of your pain and your wounds. You know that you are not perfect and that you make mistakes. Jesus accepts this about you and loves you most tenderly regardless of your mistakes. I want you to consider that others also make mistakes. Others fail in love and in kindness. Others are imperfect as we were all imperfect on earth. The mistakes made by others can cause us the greatest pain. We can carry wounds with us without even being aware that we are doing so. These wounds then spread to other areas of our hearts and result in a general state of pain that is hard to come back from.

Jesus suffered terribly on earth. He carried wounds, also. Jesus, in His most Sacred Heart, understands exactly how you came to be in such pain. He knows more about the source of your pain and hopelessness than you do. My beloved friend, I beg you now to turn to Jesus. He will heal you from wounds you do not even know you are carrying. You have felt loss in your life and there is emptiness. Jesus will fill you up again and restore you to a state of hope and joy that will flow out from you to others. I am telling you that your great pain will recede. When your great pain recedes and joy takes its place, you will be so kind to others because you will understand how they are hurting. You will look at another in anguish and your heart will be moved to the greatest pity for them. You will say, 'I remember feeling that badly.' Only one who has suffered such anguish can really understand it. Would you agree? Do you remember a time when you spoke to someone about something that they had also experienced and you felt understood? It will be this way with your great pain, also, and someone who feels hopeless will gain hope from you. If you take your life, you will not be around to help this person in the future.

I want you to know that Jesus, in His most Sacred Heart, feels your pain. Jesus suffered so that we could be forgiven. The fact that Jesus suffered willingly does not in any way take away from the fact that Jesus suffered terribly. Perhaps, my friend, you can look up to Jesus and tell Him that you, in your suffering, understand something about His suffering. If you do this, all of heaven will rejoice because you will be on your way to becoming a saint. Believe this, my friend, because it is truth. Many will share with Jesus in His joy. Many will even respect His cross. But few are there on earth who will carry the cross and turn their eyes to the Lord in love during their suffering, which is what Jesus did. Do this, beloved one, and heaven will lighten your cross and remove this pain more quickly than you expect.

## December 1, 2006

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St. Margaret Mary Alacoque

I feel such compassion for you, my friend. When you are carrying a heavy cross, it is difficult to see that it will end. Sometimes, you do not believe it will ever end. In terms of human power, maybe it is even impossible that your cross will end. But nothing is impossible for heaven. In heaven, you see, we live with miracles happening all around us. When you come to heaven you will understand what I mean. If your situation requires a miracle from heaven, you should ask for one. Miracles are not impossible when you keep company with saints. Saints, indeed, are all about obtaining miracles from God. God gives us these things, these miracles, because we suffered with Him while we were on earth. You will be a saint if you suffer with Jesus. And then, you will be able to obtain powerful graces, also. You will say, God, please help this person. God will do so when He sees that you are making the smallest effort to accept your suffering with Jesus. You have influence in your suffering. You have intercessory power, which means that if you ask for graces for another, God will grant them. This may be difficult for you to accept because you feel so sad or angry but I will use my influence to obtain graces for you to help you

to understand. You will see that your suffering, your pain, is being used by heaven to help others. It will pass, my friend. You will feel better. I make this promise to you in the presence of Jesus Christ. He will keep this promise for us.

St. Margaret Mary Alacoque

I am going to give you some advice. I am one who suffered great anguish on earth, as I said, so I am a good one to help you. Remain very calm during this time of upset. Do not panic. Do not act in haste. Let us, your heavenly friends, calm your spirit. If you deal with your pain in quiet, with an attitude of calm, you will be less likely to make bad decisions that create even more pain. It is best, indeed, if you can delay important decisions until you feel better. Be wise about your suffering and allow yourself to be quiet. This is not a bad thing. Spending time in silence, reflecting, will not harm you. While you are remaining in quiet, ask Jesus constantly for help. Ask Him to remove your pain as soon as possible, and ask Him to help others who are suffering this pain. You are joined to heaven, remember, so there are many of us in heaven who understand that you are suffering and seek to help you. You are not alone. We will never abandon you in your anguish. Ask heaven to send you calming graces and heaven will do so. Remember that you are important and that we love you very much. Your mistakes do not affect our love for you because we made mistakes, too. Heaven is filled with saints who were great sinners on earth. We repented and God forgave us. Be at peace about your mistakes because the experience you gain from your mistakes helps you later. Do you understand? God has a plan for you. Taking your life is not part of that plan. You are surrounded by saints and you are surrounded by angels. You belong to our family and you will have all that you need.

Blessed Mother

My dear little child, how heavy is your heart. I see that you are suffering and feeling alone. Dear beloved one, you are not alone now and you will never be alone. Even as you read these words, heaven surrounds you. The angels pray constantly for your recovery, for a return to joy for you. You must believe that I tell you the truth today. I am Mary, your mother, and I can only seek what is good for you. I will seek what is good for you right now, before the Throne of God, and ask the Father to send you heavenly gifts of courage and calm. You will move through this day that is already passing into the past and tomorrow will be better. Each day will move you closer to recovery. Do not think for a moment that God will leave you with pain that is unmanageable. God will not do this. Ask for help and you will receive it. I am here, with you now, and I will make sure that you receive all that you need to move past this period of anguish. Heaven does not will this for you. Heaven wills hope for you. Heavenly graces filled with hope flow into your soul now. Rest in God's grace and I secure all that is necessary for you. I am your mother. I love you completely. I will help you. May I ask you to help me with something? I ask that you turn away from anything that is causing you this pain. Walk away from habits that bring darkness into your little soul. I will give you the light to understand what is creating such pain. You will not be left confused. Your cross will be lightened. You have my assurance of this. Be at peace today because truly, heaven hears your prayer and moves to answer your prayer. You will see heaven helping you in many ways, my beloved child. You are not alone.

To those who have left the Church

Jesus

I call out to those who have left My Church. Come back, I say. Return to the safety of the sacramental walk. It will be best for you and I want only what is best for you. Be assured of My welcome. Be assured that I want your return. Do not think that you are unwelcome in your faith. How could this be when I, Jesus Christ, personally call out to you? My Church on earth represents Me. It is My Church and belongs to Me. When the people of My Church accurately represent Me, you feel cherished. I want to restore you to your Church and I want to restore your Church to you. You see, My friend, it is best for you, given your call to holiness, that you proceed on the path that is protected by My Church on earth. I have so many ways to help you if you are following your faith within the protection of My Church. My Church has suffered, it is true. My

Church continues to suffer. Part of the reason My Church is suffering is because you are away from it. My Church needs you. My Church wants you. You must return.

Beloved child, I am asking you, indeed, I am pleading with you to consider your circumstances. If there are reasons that inhibit a full return to the sacraments for you, I ask that you discuss these reasons with one of My priests. I will protect your desire to return to the sacraments. I will not reduce the standards of My Church for your circumstances but I will help you to adapt your circumstances to those standards. What is Jesus saying, you ask yourself. Let Me be more clear. This time on earth is a time where so many have compromised with standards of behaviour that the compromised standards have become the norm. I cannot and will not accept this. I do not accept this. If I were to accept this, I would have to change all of heaven and all of those who have served in times before you. Also, I would have to jeopardise the future of all those who come after you. My friend, listen to Me. Hear My words because My words are truth. Reject the rebelliousness of My enemy. Accept that you are called to follow Me and raise your behaviour to My standards. I will help you. You will be welcome in heaven if you accept that I am God. You will have to accept that I am God in order to gain heaven, of course. Will you not accept this fact now, before your time on earth is finished? Will you return to Me now given that ultimately you hope to do so? My heart longs for your peace. I see everything. If you have been hurt by those who claimed to represent My Church but who failed, I will heal you. Do not use this hurt as a reason why you step away from all that I offer for you through My Church. This has taken you in the wrong direction and others walk behind you. Please, come into My Church. It belongs to Me, after all. You are welcome, regardless of your sins.

### December 3, 2006

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A good day. Steve's toe was hurting, so I helped more with little tasks. Yes, my Jesus, I can do little things patiently and sweetly.

Jesus: Now rest and be good to your students tomorrow. Stay in My heart and love everyone with My love.

### December 4, 2006

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Looks good with LRC students. I was happy to see one who had been in terrible trouble.  
Jesus: Now stop pushing and rest.

### December 5, 2006

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Glorious concert at LRC. Jesus wanted me to have this beautiful gift for Christmas, shared with Carrie, to hear this wonderful music, and see my students who are in choir at their best, doing what they love.

### December 6, 2006

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The psalm prayer was from Psalm 36 "Give us true knowledge of Your mercy so that we may renounce our pride and be filled with the riches of Your house." I was thinking how pride is related to not knowing His mercy for others and for ourselves so that we judge them harshly and ourselves also thinking that it is all up to us humans to do things well and if we don't we are

doomed. The Psalm says also “He so flatters himself in his mind that he knows not guilt.” Yes, as if the others have all the guilt and we are near perfect!

## December 5, 2006

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Jesus

My beloved one, change is coming. You feel this. You are preparing to finish your time on earth and begin your time in eternity. That day, the day of your death, will be a joyful day because you will return to Me. Do you consider your death joyfully? Perhaps not. Perhaps you are afraid. Dear little child of God, I want to help you with any fears that take away from your peaceful consideration of the next life. You see, in our humanity, we fear death and suffering. I understand this perfectly because I also experienced a dread of suffering. I did not fear death, though. I knew that death would bring liberation for Me in that I would be free of the constraints I experienced in my body. Dear beloved one, it will be a liberation for you, too. When your body ceases to live, your soul will become fully alive. There is nothing to frighten you. I will be there for you. I will take you to Me and comfort you. You will feel safer than you have ever felt on earth. Do you believe this? You should believe this, My friend, because it is the truth. Reject My enemy, once and for all, and rest in My heart while heaven prepares you to come home. I will remain with you constantly, helping you, consoling you, preparing you. At the end, you will feel My peace surrounding you. I will do this for you if you let Me. Right now, at this time, I continue to make ready your reward. You see, your reward is not final yet because you are still serving. Perhaps you are serving in illness, in weakness, or in sadness and grief. Offer it to Me, offer it all to Me, your Jesus, and with it I will do the most magnificent things for others still serving on earth. I will take your little offerings and use them to console the Father, who is rejected by so many. Our Father is so good. You will understand His goodness more fully soon, when you come to Me. I promise you, little beloved one, that you will rejoice in any offerings, however small, you gave to our Father during this final time of service on earth. Be filled with joy. I am with you and will never leave you. In your precious little heart, take My hand in yours. I will hold you steadily, never letting go, during the time of transition between your life on earth and your life in eternity. I am with you in each moment.

St. John the apostle

Greetings you to, my beloved family member. I am a quiet visitor in your soul. I am quiet because I am reverent in the face of your preparation. You see, the Lord has willed that you be given these words and graces to calm your fears. A steady stream of grace will flow into your soul at this time, preparing you to make the transition to the heavenly kingdom. How blessed you are! How merciful is Jesus to make these words and graces available to you! I am not surprised that Jesus does this for you. I am a witness to the great love Jesus holds for you. Jesus loves you so much that He cannot wait to give you heavenly gifts. He is giving them to you now so that you will have a foretaste of your reward. When you die, you will come into the family of God. We love each other very much because we love God and join God in His love for each of our brothers and sisters. This love is different from love on earth. This love never fails. This love never weakens or alters. The love we feel for you and for each other is a reliable and continuous state of existence. We see each other as we were in our humanity, flawed, and this makes us even more tender in our love. You see, dear friend, the times we failed on earth helped us to become humble. There is no arrogance in heaven and you are coming to heaven. I am telling you that if you made mistakes and committed sins you are exactly like the rest of us. Confess your sins and allow Jesus to free you from the hold they have on your soul. Jesus forgives. Jesus forgets. You must accept His forgiveness and allow Him to grant you acceptance for yourself. Jesus can make all things new and He will make you new when you come to Him. Have no fear about your welcome. You will be welcomed by Jesus and by your whole family. I, John, am an expert on the

love of Christ. I rested in the love Jesus had for me and I am asking you to do the same. Rest in the love Jesus has for you. Let it encircle you and penetrate you. You are cherished by Jesus Christ. He accepts you just as you are. Be at peace, my friend. Remain in heavenly quiet and allow Jesus to put the final touches on your soul.

St John the Apostle

My dear friend, how often have you known contentment? In your life on earth, how often have you sat in silence, thanking God for all of your blessings? Perhaps you are a wise person and you have done this each day. I am glad. Perhaps you have been busy and distracted and you have not done this enough. It is time to change. For a moment, thank God for all that He has allowed you to experience on earth. You have seen great goodness. Where have you seen goodness? Consider this question. Think back with me on the people you knew who were good. Why were they good? What was it that impressed you about them? You have also seen great evil. Offer God a brief prayer for those whom you witnessed working against goodness and then think no more about them. God will be merciful, particularly if you ask Him to be. Come back now to the examples of great goodness because it is in this goodness that I want you to rest yourself. You will always remember those who were better than you in terms of following God or following Godly principles. Be at peace in this. It is not to torment you that I bring these things to your mind, but to console you. If you think back on the good people you have observed, you will be thinking forward to the good people you are about to meet. Heaven is filled with people who made decisions for God. Heaven is also filled with people who chose against God, but who repented, allowing God to purify them. What you will remember about a good person is this. That person made decisions based on love. That person overcame their own desires for the needs or desires of others. That person often took a harder road in order to do the right thing. You will recall that the decisions to do the right thing cost that person something. There was sacrifice. Rejoice with me, John, as you consider the heroic goodness of another. In doing so you are becoming acquainted with heavenly principles, even as you remain on earth. This is a good exercise for you because we will bring you to the heavenly kingdom soon. Anything you need to be comfortable here will be given to you in terms of graces. I would like to see you at peace. I would like to see you accepting yourself as Jesus accepts you. Do you wish you had more to offer to Jesus? We all did and I mean that sincerely. Every one of us who considered our lives wished we had more to give, that we had been better, loved more completely and selflessly, served without interruption, and accepted the truth of God's presence. If you wish you had been better, you will fit right in with us in heaven. Be at peace. Contemplate the goodness you have seen and believe that Jesus accepts you, just as you are right now.

St. John the Apostle

Dear friend, we, your heavenly companions, whisper into the ears of your soul during this time. We are helping you to leave this world and enter the next. We do this to assist you and we do this because it gives us joy to see that you are nearly finished with your earthly labours. We are happy for you. Any expectations you have of heaven and God's kingdom are certainly underestimates because nothing can prepare you for the love of the Father and nothing can prepare you for the love of the family you are about to meet. We are all together in God's love and God's love unites us. This is the truth. Another part of the truth that will delight you is the personal, intimate love God has for you. You will experience this in Jesus Christ, our beloved friend and saviour. I lived for love of Christ on earth. In heaven, I live because of the love of Christ. How far short I fall when I begin to talk about the love of Jesus Christ. It is like trying to describe an ocean by indicating a small cup of water. Still, even though one is destined to fall short, one must begin. Jesus loves you so much that He lived each day for you, personally. The fact that He lived each day on earth for you personally, in no way detracts from the fact that He lived each day for me personally. Because of the nature of God, God can be equally present to each man simultaneously. You will come to us and you will be with Jesus. You will never be separated from Him again. You will know perfect security, perfect acceptance, and perfect

intimacy with Him in heaven. My friend, there are those who will choose eternal separation from our beloved Jesus but you will not do so. You will choose Jesus. Choose Him now so that He can shower you with mercy, thus preparing you for your homecoming. Confess your sins. Admit to your failures. If you do this now, grieve for your sins, you will have begun the process of self-acceptance. Jesus forgives you if you repent. This is always the case. But you have the need in your humanity to accept yourself and become peaceful about your past sins. If you do this on earth, there will be no barrier to an immediate unity with Jesus, in other words, heaven. If you do not finish the work on earth, you will have a need to finish the work in the heavenly kingdom, that is, in purgatory. I, John, am encouraging you to at least begin this process now. Either way, Jesus is all mercy, all forgiveness. If you trust in Jesus, in His mercy, He will reward you with an unlimited amount of this mercy. Oh, my dear friend, take my words to your heart and believe them. I am trying to help you by giving you good advice and accurate information. Be humble and accept me as your brother, who gives wise counsel. I am praying for you now. Ask me to help you in this process and I will do so. Peace be with you and with all those around you.

Blessed Mother

My little child, how joyful I am to be with you. My heart rests with you as you contemplate God's mercy. There will be no difficulty with Jesus accepting you. If you feel the smallest desire to be with Jesus, to rest in His merciful gaze, you will do so. You belong to heaven, little child. Be very humble about your entrance into eternity. A good child, a faithful servant, comes to the door in humility. This is what you must do. God is great, very great. God is all goodness, all power. Comparatively, what are you? I will tell you. You are God's beloved and immeasurably cherished child. You are like a small infant in my arms, in need of comfort and nourishment. Allow yourself to be a small and helpless infant and I, your heavenly mother, will give you all that you need to appear before God. I know about God, my child and I know about you. I know about heaven and I know about the family who prepares to welcome you. I know what you will need to be comfortable. Allow me to help you become comfortable. We are all here for you. We desire to make you comfortable. If you have a thought that troubles you, simply give it to me. I will see to it by either removing the thought from you or revealing God's truth about the matter. You will have peace. We, your heavenly family, surround you. We help to remove any bitterness that remains with you. I love you, my little child. You are dear to me. A mother does not leave her child when her child needs her and I will not leave you.

December 7, 2006

Peaceful day. Jesus: "Be still and know that I am God." Don't make idols of your plans.

December 8, 2006

I loved what Jesus sent through Anne, Direction for Our Times, about suicide.

Jesus: Yes, that merciful tone is what I want you to hear and speak with yourself.

December 10, 2006

Talked to Daniel. Excited by all his plans.

Jesus: Wait. There is no peace there for you now. You don't have any decisions to make now.

December 11, 2006

How strange to be in the Lutheran chapel at Koinonia House where my new office will be. The look of the chapel is so Catholic since Fr. Andrew has studded the walls with icons of the saints and even a picture of JP II and the words were the same as our liturgy, but no one kneels at the consecration or for communion which I did not receive. But I felt the grief of the separation. Lord have mercy and bring us so close that we have to reunite!

Jesus: You see all the bridges I made for you?

Yes, yes, yes!

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December 12, 2006

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Jesus

Life on earth is filled with change. If you look back on any life, you can see marking points where that life changed. Sometimes change comes in a predictable and expected manner, as in the movement into a vocation for which a person prepared. Sometimes, change comes in an abrupt manner, as in situations where a person is injured or dies unexpectedly. It is this, the change viewed as a tragedy that I wish to discuss today. My friend, there are events in every life that stand out as difficult and life altering. This tragedy, this abrupt change of course, will stand out to you, I know. When you feel a sense of shock, a sense of stunning upset in your life, you must look for Me. I am there. I do not remain with My children, day after day, and then abandon them when they most need my support. Your grief is understandable and I will support you in it. You will not always understand why I allowed a certain thing to happen. In your expected inability to understand, you will challenge Me. You will say, "God, how could you have allowed this? God, where are you? God why have you abandoned us?"

My friends, bring those questions directly to Me because I, Myself, am the most sympathetic listener when it comes to these heartfelt cries of anguish. You see, I made these cries Myself. In my humanity, on the cross, I felt abandoned. In My humanity, on the cross, I questioned the value of God's plan. From My viewpoint, nailed to a piece of wood and raised aloft as a subject of total rejection and derision, it appeared that I suffered more than anyone. It appeared that none could know the extent of My pain. My beloved child, I tell you this so that you will understand that I, your Saviour, grasp the depth of your pain. I will walk you through each moment of anguish, surrounding you with heaven's graces. No. You will not be left to walk alone through this tragedy.

St. Ambrose

My friend, rest with heaven a moment. At this time, it is important to remember that every life on earth is finite. When a child is born into a family, there is no way to know the extent of their life. There is no way to know the plan for that life. There is no way to know the sufferings and joys that will provide formation for that life in order to bring that child to knowledge of God to the extent that God has intended. We, humanity, simply do not know God's plan. If we accept this truth, we will move through our lives with a greater appreciation for the possibility of change. As you walk the earth today, which one of you knows whether or not you will be walking the earth tomorrow? No person on earth today is assured that they will be on earth tomorrow. Clearly, it was the same in my lifetime. Nobody knows whether or not this is their last day to serve on earth. In the same way, perhaps you celebrate good health today. Does this mean you have a guarantee of good health tomorrow? Can you prevent a circumstance that will alter your health or your ability to serve tomorrow as you serve today? No, dear friend, you cannot. Accept this fact and you will serve in greater humility, aware that God could allow your course to be changed at any moment.

You, my beloved friend, are experiencing this today. You are stunned by the change in course that God has allowed for you or for someone you love. I understand. I want to compare your situation to that of Jesus Christ's situation in His passion because we, as Christians, must compare every experience to the Lord's experience so we will understand how to best conduct ourselves. Jesus suffered terribly before He died. His death was not sudden in terms of time in that He carried a cross to an expected death. That stated, can anyone be prepared for a torture and death such as He experienced? What preparation can there be for a mother to bring her to peace about such torturous treatment of her only child? Can a mother ever reconcile herself to a child's death, particularly such a violent death? My friend, you are possibly shaking your head, saying, 'No. It would be impossible for a mother to reconcile herself to the cruelty levied at her Son.' I understand. I, agree with you. Taken by itself, without the illumination of God, it would be impossible to accept such a set of circumstances. In the same way, if you take your tragedy by itself, without God's illumination, you may find it impossible to reconcile yourself to it.

Our mother, Mary, did reconcile her mother's heart to the will of the Father. She did this by joining herself to God's will in each moment. Mary never separated her life and every circumstance around her from trust in the Father's plan. This, most assuredly, does not mean that Mary was given extraordinary light to understand God's plan in each moment. On the contrary, Mary had to practice trust in a disciplined way because there were more moments of fog for her than clarity in terms of why God was allowing or advancing His plan in a given manner. Poor little mother, so worried for her Son's safety and happiness. Can we say that Mary proceeded wisely, despite her anguish? Yes, truly, we can say this. Mary proceeded wisely because she trusted that even though her Son suffered, even though her Son died, God's plan was the best plan, both for her Son and for humanity.

My friend, perhaps you cannot see God's plan illuminated in your grief and your pain. We understand. We will not leave you as you move through this period of shock. Believe me, one day you will see God's plan and you will look back to this day with perfect understanding, saying, 'Yes, I understand God's plan.'

St. Ambrose

Some of us walk through life trusting God. It is a habit that we have practiced for many years and it comes more or less naturally to us after a time. When a tragedy occurs in our life, we proceed through it in trust, despite our anguish, simply because this is what we have done in the past. Oh, my beloved friend, how priceless is the discipline of holiness.

Perhaps you do not trust God and you do not have a habit to fall back on. Perhaps you are angry at God over something else and now you are confronted with this tragedy. You are possibly experiencing a grave temptation to hate God because you are blaming Him for this tragedy. I can see how this would happen. I can see how events in your life have brought you this point. This is not a good place for you. You know that. You are angry at God and yet, God is not angry at you. You want to cast God out of your life and yet God does not want to cast you out of His presence. God, on the contrary, wants to pull you up against Himself so that He can console you. God has so many things to whisper in your ear. You will not be able to accept this tragedy if you do not allow God to help you. Fine, you say, rebelliously. I do not and I will not accept this tragedy, ever. Hmm. My friend, the tragedy is not going away, simply because you pledge to reject it. The tragedy has occurred. You cannot control tragedy any more than you can control death. You will die and this pain will have ended. What then? Will you wait until that moment to reconcile with God and your heavenly family? You are a person of good will. Surely you will not choose eternal separation from God. That would not be good for you. Do you want to spend eternity with your loved ones? Perhaps you should consider that your loved ones wish to spend eternity with you. I can promise you this today. Your loved ones want you to be with them in heaven. They are telling me this now. They are here with me, watching you, surrounding you with prayer, and they are asking that you accept God's grace into your heart. You see, you are not alone. You are not abandoned. God allows all those who have gone before you to help you in times of difficulty. There are many here who seek your peace. Ask God to give you the grace to reconcile yourself to His will. He will do so. I will help you. Throw yourself into the arms of your beloved Saviour and allow Him to protect you and comfort you.

St. Ambrose

My friend, my beloved family member, I am going to help you. Take these words into your heart. The graces attached to them will sustain you. You will see that very often the kindest, holiest people are those who have experienced tragedies. They understand that great pain comes into every life. Sometimes, there is nothing to comfort you, no drink of water in your parched thirst for yesterday. Do you wish to undo God's will? Would you like to be one who rejects God's will and marks out his own path to Christ? This would be like driving a car while blinded. Only God can see your destination and only God can see the best course for you to travel to arrive there. Perhaps there is great guilt in your grief. Perhaps you hold yourself accountable for something that you feel contributed to the tragedy before you. Oh dear friend, please, give this

guilt to God. Allow God to take this away and let Him do with it as He wishes. If you turn to God now, He will remove this burden from you and put it exactly where it needs to be. God will burn it up in the flames of His passionate love for you. If you need to confess a sin, do so. Otherwise, consign your guilt to Jesus as something that He must take care of for you. The Lord, in His great mercy, rejoices in exactly this type of request. Do not revisit yesterday, except as it causes you joy. I want to say a final word to you. The only way to travel the road to heaven is in trust. If you trust God, even the littlest bit, you will make progress and you will stay on the path to Him. You will proceed in some measure of peace and you will remain calm. Dearest friend, when you feel that you cannot remain calm, call on heaven. You can tell heaven that you have an emergency. Heaven will respond at once, bringing graces of trust and calm to you. If you trust in heaven, and you should, you will understand that heaven never abandons anyone. Heaven does not abandon you any more than heaven abandons those around you who also suffer at this time. Ask for graces for those around you and they will receive graces because of your request. If you pray for others in a time of such great pain, heaven will flood others with graces because heaven views this prayer, made in sorrow, as the most beautiful act of trust. The angels delight in this prayer and bring this prayer before the Father as evidence of man's respect for His dominion. God the Father, in turn, unleashes a torrent of conversion, healing, and calming graces for all involved in the tragedy. Truly, the Father orders the angels and saints to benefit thousands from such a situation. Talk to heaven and you and all those around you will be blessed powerfully.

Blessed Mother

My poor little child, how you suffer. There are times when suffering is so great that a little one cannot even feel the comfort that is lavished upon them. It is this way for you now. In your grief, you stagger, but you are supported. I know that you do not always feel this support. We accept this. Later, when you come to heaven, you will marvel at the generosity of heaven as you understand the great lengths heaven went to in order to support you through this tragedy. Dear beloved child of the Father, rest in your little soul. You are like a wounded one who requires heavenly nursing. We will nurse you. I will watch closely and take each opportunity to send you examples of heaven's tender care for you. God has a plan and you are part of that plan just as I was part of God's plan. I am playing my part in God's plan now in speaking these words to you. Why do we use words? Little child, we use words to communicate truth because we are holy souls, filled with God's integrity. These words represent God's truth. If a person sends a letter, filled with love, can you say that the person sent words? Is it not more accurate to say that the person has sent love and kindness which brings also encouragement? On earth, in the limited view of those who do not yet experience heaven, perhaps it is true that a word is simply a word, representing a concept. In heaven, which is where we speak from, a word is much more. These words carry with them heavenly graces of truth, of comfort and of joy. My love for you, which is part of God's love for you, flows out from this page to your heart. My intercession for you is taking place as you read these words. Heaven is with you, I promise you. I am your mother and you are my beloved child. Turn your face to me and I will give you heavenly comfort that cannot be seen or understood. You will know that I am with you by the calming graces that come with me wherever I go. I am calm because I see God's plan. I will give you this calm and help you to see, at the very least, that God has a plan for you and that it includes this tragedy. I am with you, little dove. Your pain will not be without value and every tear you cry will be a tear that is noticed by heaven. Peace now, as we walk with you through this time of grief. We will give you the graces you need to cope today and to grow in holiness tomorrow. All is well. Heaven surrounds you.

I read an article Sister Judith sent about how the English Catholic Churches that had become depleted of late are now full up with immigrants from Brazil, Asia, Africa with vibrant ethnic flavor Masses, full of life and hope. They come and they find the one thing that is the same is the Church.

I recalled Mary Neill saying “Ronda, don’t worry. It’s not the intellectuals who will save the church but the anawim.”

## December 18, 2006

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Asking Fr. Ken's advice about some family problems he said "Hardly ever when you want to help people, will they receive your help in the manner you want them to." For instance, if you give people money, it is theirs and they won't spend it as you would like them to!

Basically, as in marriage preparation, we have to say "I put up with you and you put up with me."

## December 12, 2006

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Tonight there was an Our Lady of Guadalupe procession from the center of town to our Church about 1/2 hour's walk. I loved seeing the kind of stiff seeming male Hispanic leaders tenderly laying flowers around Mary's lectern like base. In Jungian terms I suppose that is how they get in touch with their feminine side.

Only about 10 of the 200 people in the procession were Anglo's. I love Our Lady of Guadalupe so I thought I should go even though it was walking in the dark in the night.

I kept thinking of how 35 years ago Martin went on a business trip to Mexico and I went with him to see the shrine of Our Lady, and joined in by crawling on my knees on the cobblestones across that huge plaza in front of the Church to finally reach the tilma. During that painful crawl I offered it up for my students at the new teaching job I was to start at Loyola Marymount and for everyone in my family. So many graces came pouring down amidst all the sometimes terrible crosses.

In the procession tonight we had candles and it felt like somehow making a dent in the mentality of this Bible-belt area.

During the Mass there was mostly the usual charismatic style songs of the Hispanic choir, but it seems Father Ken, who is teaching formal music to the leaders, got them to be able to do deeply beautiful old chant songs in Spanish as well. I marveled at his pastoral heart to "hide" his own feelings about charismatic songs and to learn Spanish perfectly so they would trust him to move them along in the music. Maybe that's not how it really happened, but that is how it seemed.

Father Ken gave a rousing sermon about how fences and walls can't keep out God's love and how Our Lady of Guadalupe is an icon of God's love being greater than cultural barriers. I kept thinking how she "came" with these Mayans to this strange Southern part of North America – as the feminine icon of the Church who they are bringing in so many good ways to our less devotional Anglo Church.

Heaven Speaks to Those Who Struggle to Forgive

## December 13, 2006

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Jesus

How blessed I am that you take a moment to read these words. I am God. I am complete, and yet your simple act of reading My words gives Me glory. You are important to Me and you are important to My family, which includes all men of good will. Because I love you and because I need your help, I wish to give you the opportunity to find greater peace in your heart. It is clear to Me that many suffer from hidden wounds. The only way for these wounds to heal is for the carrier of the wound to forgive the one who inflicted the injury. My dear child, this can be

difficult. When a wound finds a home in the heart, it becomes comfortable there. It must be loosened and shifted. Both a willingness to forgive and a spirit of forgiveness are necessary because it is these things that make the wound uncomfortable. The wound then begins to dislodge. This reawakens the pain but only temporarily until the wound is removed altogether.

I want to begin this process in you. If you proceed in the process of forgiveness with Me, you will find that forgiveness floods your heart. Your wounds will be gone. I have the power to heal every one of your wounds. When you try to do this alone, you do not experience success and you find that bitterness persists. Bitterness characterises My enemy. Forgiveness characterises Me. You, a beloved little child of God, seek to find peace in your heart. You will only find peace if you step into the stream of goodness. This stream is like a river of grace with which I desire to bathe you, removing all pain and injury. What will remain in your soul is joy. This joy, this heavenly peace, will be obtained by accepting your flaws and accepting the flaws of others. You see, My friend, if you accept the flaws and sins of others, you will soften in attitude toward yourself. I love you. I accept you. I need you to accept yourself so that you will be at peace in My kingdom and it is through forgiving others that you will find acceptance of your own humanity.

St. Faustina

Oh my, how we suffer on earth. We are so very woundable, are we not? Our humanity makes us vulnerable and we are subject to pain. My friends, Jesus wishes to heal you from the injuries levied against you. It is possible that you are suffering from pains that were inflicted in the past. At this time, Jesus is allotting a torrent of graces because He wants His little ones to be at peace. If a person is at peace, that person can serve God with very little self will. There are different periods in the history of this world. At different times, Jesus sends different graces, always considering the appropriateness of the grace for the time. In other words, Jesus knows what His people require and gives accordingly. At this time, the Lord sees that souls are in distress. The great darkness has obscured the usual process of acceptance for others and many carry heavy burdens that they should have cast off already. There is a preoccupation with self that precludes God's children from considering the struggles of others. This preoccupation has inhibited spiritual healing for many. Jesus wills at this time to send heavenly help that will shake God's children out of this fog. You have been hurt by others. Heaven knows this. Now it is time to forgive those who have hurt you. Jesus is all mercy, it is true, but God is also all justice. Those who have hurt you will be held accountable. Do you want this? Do you desire it? My friend, nobody escapes divine justice. Where does that fact place you in terms of the sins you have committed? Are you free from sin? Have you hurt anyone in your past? Be honest and I will ask God to illuminate your soul for you because you are in the same boat as those who have hurt you in terms of being held accountable for sins committed. Perhaps you have been injured grievously. Perhaps the evil committed against you far exceeds anything you have ever done wrong. Be at peace. God will make all wrongs right and the one who hurt you will have to deal with their own process. We are concerned with your growth today and your growth will be stunted if you do not accept forgiveness into your heart. You need bring nothing to this process but willingness. Tell Jesus that you are willing and He will begin His work. If you are not willing, I understand that, also. In that case you must ask Jesus to give you willingness. Jesus loves this prayer. Do not think it makes you unworthy of the process. You say, 'Jesus, I am too angry, too hurt. You will have to heal me enough so that I can even allow such a process to begin.' The heart of Jesus rejoices in this and He tells the Father that truly, this is a soul in which He can work. In other words, I am telling you that there is no reason to persist in bitterness. It is time to let it go. We will support you and sustain you.

St. Faustina

My friend, there is great opportunity here. Jesus is promising you that He will assume responsibility for your healing. This is the healing that comes from heaven, the authentic liberation from spiritual and emotional distress. This is not something that is obtainable from a

worldly source because only the divine can make these promises and then deliver these graces. I cried many tears on earth. Do not fear tears. Tears provide the soul with moisture which allows for great growth in virtue and holiness. Tears are a sign that healing is taking place. Sometimes, tears flow out of the person and with the tears goes the hurt. Good bye to hurt. Welcome to forgiveness.

What does forgiveness bring? I will tell you. Forgiveness brings peace. Forgiveness brings self acceptance because you are able to say, yes, this bad thing happened to me. Yes, it was hurtful and I suffered pain because of it. Then you stop and say, No. I will not allow this injury to suffocate the goodness in me. No. I will not allow it to divert me from God's will in my life. I will not behave badly because someone else has behaved badly. If I do so, I am being tricked.

You see, my friend, the path of bitterness leads in the opposite direction of where you must go. Come our way, to heaven, and you will have joy. The enemy seeks to divert you by encouraging you to persist in bitter self-righteousness and indignation. You know that it is not Jesus who advises you to hold on to anger. It is His enemy, who is also your enemy.

St. Faustina

Ask yourself this question. Are you angry at Jesus? If you answer yes, you must tell Him and talk about it with Him in the silence of your heart. There is only one combatant here, my friend, because Jesus is most assuredly not angry at you. As such, you are fighting all by yourself. Day after day, you make a case against God, reviewing all of the hurts that God has failed to prevent. You find yourself softening at times, and then you hastily list the wrongs God has committed against you, backing up your case and affirming your decision to ignore God or even work against Him. If you could see me you would see that I am shaking my head sadly. This will never succeed for you. This state of affairs will really have to cease. I would like to say, 'Stop this at once' but who am I to give you orders? You would say, "Who is this Faustina who speaks with such authority? Faustina does not understand my pain or she would join me in my anger against God.'

You are wrong, of course. I would not join you in your anger against God because I know God. I am united to Jesus in heaven and I am continually suffused with His love for me. At the very same time that I am suffused with His love for me, I am suffused with His love for you because it is all the same love, from the same Source, and it includes us all. Do you understand? Will you try to stay with me while I attempt to explain this to you?

I exist permanently in the heart of God. You exist permanently in the heart of God in that He created you and He cannot fail to love you. He is enamoured with every part of you, every characteristic, and every possibility in your future. Your anger, your pain, your sinfulness, in no way diminishes God's love for you. This is not even possible. God will never reject one of His children. It is His children who reject Him. My little beloved friend, you are like a small child sitting in a corner at a birthday party with his arms crossed. Will you do this in heaven? Will you come to heaven and refuse to join in our joy? No. You will not. You will have to work through this pain in purgatory. Now, perhaps you are getting angry at me. You say, 'More injustice! Faustina is threatening me.' I am not threatening you. You are my little brother or sister and God has given me the task of helping you to cast off your bitterness, allowing Him to replace it with His forgiveness. In order to do so I am using the powerful weapon that is the truth. You have a great many friends in heaven and they want you to begin this process now so that you are ready to come straight to heaven when you die in your body. I want this, too. Jesus wants this, also. We have many people here who are heavily committed to your cause. Won't you come back to completeness now? I love you very much. I know all about heavy burdens that tempt one to bitterness. Sit in silence and we will begin this important work in your soul.

Blessed Mother

I am with you, my child. I am in all of your pain and I understand why you are having difficulty. Heaven sees everything. This fact should only console you because heaven completely accepts humanity. Dear child of my heart, heaven was created for you. Let me repeat that for my

little wounded one. God made heaven for you. This is your home. You will come here if you accept Jesus when you die. Accept Him now and you will live out the remainder of your time united to all of us, who seek to save others. I want to explain something to you so that you know that we understand your predicament. Your difficulty in forgiving is understandable. I had to forgive those who crucified my Son. My love for Jesus is combined with my respect for Him and it was this way for me on earth. He always served God's children. He always put the good of humanity first, sacrificing everything for every human being ever created. His love was perfect and perfectly selfless. Yes, I loved Him fully. In His presence I could only melt with the love He exhibited. When He was crucified, and even before that, unjustly castigated and slandered, my heart nearly broke. At His death, My heart stopped as well, in terms of its ability to recover and love. It was only through the grace of the Almighty God, who breathed forgiveness into me, that I was able to continue on in the world without my Son. I am telling you that you should not be ashamed to need God's help in this process. I, also needed God's help. God placed forgiveness in my heart and He will do the same for you. A final word of love for you is this. Remember that you have hurt our Jesus and Jesus willingly forgives you. Jesus loves you so tenderly. Forgive others as Jesus has forgiven you and you will know heaven's peace. We will help you. I am with you and I will never leave you.

### December 13, 2006

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I asked Jesus what I would do if I trusted in him about difficult family problems. He said "Wait till January 1st and in the meantime have a good Advent by just serving with love in the home.

Heaven Speaks to those who have rejected God.

### December 14, 2006

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Jesus

I speak today with the greatest seriousness. My beloved one, you were created by God. God did not create you to reject your place in His family. You are important in this family, which includes all of mankind. To cast yourself out of God's love is to cast yourself out of your family. You object to this, telling yourself that you do not reject mankind, only the Creator of mankind. My friend, this is like reaching into your chest and removing your heart with the goal of rejecting your heart but accepting your body. The body will not function without the heart. It cannot. In the same way, the family of God cannot function without the sustaining hand of the Father. Even the earth would fail to exist if the Father were to withdraw His benevolence. Your rejection of God proceeds from anger. You move to deny this. Perhaps you cite scientific evidence that claims to supplant God's existence. When you die in your body and you come before Me, Jesus Christ, you will be dazzled by the extent of what humanity does not know. The body of knowledge on earth at this time, while exciting for you, is miniscule when seen against the light of the full truth that you will be allowed to explore in heaven. I bless all science of good will. God has been merciful in the extreme through science. Many men have studied science and been brought to a profound respect for the Creator through the knowledge they have gained. They will continue this study in heaven, of course, and be blessed even more. Additionally, many men who study science have served their family, humanity, profoundly through their cooperation with Me in their studies. Do you understand? They cooperate with God and God, through that cooperation, blesses humanity. It is arrogance on the part of mankind to believe that they have discovered anything that I do not wish for them to discover. You, as one of God's created ones, must come to accept that those using science to subvert Godly principles are working against the

Creator. They will be accountable for any damage done to the Kingdom of God. I am merciful to those who repent and I will be merciful to you. I speak to you today, not to condemn, but to save. I am with you. Do not reject Me.

St. John of the Cross

My friend, you cannot persist in rejecting God. It is too hard for you. Perhaps you do not understand the burden you carry. I will tell you about your burden so you will understand just how heavy it is and perhaps agree to put it down for a moment. The weight of your burden is such that your soul cannot be lifted. I am strong in my determination and I am strong in terms of God's divine power. Try as I might, though, I cannot lift you. You are as heavy and immovable as ten tons of bricks. When a soul believes in God and respects God's dominion over mankind, that soul can be lifted like the lightest feather. We can give that soul comfort and consolation. We can gain graces for the soul so that it can feel our love and the love of the Creator. The soul who accepts God is light and can be drawn easily into the divine truths. The acceptance of God gives souls a buoyancy that keeps them up above the water line, faced into the light of truth. This light flows steadily into these souls and the love that grows in them nourishes both the individuals and all those around them. You do not have this. You have rejected access to the One who loves you unconditionally. We surround you, hoping for an opportunity to help you but you block us out. Consider those around you. Think of those you love. Do you wish them well? Do you desire their safety? This love you feel, this caring, is the evidence of God inside you. Though you purport to reject your God, you cannot do so entirely because to fully reject God, you would have to reject all forms of love. Please understand that there are only two ways to proceed. One is from love, God's way. The other is from hatred, the enemy's way. Ahh, you say, John is simplistic. I must tell you that I take that as the highest compliment. Heaven is simplistic in that it originates and is sustained by love. We will continue, you and I, to explore your rejection of God together. I am trying to help you, my friend, because I love you. You do not know me enough to love me but when you get to know me, you will love me. Thank you for entertaining my thoughts for these few brief moments in time.

St. John of the Cross

There are several ways to proceed. One, you can continue on in your rejection of God. Two, you can accept that God loves you and ask Him to make Himself known to you. Three, you can accept that God exists but continue to deny Him access to your life.

If you do the first, nothing changes. You will have the greatest difficulty when you die and meet God because you will have to accept that you rebelled against perfect love. This will be painful for you, in the extreme. God is merciful, of course. He will give you an opportunity to repent and if you do so, you will be taken joyfully into the family. At that time, however, you will have to begin learning all of the lessons of love and humility. This will take time but God has prepared a place for you to do this. It is called purgatory.

If you follow the second option and accept that God loves you, asking God to make Himself known to you, you will begin learning about God's love on earth, in your life and through your relationships with others. You will know joy, again, my dear friend, and you will have hope in your heart. God will flood you with graces, we will surround you and defend you as you grow in virtue, and upon your death you will be welcomed with the greatest joy and celebration. Truly, when you accept God and let Him teach you about love, the day of your death is a happy day indeed.

The third option is not the option I would take but it is better than option number one. You can accept that God exists but keep Him at a distance. This is better than option number one because you are giving God some measure of respect. God rewards all such respect with untold generosity. Also, if you at least recognise, even in the smallest way, the existence of God, you leave a door open to a relationship with God. Perhaps you are not willing or able to ask God to reveal Himself to you. Possibly you are fearful of what God will ask of you. This is short sighted because anything that God asks of you becomes easy when you embark upon it with

Him. At any rate, though, at least tell God that you recognise Him as the Creator and there will be a link between you and your God. It will be like being in deep water and holding on to a rope. You may not make progress, in that you are not allowing God to pull you into the boat, but neither will you be lost.

I love you. My heart has the greatest interest in helping you come back into our family. You see, I am looking at you with heavenly eyes. I see all that you can do to help others know God's love. We need you so badly. You have potentials that you have not touched. Only with God's grace can your full potential be realized because God ignites the growth process, just as truly as he takes a seed and creates a massive tree. You have seeds of the greatest, most powerful goodness in you. Come back to God's love and He will ignite the growth process in each of these seeds. God, Himself, sowed these seeds and He has a divine purpose for each of them. Be at peace as you consider your options. You have heaven's assistance.

St. John of the Cross

You have been patient with me and I am grateful. I have a few more thoughts to share with you so I will presume upon your patience for one additional moment. If you have held onto your rejection of God for some time, you will find that these thoughts are unsettling. I, John, speak of choices as though these were easy choices with no subsequent emotional effects. I know what I am saying to you in that I understand the emotional impact of making choice number two or even three. You will not be left to walk through this alone. Any aloneness you have felt in the past has been self imposed. Listen carefully to this. I know that you have felt isolated and abandoned in your pain. Jesus felt the same way on the cross. In truth, He was not abandoned and neither were you. You simply locked us out. We, the saints and angels, cannot help you without some willingness on your part. The best we can do in these situations is to seek to protect you while we wait for the smallest opening in your heart.

I ask you to take some time in silence and consider these words. You will see that I am reasonable in my contention that if you feel any love at all, you are still interested in being in God's presence. To say that you do not believe in God or God's enemy is to simply deny a truth as obvious as the truth that water is wet or wind produces movement. You can argue about the truth, you can distract yourself and others from the truth, but ultimately, the truth remains. God exists. He loves you. To reject Him is to choose His enemy over Him. This is a mistake for you. Accept God again, if only in the smallest, most limited way. These words and the graces that accompany them are not simply for this moment. I am going to stay with you and remind you of them. I, John, love you and I will not give up on you. Feel the heavenly calm in your soul. There is no need for anything other than calm. If you are not ready now, do not be distressed. There will come a time when you are willing to accept God. I am with you now and I will be with you then, praying for you and gaining all possible graces for you. You may feel anger at me. You may say, 'John is a fool. I am ridiculing John and yet he continues to express love for me.' You are right. I love you even though you ridicule me. I am in heaven, you see, so I am like God. Even if you ridicule God, He continues to love you and hope for your return. So, in simply reading these words, you have had your first lesson in the unconditional love that is God's. Be at peace. You are not alone.

Blessed Mother

Dearest little child of heaven, you are not as intellectually advanced as you think. If you were truly advanced in your intellect, you would be working hard to become a saint because when one authentically applies the intellect to the consideration of truth, one is enchanted with the limitlessness of God's knowledge. One then desires to proceed more and more deeply into these heavenly truths. This can be done during your time on earth.

You are loved. You are cherished. We in heaven have many hopes attached to your conversion to God in your heart. The first reason that we harbour such hope is that we see the goodness in your soul. You may detach this goodness from God, stating that this goodness originates in you. In other words, you claim this goodness as your own. I am Mary, the mother

of Jesus Christ, and I tell you today that any goodness in your heart originates in God. Do not claim something that came from your Father. Would you claim your genetic composition? Did you have anything to do with it? Did you choose it or design it? This is silliness, of course. It was chosen for you so that you could serve in the way God intended. Do not reject the one who lovingly created you to serve at this time. All of heaven is interested in your acceptance of God. You are that important to us. My motherly heart suffers at your rejection of God because I witnessed what Jesus did for you. Be at peace. I will help you and you are loved. Take John's advice and accept God into your life. You will be so grateful that you did.

## December 16, 2006

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Lily says with family, apostolate of being. Yes, don't push, be gentle.

Difficulty with plans with Lara. Jesus: You did go too fast, but I am bringing good out of it as always. Even though sometimes team things worked, it is better when you do it alone in terms of these personal coordinating matters. Just be patient. Put Taming out there with the flyer and wait and see. The Holy Spirit is working with everything you do. Look at St. Vincent Palotti, many, many ventures. Some got blocked; it doesn't matter. Remember your main work is to let me sanctify you. You did well being loving about the changed plans and apologizing often with the family. See how I am using them to force you to let go more?

Memories of Dietrich Von Hildebrand by Ronda Chervin, Ph.D.

It was truly a miracle that I met Gogo (as all his friends called him). Here is how it happened.

I was brought up as a total atheist, though my background was culturally Jewish. I studied philosophy hoping to find truth but only found skepticism, relativism, and historicism. I was looking for love but only found fascinating, sinful, disappointing relationships. By the age of 20 I was in despair of ever finding love or truth.

One Saturday my mother, who never surfed the TV, not ever, turned on the set in the middle of the afternoon, and there was a program called the Catholic Hour with two philosophers on it: Dietrich Von Hildebrand and Alice Jourdain. "Ronda, come see, there are some philosophers on TV." To my amazement, these philosophers were talking as if truth, love, goodness and beauty were objective realities.

I wrote them a long letter describing my futile search and asked if they could help me. It turned out that Alice (Lily – shortly afterwards to become Gogo's second wife) lived but 2 blocks away from me on the West Side of New York city. Neither she nor I, nor Madeleine (to be Stebbins) who was her roommate will ever forget our first meeting. Somehow, even though I was an atheist, I knew that there was something extraordinary in that apartment. Never had anyone looked into my eyes with such compassion and insight as did Lily. Afterwards, I danced down the street thinking, "I have met a saint."

Impressed by my yearning for truth, Lily suggested that I make a visit to the classes of Dietrich Von Hildebrand at Fordham and if I was enthusiastic, why not transfer my Woodrow Wilson scholarship from Johns Hopkins graduate school to Fordham.

Stephen Schwarz escorted me to Fordham. Two things caught my attention. The first was that, unlike the professors at Johns Hopkins who seemed to me to be dessicated academics, Von Hildebrand and Balduin Schwarz were vibrant men, overflowing with joy. Secondly I noticed that they could refute skepticism, relativism and historicism in a few sentences.

I like to think that two of my favorite saints also had something to do with the miracle of my mother turning on the TV at that moment: St. Therese of Lisieux who, during her dark night, prayed so much for atheists, and St. Edith Stein – who, having been an atheistic philosophy student from a Jewish background herself, surely she would want me to meet her "cousin" philosopher, Von Hildebrand.

Of course, being such a thoroughgoing atheist who had been brought up to think that all religious people were stupid and weak, I didn't think that the wonderful traits of Von Hildebrand, Lily, and the Schwarzs: Balduin, Leni (a convert from an atheist Jewish background) and Stephen, their son, had anything to do with their religion. I just wanted to be with them.

Zealous Gogo, at the urging of Lily, quickly arranged for my scholarship to be transferred and within a month I was taking courses at Fordham.

Ecstasy is the only word to describe my reaction to each of Gogo's classes, as I realized that truth was real, and what glorious truths, such as proofs that moral values were absolute. Simultaneously I was lapping up the love the members of the lay community surrounding me with. Getting to know them took place at lunches at the Schwarz house, and on the D-train of the NY subway from the Manhattan to the Bronx and back again, for I was able to travel a whole hour each way with either Gogo or Balduin who were riding up to the classes I was taking and they were teaching.

The miraculous events that led me to become a Catholic a year after meeting Gogo and Lily are told in my autobiography *En Route to Eternity*. A large part came from reading the authors recommended by them such as Augustine, Newman, and Chesterton. The night before my baptism I was visiting the Schwarzs who would become my godparents. Gogo was there. On my way home, I grabbed his arm and asked, "But suppose it isn't true, after all?" I expected some insight into philosophy or psychology of religion, but he replied with the simplicity of a peasant, "but think of the miracles!"

I found the personality of Gogo overwhelmingly. That the same man could be so serious, so deep, but also so spontaneous and affectionate, delighted me. We used to attend the same daily Mass, walking from different directions. Always I would find him singing opera loudly along the way. I often thought of this as the Italian side of his personality whereas the philosophical side was more German.

These personality traits of Gogo made whatever he wanted to teach me not so much didactic as enticing. And this was not only in the realm of philosophy. My father was a lover of classical music who filled our early childhood with the sound of music every hour he was home. As a teenager I rebelled and listened only to popular tunes. By college I gradually grew to love classical music, but had very little sense of choral music. I will never forget sitting in a room next to Gogo who was playing a 78 recording of Mozart's *Laudate Dominum*. To make sure I understood the beauty of it, he grabbed my arm with his hand and emphasized each climax of the singing with an extra squeeze accompanied by his radiant smile.

Another memory from these early days of the friendship, which would last until the end of his life, is of his insistence that those of us who rode with him on the subway from Fordham back to Manhattan pray *Compline* out loud in Latin. It was for me such an exemplification of the later buzz-word "counter-cultural" but also of freedom of spirit. In later years I followed his lead by insisting that friends pray the rosary aloud with me in airports during long waits at the gate.

Gogo played a large role in my marriage to Martin Chervin, a man from an orthodox Jewish background who had become an atheist as a teen but who wanted to know Christ. When I got interested in Martin as a possible spouse, I was on the verge of becoming a Catholic. At the time, he was a divorced playboy. I was confused. I thought a good way of getting rid of him would be to introduce him to Gogo and Lily and the Schwarz family. Surely they would tell me to drop this dangerous friendship immediately. Instead they all loved him and encouraged us in what turned out to be a long chaste courtship and helped us get a dispensation from Martin's previous non-religious marriage. We went through a long process with the New York and Roman tribunals. Finally Gogo was instrumental in persuading a prominent Cardinal to intervene for a dispensation in *favorem fide*.

It seemed as if Martin would soon become a Catholic. A major influence on him was the reading of Transformation in Christ. He recognized the genius of Gogo's combination of consummate understanding of human nature with sublime faith.

Even more, my husband, who had the same kind of joie de vivre as Gogo, could only have understood a faith like Gogo's, which included rejoicing in the goods of the earth, as well as opening to the redemptive gifts. Before meeting Gogo he thought of Catholics as either tight Puritanical types or rebellious sinners. It took him many years to finally become a Catholic, because he detested the American post-Vatican II Mass. Shortly before Gogo's death he made a bargain with God that should Gogo survive longer, at a time when his life seemed almost at an end, he would take it as a sign to become a Catholic in spite of his dislike of the English Mass. Gogo was spared a short time longer and Martin did become a Catholic.

Gogo also had an influence on the conversion of my atheist mother. She was horrified at my interest in Roman Catholicism, but the personality of Gogo opened her to investigating the faith for herself. He decided to meet her informally at our home for individual teaching sessions to overcome her formidable doubts. In a charming gesture, the first time he came he presented her with a huge bouquet of peonies.

A few less important but telling memories:

Before his conversion, Martin and I were once traveling in Europe and went out of our way to go to Florence to see Gogo and Lily. I was praying constantly that whatever Gogo said would be a turning point for Martin to becoming a Catholic. We had a lovely visit but mostly the conversation was humorous and anecdotal instead of deep. At the end I was alone for a few moments and told Gogo how sorry I was that no important points had come up. Immediately Gogo's humorous expression changed to great seriousness and he exclaimed "What a sin on my part to have talked so much thoughtlessly!" I was touched by his readiness to acknowledge a fault even when it was unintentional.

Summers included a yearly meeting of a lay community that most of the Von Hildebrand circle were part of. I occasionally came to these meetings in Bavaria. The Mass was celebrated in a small chapel with parts of the congregation on either side – men on one side and women on the other. It always delighted me to see that, even after many years of marriage, Gogo could not bear to be separated from Lily – so throughout the Mass he would turn his head and gaze upon her with love.

A memory that fits with the name of the book *The Soul of a Lion* took place when Gogo and Lily came to Loyola Marymount University where I was teaching in the early 70's. Gogo gave the first talk. During the break, Lily told me that I must sit next to him while she was speaking and be sure that he stayed calm because he could have a fatal heart attack at any moment. During the question period the wife of a colleague of mine challenged Lily on some point. Gogo took it as an insult and tried to leap up to seize the floor. I grabbed him to hold him down. He turned on me swiftly and remarked: "Ronda, you can't keep me down. I am not a lamb, I am a lion."

We all knew that Gogo had a bad heart. Once, toward the end of his life, I had a nightmare that he was falling down a staircase to his doom. After that, whenever I was with him and there were stairs I pushed myself ahead of him so that I might cushion a fall.

As a professor of philosophy I have taught Gogo's books for decades with great impact. Some of my philosophy majors such as Michael Healy and James Harold, now at Franciscan University of Steubenville, went on to graduate school to study his thought. I cannot teach his ideas, or those of Lily, my lifelong friend, without a sense of the presence of their minds and hearts and souls permeating my smaller personhood. What a legacy. Viva the Von Hildebrands!

(Ronda Chervin is presently an adjunct philosopher at Lenoir Rhyne College in North Carolina. For more information about her numerous books about Catholic living, as well as videos and audios, go to [www.rondachervin.com](http://www.rondachervin.com))

Heaven Speaks to those who suffer from financial need.

December 17, 2006

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Jesus

I speak today with such love in My heart. There are those among you who suffer from financial need. You do not have enough money to sustain your family. Perhaps you do not have what you need to buy food or to pay for your shelter needs. My friends, you are not forgotten. Heaven will not abandon you. I see your distress and recognise your need. I want to ask you to look at your situation fearlessly. Ask yourself if you are in real danger of going without food. Are you in real danger of losing your place of shelter? Consider these two things as your basic needs. I am asking that you begin to think of your time on earth differently. Consider exactly what your body needs to continue in service to Me. Some of My children on earth have been blessed with great abundance. In some cases, this great abundance has created a craving for more that is undermining heaven's goals for the soul. Additionally, this craving for more has become a distraction, diverting some of God's children from the task of growing in holiness. My beloved ones, if this describes you, if you routinely have enough food to eat and a safe place to rest, yet you continue to worry about money, then you must change your standard immediately. What will you do when it comes time to leave all of this? Will you object when Jesus does not supply you with these extra things in heaven? You may not want to come to heaven because there is no excess of material goods here. This is silly, of course, and I am being playful with you but please try to understand My point. Excessive material goods are a distraction. If you have financial needs that can be rectified by cutting back on your standard of living, do so at once. I will help you and I promise you this today because this is very important for you and for your family. I am asking all to reconsider their needs and use less when possible.

For those who cannot sustain basic food and shelter needs, I have something else to say. You are loved. You should ask Me to send help and I will begin to do so at once. My beloved children, I did not create you to go hungry. I did not create you to sleep in circumstances that prevent safety. I want you to know that during My time on earth, I often experienced hunger. I very often did not have a place to rest My head. Indeed, I was born into poverty and I understand poverty of the physical type. I want you to know something today. Financial poverty, physical need, does not equal spiritual poverty, meaning spiritual need. I am saying that you can be far wealthier than any king or queen, even if you are the poorest of the poor. Perhaps you are hungry more than you are fed. Perhaps you have no home. My beloved child, you will have a beautiful home here in heaven and in it you will entertain your loved ones with great bounty. You will have enough of everything in heaven and you will be treated as a royal personage by Me, your Jesus. Your time of poverty on earth prepares you for a time of great wealth in heaven. You must accept your circumstances in peace, even while you try to change these circumstances. I will not accept that you did not want to work to support yourself or your family. That is not an acceptable reason to suffer need. I want you to try to sustain yourself and those for whom you are responsible. But if, through no fault of your own you suffer poverty, I assure you today that if you accept this in peace I will reward you beyond your furthest imaginings. In places where people are poor, I am there with My greatest graces. Dear beloved ones, believe Me today when I tell you that people who come to heaven do not regret anything they suffered on earth. Rest in this thought. You will not regret your sufferings. You will only regret the times you failed to love. Ask Me for help and I will help you. Be at peace. You have not been abandoned.

St. Augustine

Dear brothers and sisters, we in heaven remember being on earth. We remember having great wants and suffering from poverty. Some of God's saints were wealthy on earth, of course, but many were not. The time in which you live is a time of great abundance for some. It would make God happy if this abundance were shared so that few experienced hunger that resulted in disease and death. There will always be poor, it is true, but this fact does not excuse anyone from failing to assist them. If you are wealthy, you may say, 'What can I do?' I will answer you today. Give. Give often and give more. Work for others with your power and influence. Spread Godly

principles of responsible use of material and financial wealth. Also, deprive yourself of something. Sacrifice. Perhaps you are in a situation where you were accustomed to a high standard of living and now you find that you have had to reduce your standard. Praise God for this. Rejoice because in this circumstance you will learn many things. You will learn to trust God. You will learn to have compassion for others. You will learn that not everything has to do with bodily comfort.

In looking back at my time of service on earth, I am aware that the time of greatest growth for me was the time when I suffered. This is basic spirituality of course in that it is hard to become holy if you never deny yourself. In order to become holy you must take up your cross. This cross can come in many forms and the best response to the cross is always to pick it up and walk with it. Move. Do not lament that the cross has been placed on your doorstep. Accept the cross as coming from heaven and, putting one foot in front of the other, climb the mountain toward Jesus. There are always those who suffer more than you and there will always be those who suffer less. Do not let poverty make you bitter. To do so would be to reject God's generous offer of holiness. During this time, many are suffering from financial difficulties. Is heaven any less present? This is the same as in many periods of history. Be at peace in all circumstances around you and you will find that God gives you what you need to serve Him in each day. If you are hungry, offer this to God, even while asking Him to provide you with more food. God will make you a saint quickly in these circumstances and you will experience spiritual richness. If you have enough and you are not hungry, deny yourself food periodically. Simply do not eat for a day and offer your hunger to God so that He can take your little sacrifice and obtain graces with which to feed others. Heaven will help you to understand God's will in either situation, either poverty or affluence.

St. Augustine

In a world where many have rejected God, it is necessary for many to learn about trust. Reliance on God is something that liberates a person. God can teach this lesson by withdrawing financial security. If you have lost your financial security and you are fearful, talk to God. Tell Him your fears. Tell Him about your obligations, particularly those you find you cannot meet. God will help you. There is no shame in not having enough money. Jesus, Himself seldom had money, not to mind enough of it. Did people look down on Him? Yes, they did. Did people have to take care of Him? Yes, they did, and they are being eternally rewarded for doing so. If you find that others have to help you, accept this with grace. Perhaps this is painful for you. Perhaps you find it humiliating. I understand. I am with you in this humiliation. Humiliation brings humility though and while I know the humiliation part is difficult, the humility part is heavenly and makes you open to God's love in a way that delights heaven. If others have to care for you, sharing their food, shelter, time or wealth with you, accept this in peace. You may not have anything with which to reward them but God has all of infinity to bless them for their kindness to you. Indeed, your situation may be the best opportunity these people have to obtain holiness. Here is a snare. Do not become angry at the ones who help you, even if they give with superiority. If your circumstances make them feel superior, then they are in greater trouble than you and they have their own lessons to learn. You must pray for them and concentrate on the lessons God is teaching you today. Accept the help of others as though if were directly from the hand of God. You are in financial trouble. You pray. God sends help. Be grateful to Him and rejoice. Do not criticise the manner in which God sends the help. That is like being on a road walking, certain that you cannot continue as you are too tired. You have miles to go. A car comes along and offers you transport. You get into the car and begin to criticise the colour of the seats. Would you not shake your head at this foolishness? Would you laugh at the ridiculousness? Would you feel sad for the one who offered his help, only to be mocked and ridiculed by a mean spirited one? Be loving. Look with favour on those whom God sends to assist you.

St. Augustine

Dear friends, we in heaven see your needs. We hear your prayers. Come to God with everything. Be at peace in everything. Be like trusting children who know that their father will provide for them when the time is right. You will not regret trusting God. Trusting the Father becomes a habit and it will serve you well in every area of your life. Perhaps you have enough money and you always have had enough money. You, even more than a poverty stricken one, must learn trust because there is a temptation when you are wealthy to rely on your wealth to protect you. Oh my, such folly. Such perilous folly is this. Truly, this is living in a house with no foundation. All may be well when it is sunny but in life storms must be expected as they come with regularity. An abundance of material wealth makes it even more imperative that you learn to rely only on God. Ask me for help with this and I will teach you everything I know about trusting God.

If you fear for the financial protection of your family, ask me to intercede for you. Jesus has the greatest tenderness for the poor because He, Himself was poor. Jesus understands that you worry about providing for your children and taking care of each other. Jesus accepts that this desire to provide for your loved ones is a holy inspiration that comes from Him. He will reward this by giving you all possible assistance. Do not think that you are working outside of God's will if you strive to protect your family financially.

Also, do not be afraid that God will punish you if you are wealthy. God, Himself has allowed you to be wealthy but God did not allow your wealth simply for your personal comfort. God allowed wealth for you so that you could steward this wealth in such a way that God could assist others through you. You will want to allow God to do this with freedom, which means you need to be praying for God's direction at all times.

Be at peace in all circumstances. God loves His children and you will not be abandoned. We, the saints in heaven, will assist you to find the right answers to all of your financial difficulties. There will come a day when you finish your life and all of these problems will cease. On that day, I, Augustine will be waiting for you so that I can congratulate you on the holy way in which you faced your financial circumstances.

Blessed Mother

My dear child, I am with you. There is a holy way to conduct yourself in your situation. If you pray, you will know which is the holy way that leads to my Son. I will protect you from choosing an unholy way that leads away from my Son. You see, little child, in everything you face there is opportunity for holiness. Heaven can use your day to move our goals forward if you are the poorest of the poor or the richest of the rich. All we need is your yes to Jesus. Say yes to my Son. Accept any crosses you have. We will help you to provide for your family. We will help you to have peace in any suffering. You will not be abandoned. I am a mother and I had many worries because of our lack of wealth. Many people assisted my little family. My gratitude for the generosity of others is still with me and God's gratitude for their generosity is still with them. Do you see? If you help others you will be rewarded for eternity. If you accept the help of others with dignity, you will become holy and set an example of dignified suffering. Beloved ones, I promise you that you will have what you need to become holy. Do not think that heaven abandons you with financial problems. Heaven helps in these matters as much as heaven helps in spiritual matters because we understand that all that happens in your life shapes your spirituality. Walk each day with heaven and you will see our help. I am your mother and I will not abandon you to these troubles. I will give you peace in all of your troubles.

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**December 18, 2006**

At prayer in my oratory –

Jesus: See, I am making it very peaceful for you here in your room; to detach you a little more. I want you to share the pain with Carla and Steve of the wait about work, but not so in close. To support them not to interfere.

Heaven Speaks to Parents Who Worry about Their Children's Salvation

**December 20, 2006**

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Jesus

My dear ones, you worry for your children. I understand. Your worry is a sign that all is right with you because a parent who loves their children feels concern for them....

Perhaps you have always followed Me but your children have strayed from the path and are spending their time in the world, away from Me. This causes you grief, I know. Pray for your children but do not become preoccupied with your worry about them. If you are connected to Me, I will be with your children. I will wait for a moment when their hearts are open to Me and I will fill them with graces, healing their wounds and softening their hearts. I do this constantly for holy parents and I will do this for you. Do not worry that God will abandon your children. A parent's prayers are powerful and these prayers are inspired by Me. Understand that you are working with heaven and with Me to convert these children. In order to console yourself, look at the love that is in your children. Look for any evidence of goodness. Remember the goodness your children showed to you when they were young. There you will find hope of that same goodness returning and growing when your child is converted. Be at peace, dear parents. God loves your children, too. Heaven will not forsake them. I see their wounds and understand what led them away from Me. I, even more than you, have compassion for their pain. I, even more than you, know how to heal their wounds and restore them to wellness, emotionally and spiritually. I am aware of every obstacle to holiness that they face, just as I am aware of every obstacle to holiness you face. I want you to be holy. The best way to help your children is for you to be holy. I ask you today to concentrate on your own holiness. If you do this, I will inspire you with exactly the right course to take to help your child. I keep My promises, as you know. Strive to be holy and I will help your children.

St. Monica

How heavy is the heart of a parent when their child has abandoned morality. This causes a pain that does not heal until the child has returned to God's path. I understand this burden because I carried it myself. Jesus seeks to help all such parents because He also understands this burden. With heaven, the priority is always personal growth in holiness. For this reason, God uses every experience we have on earth to make us holier and to bring us closer to Him. If we are close to God, God can use us powerfully and this helps the family of God. At this time, heaven has a need to bring light to a dark world. It is the darkness of the world that has distracted God's children. Perhaps your child is among these. Jesus is telling you that the best way to help your children is to become holier and holier so that His light can flow into the world through you. When a soul participates with God in this process of renewal through their personal holiness, God experiences great gratitude. God denies that soul nothing and the soul has great intercessory power. If you work for renewal through your attempt to become holier, God will reward you. Part of the way God will reward you is by reclaiming and healing your children. Believe this, my dear parents. It is true. Jesus promises all lay apostles that He will pursue full conversion of their loved ones. Jesus does not make this promise lightly. Jesus intends to keep this promise. If you work for Jesus, you are doing what you need to be doing for your children.

There is an excellent opportunity for holiness in this situation and that is by practicing trust. When you trust God, you are free to be joyful in His service. If you look at your children and feel distress at their condition, but then turn to God and trust Him with these children, you will know joy. It is good to tell God that you trust Him. It is good for God to hear this because it

consoles Him. It is also good for you hear yourself telling God that you trust Him as you will begin to believe it because you hear yourself saying it. I am going to give you this advice and then I will pray that you take it. Each time you feel worry over one of your children, say, "Jesus, I trust in you. Take care of this child." If you feel worry for one of your children one hundred times today, say this prayer one hundred times on this day. Believe me, Monica that it will work. I will be helping you with this and praying for grace for you. This is a new way to proceed because you are actually fighting the enemy's attempt to distract you with worry. I will be working with you and with heaven in the struggle to reclaim your child so you are not alone in this project. Show Jesus that you understand His great power by trusting Him.

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## December 20, 2006

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St. Monica

There are good ways to prompt conversion in your children. The best way to prompt conversion in your children is to love them, even in their error. When you are with your children, show them God's love by loving them. Do not focus all the attention on their errors or on the areas where you disagree with them or where you believe God disagrees with them. Instead, shine the brightest lights on the areas where you agree with them, where you feel God agrees with them, and where you see hope of greater goodness. What is it that God is consoled by when He looks at your child? Find this in them and talk about it. Your children will see God in you if they see God's love in you. Treat these loved ones in error the way Jesus treated those who were in error. Jesus was kind and loving. Jesus loved each person on earth individually and totally. You must look at each of your children with the Lord's eyes and love them individually and totally. This can be difficult, particularly if your child is behaving in a way that is not lovable. In fact, it is most clear that you will not feel this love in your heart if your child is behaving in an aggressive or hurtful manner. This is no problem if you work with heaven because Jesus will put His love in your heart. In this way the renewal begins in your family. God's love is abundantly available. God's forgiveness is also abundantly available. Ask God to send forgiveness to you so that when your children look into your eyes, they see only love.

St. Monica

There are those among you who are wondering how to reconcile your feelings about your child's sinfulness to your faith. In other words, you believe perhaps that your children's soul is at risk because of the behaviors being practiced by them. You possibly feel concern about their bitterness or rebelliousness. I will tell you that each family on earth is a model of the bigger family of God. God is telling you through this apostolate that each apostle brings light to the world through their commitment and service. It is the very same in your family. If your child is in darkness and is being deceived into thinking that sinful behavior is acceptable, you have all the more reason to allow God's light to flow through you. Through being exposed to the light, your children will begin to understand what is dark. You should tell your children in the greatest love that you are concerned. Tell them why you are concerned. Give them anything that will help them. Do not allow yourself to be intimidated and stand firm in your beliefs, my friend, but do not ever leave God's love. Most particularly, you must love your children while you are explaining your feelings about behaviors or attitudes that you find concerning. Indeed, it is at this time when you must allow the most love to flow through you. It is not appropriate for you to make judgments, of course. Only God can judge. Only God knows the true nature of the wounds in your child and if your child feels judgment from you, your child may turn further from Christ. Remember that Jesus came not to condemn but to save. Your interactions with a loved one in error must reflect the goal of saving, not condemning. Oh my dear parent, I feel your concern. I feel your heartbreak. Loving each other with God's love creates vulnerability to this type of hurt. Parents are well familiar with the hurt of rejection. I am cautioning you to love because heaven

seeks to pull your children back at this time and heaven does this most successfully through love. Pray and be at peace. You have more help than you can possibly imagine.

Blessed Mother

My dear parent, how my heart hurts for you. I understand the pain of worrying over a child. I know that you worry because you seek to prevent additional pain for your child, regardless of their age. I know that you see their path and you fear trouble ahead for them. I also see this and I will help you to call your child back to God's path. We do this in great love and gentleness. This is the best way. I will give you my gentleness and with it you will melt your child's heart and create in them a longing for goodness. There is no circumstance that should cause you to give up hope. I will not allow you to give up hope. Even as you read these words I am obtaining fresh hope for you and with this hope I am also obtaining a spirit of calm that will enable you to serve in peace. We will surround this child for you. We will protect this child. If your child has died and you worry for their salvation, I ask you today to stop. God is all merciful. Trust in His goodness. The good God could not face a parent who trusted Him and disappoint that parent. Your greatest weapon in the battle to save your children is trust in God. Use this weapon and be at peace because I am your mother and I read your heart effortlessly. I will help you. Your battle is also my battle.

## December 21,

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I spend a lovely overnight with the Ballards – a couple, both Lutheran ministers who became Catholics last Easter. They live in Asheville. She is a beautiful contemplative iconographer and he is hoping to become a deacon but is also a counselor as well as a theologian. We had wonderful talks. I hope they will become real friends and part of our Sacred Arts Retreat Center.

Heaven Speaks to Those Who Fear Purgatory

## December 21, 2006

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Jesus

My beloved children harbor many fears. This is understandable. The fears of one can be transmitted to another and this is not good. During this time, fear spreads through the world quickly, almost instantaneously, through the media. Perhaps you rise on each day and look out and see that the sun is shining. It is a good moment for you. I am with you, you are fed, and My sun is shining. But this is not enough. You look to see what is happening in other parts of the world. Through communications that are often unnecessary for you, you learn that there is war, disaster, and famine. You look out again but the joy you had taken in the sunshine is gone. How can you feel joy when in another place there is war, disaster, and famine? You fear immediately that these things will come to you.

I want you to be aware of the needs of others and if a cross comes to you, I want you to carry it with dignity. But I want you to remain in your life, paying attention to your tasks. My friends, few are serving in the area where I have placed them. They are isolating themselves, listening to events from everywhere else in the world. In the meantime, events in their own areas pass unheeded and untended. It is true that I will use communications to further My renewal. I will use everything I can to save souls. But I want less time given over to the consideration of the crosses and challenges of others and more time given over to the crosses and challenges in front of each one of My children. My enemy is using these communications to inflate the fears of My children. Fear is not from Me. Because there is disaster in one area does not mean that you are assured of disaster in your area. Children, listen to Me. It is good to sympathize with others through constant prayer and concrete assistance. It is not good to be inundated with images of

disaster. This is not from Me. In each of those situations, there are holy men and women acting as apostles and helping Me. They are becoming saints through these situations. My angels are present, as well as My saints. I am present. I am sustaining many and reaping a harvest for heaven in every event that occurs in your world. When each soul completes their time on earth and comes to Me, there is justice. You do not see this on your televisions. You do not read this in your newspapers. I am barely represented in these communications so you must not look to these communications for truth. Look to Me, in prayer, and there you will find truth.

I make reference now to the fear harbored by many that they will suffer unbearably in purgatory. My friends, you see unjust and seemingly unbearable suffering on earth and you are fearful. You then transfer this fear to Me because if injustice is allowed on earth, surely injustice is allowed in the heavenly kingdom. This is simply not true. There will be no injustice here and you will not suffer physical pain in purgatory.

Perhaps this does not comfort you. Perhaps you understand how sinfully you have behaved and you fear just punishment. If you feel this way, you have not spent enough time resting in My companionship. You do not know Me. You do not understand heaven or its many kingdoms. I do not hold this against you. I understand and it is for this reason I am giving you these words. Do not be afraid of the process of purification that awaits some of you after your death and before your entrance into heaven. There is nothing to fear. You will find that I am all compassion and mercy. I do not seek to condemn you, but to save you. I am your friend and I love you. Even if you are not My friend now, at this time, I have hope that you will change your mind and become My friend later, at the time of your death. A friend does not prepare pain for a loved one coming in from a long journey. A friend prepares a time of recovery if it is necessary and that is what I have prepared for you. Think of time in purgatory as time for recovery. You will recover and grow in purgatory if, together, you and I, find that you need this. I will take care of you, always.

St. Andrew

God's friends in the world have a certain amount of trust in Him. There is not enough trust in Him, it is true, because there is really no way for a soul on earth to fully understand the Godhead and what flows from Him. But the small amount of trust that souls on earth have for God is well placed and benefits each person immensely. Truly, a life lived one way would be lived in a completely different way if a person allowed heaven to place greater trust in their soul. I am telling you this today because I look at you and I want you to live differently. Your life can be altered if you trust God. You will bring far more souls to the Father if you trust God. Yes, it is all about trust. Many say they trust God but then they fear purgatory. I am not trying to catch you in something. I am trying to reveal to you a possible discrepancy in what you say and what you feel. It is good to identify this discrepancy if it exists, in order to correct it. If you follow God, you do so because it is the right thing to do. You are wise. I tell you today that it is the right thing to do because God is good. God is all love and love generates, by its nature, mercy. It can do no less. A loving heart is a soft heart. A loving heart is also a wise heart and in its wisdom the wise heart understands what is best for the recipient of perfect love. In this great love and wisdom, God allowed for repentance. He did not have to do this. He did not even have to create us and when you get to heaven you will understand how good our God is and how infinite is His love. But God, in His love, did create us and allowed for a life for each of us. God understands our weakness and delights in the process of perfection that we embark upon through fidelity to Him. God's expectations are realistic and compassionate. God expects that we will experience our weaknesses and God understands that at times we may travel down paths that lead away from Him. God could have said, "You cannot be admitted to heaven unless you become perfect on earth." He could have said this, my friends. He is God. But He did not. He said, instead, "I will allow for the imperfections of My beloved created ones. I will help them by allowing them, if necessary, to complete this process of purification in the safety of My kingdom."

Purgatory is another extension of God's generosity. You will be safe there. In considering this as a possibility, you must rejoice. Fear of purgatory is unnecessary and inappropriate.

### December 23, 2006

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I read this wonderful, wonderful book *Left to Tell* about Immaculee, a young African woman from Rwanda who was hiding during the genocide in a bathroom with 6 other young women and survived. Her family except for one was massacred. She asked to go back to her village, having been saved by the French, and when she saw the man who slaughtered her family, broken, now a prisoner of her tribe's soldiers she was able to forgive him. Asked by the soldiers why she did that since he deserved hell, she, all of whose possessions had been destroyed by these enemies said "forgiveness is the only thing I have left to give." It is a stunning book.

Jesus: See what I can do? Please dear Ronda stop being afraid – there is nothing I won't do to help anyone to love who prays for that.

Sweet, sweet e-mail:

Love you, love your work, love your web mini-talks!

Please continue your work and thank you for sharing yourself with us.

Merry Christmas and may you be abundantly blessed.

In Christ, Elizabeth Lowry

### December 26, 2006

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Carla Eaton sent me Elgar's *Dream of Gerontius* for Christmas as asked. I had worn my cassettes down playing it at all the family deaths for months over and over again. I love the exalted pathos of it. This time I was sure Blessed Cardinal Newman, who wrote the poem, must have inspired Elgar melody by melody since Newman as a musician. I thought "It is Newman's Jesus, that I love. This is Your song, Jesus.

Jesus seemed to reply: Your books are also songs of Me. Thank you. Please let Me sing a song of peace in your heart at this Christmas time. Just pray My name and look at Me as a baby in the pictures around you.

He also seemed to tell me: "Of course you feel that you can't be holy with your jumpy nervous temperament. You just have to see this with humility and call upon Me constantly to live in you, like St. Paul did. Who would have thought the St. Paul who arranged the stoning of St. Stephen would make it?"

### December 27, 2006

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Dear Paul,

I have been praying for the gift of counsel, but I am really not a psychological counselor but a mentor literary and philosophical counselor, also a prayer warrior. also since my son Charlie committed suicide at age 19, I am traumatized. I cannot deal with others about that subject, but I can talk to you about despair in general: Here are some suggestions after praying for you about an hour. I would ask you to consider them even if they seem impossible for you:

1. Go to confession and go to at least Sunday Mass. (Maybe you still do)
2. I find truth is the best remedy for despair - either read the Vatican Catechism - you can find it on the web, or Peter Kreeft's Summa of the Summa slowly - if you disagree, dialogue with me about them.
3. Pray the rosary every day.
4. Go to the web to Recovery, Inc. which is for depression, anxiety and anger - they are free groups and surely there are some in Boston area. They were founded in the 1940's and operate a little like Twelve Step - free, except by donation. They helped me enormously with anger. I think you have lots of anger.

If you want to trust me enough to try any of the above, I think God will give me the grace to help you. Because of my son's death I will spend any amount of time to help anyone in despair, so don't hesitate.

Shalom, Ronda

I find myself something of a peacemaker in the family, just from accumulated wisdom, in spite of all my faults.

Jesus: I want peace in your heart, their hearts, in families. Try!

## December 28, 2006

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Dear Jesus, Mary, Joseph,

At my suggestions and the desires of some of the strongly active pro-life people in the parish we had a special Mass of Reparation for abortion on the Feast of the Holy Innocents. Fr. Ken did it beautifully, emphasizing how this feast had fallen out of popularity but now has a new meaning. Others were planning to do the rosary and intentions but they had been sick during the holidays and didn't do it, so Father Ken quickly asked if he should lead it. I know he is not fond of out loud rosaries so I was surprised. In the biography of Mother Benedict Dus, foundress of Regina Laudis it mentions that she used to say she needed to meet the expectations of each sister. In a certain way Fr. Ken wants to "be all things to all men" because he wants to meet our expectations. I thanked him for making the sacrifice of saying the extra Mass. He said "that's what it's all about." Why do I keep forgetting that?

I was feeling such gratitude for him and for our friendship.

Jesus chided me gently: "Friendship is a necessity, not a luxury. You might not have survived here without him.

Carla Eaton recommended the film Joyeux Noel about French and Scottish and German soldiers during World War I having a cease fire and celebrating Christmas together.

I thought: in purgatory we will be stretched to really believe that good is stronger than evil.

## Dec. 29, 2006

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More money? I saw a fantastic TV spot showing a young woman cast down by fear of her pregnancy and offering help in such a way that someone seeking an abortion might call the Pregnancy Line. I checked the web and it was a pro-life message with links to local pregnancy counseling centers that are pro-life. I sent a contribution to Pregnancy Line – Virtue Media – and the man who does these terrific TV ads asked if I would be interested in being paid to write web-site popular material for them on apologetics. Thank you, Jesus. (They never got back to me on this.)

### Me Speaking #3 Healing of Envy December, 2006

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Envy! What a role it plays in many of our lives. It could begin with feeling a sibling got more love in the family because he or she was prettier, brighter, or more talented. In school, envy of classmates who were better looking, or stronger, or richer, or had greater ability in sports or academics, or the more popular. At work, envy of those higher up on the ladder or those more sought after socially, or those with more sex appeal. In Church life envy of those closer to the priest, or of the priest himself by those who wished they had that vocation, family Christians envying the freedom of the singles; and singles envying the married and the parents. And, of course, we can envy those who seem more holy than we are as in “how come she thinks Jesus is talking to her specially? If He talked to people that way, it should be me?”

Think about the horrible feeling in ourselves when we envy such as low-self-esteem in the area where we can't compare; bitter resentment that we don't have what the other does, admiration sullied by dislike of the one who is envied. Often there is a desire to find fault with the envied person, to run them down, or gloat over their failures.

One of my main areas of envy started with my unidentical twin-sister, Carla, a dancer, who was ethereal and graceful where I was clumsy with nervous jerky hand gestures. In later years I envied anyone with that kind of graceful beauty, such as certain women prophetesses in charismatic renewal who spoke with hands upraised in voices flowing with supernatural grace.

What heals such envy?

First, I believe we have to admit to our envy, no matter how shameful.

Secondly, we need to trace childhood feelings of being less lovable because not as good in some respect as someone else.

Thirdly, we should bring to Jesus our feelings of being less than another, our fear that He loves us less because we lack some quality another has more of.

We can ask Him to tell us how He loves us even if we feel inferior.

After we have let Him show us in whatever way He wishes that we are lovable, we need to repent of any ways we have hurt those we envy by gossiping about them, or tearing them down.

When we are healed we will be able simply to admire those with qualities we wish we had more of; rejoicing in being able to enjoy their gifts.

Here is when healing of envy began in my life. I was visiting a monastery of contemplative nuns. While waiting to speak to the Superior, I sat in the chapel and observed them one by one coming in for prayer, able to sit in perfect stillness, rapt in communion with the Lord.

I thought to myself, how can Jesus love such a fidgety wretch as I am, who can't sit still for more than 5 minutes. I will never be holy.

Jesus seemed to speak in my heart with these never to be forgotten words: You will never be a woman of that kind of peace. You are a Jewish convert and you carry the Jewish yearning for the Messiah. In the Church, your name is not peace, but yearning.

If you have any envy in your heart – why not try the steps I just suggested. May God bless you and help you to understand your own special loveliness.

### Segment 4 Me, Speaking: “Self-Righteous Anger: Sending Others to Hell in a Hand Basket” January, 2007

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As most of you know, I have been studying anger management and relating it to Catholic spirituality for a long time. An area I struggle with a lot is self-righteous anger. Self-righteousness is tricky. Here are some helpful distinctions:

- Unrighteous anger - we are in the wrong but we blame others, or things such as computers, or even God.

- Righteous anger is good. It pertains to situations where we are angry at injustice and our anger is proportionate; not harsh, eager to right the wrong, and to forgive, such as Jesus anger at the Pharisees which didn't keep Him from reaching out to Nicodemus or to Saul, the Pharisee, after his stoning of St. Stephen!

- Self-righteous anger is anger for a good reason but is tainted by arrogance, harshness, and reveling in our superiority over those who offended us by their sins. When we indulge in such anger, we are probably eager to consign the offender to hell in a hand basket or whatever way would be even swifter! Examples would be anger against someone who rejects the divinity of Jesus or rejects the Church; someone who exploits me or someone dear to me; a spouse whose betrayal leads to divorce.

In situations such as these, here is what goes on in me:

- sorrow for the objective injustice and for the offending person who is wrong-headed or cruel;

- rage that I am unable to force the other to change;

- a burning feeling in my chest – a sort of emotional “heartburn” as toxic fantasies of their defeat course through my feverish brain.

Every time the Holy Spirit tries to remind me of the words of Jesus “forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us,” I mutter those words quickly, but then revert to a cycle of

- recalling the words or deeds of the offender

- gnashing my teeth, sometimes literally!

- and then rehearsing words of sarcastic refutation, plots of vengeance; or plans of disdainful rejection of the offender and withdrawal.

What I am doing with self-righteous anger is what Dr. Abraham Low of Recovery, Inc. for anger, fear and depression, calls trying for “a symbolic victory.” What does that mean? Well, because we don't have the power to win over someone such as the defamer of our most cherished beliefs; or the exploiter of the weak, or the one who betrayed us personally; we want to defeat them in some other way. As Von Hildebrand writes, the self-righteous person wants to seat himself on the throne of truth and hurl denunciations. Less dramatically, this is done by condemning or ridiculing the offender in our conversations with allies. I cover my feelings of weakness to bring about justice by the superior feeling of being JUDGE.

When we have sent the offender in a hand basket to hell, symbolically, through denunciation in our heads or in our conversations with others, we feel powerful.

But only for a short time, because real power is not in hate but in love.

As part of His prophetic teaching role, Jesus did denounce the sins of others, but one on one he was always eager to forgive and save - even in the case of Judas.

I challenge myself and you, the listener, to make a list of old and present enemies: either those you hate from a distance such as politicians or those you know personally.

Then, consider:

1) Is my sorrow and anger helping these others to change?

2) What could I do that would help bring about change? We should never resign ourselves to evil in others if we can make a change for the better. Certainly, if everything else fails, there is always prayer. Walking away from a situation is also a form of change but then we needn't spend time afterwards in venomous descriptions of the offenders.

3) Would greater forgiving love in Christ of each person, cast out self-righteous anger from my heart? Say a prayer for this blessing with respect to each person you are angry at.

4) Can I try to give up symbolic victory hot or cold in my thoughts and conversation?

5) What would be left if I let God cast out the anger in my heart: only sorrow and forgiving love?

If this mini-talk helped you, try looking on the web for Recovery, Inc. self-help groups near you – don't forget the Inc. It's not 12 Step, which is Recovery without the Inc. Or get hold of my book *Taming the Lion Within: 5 Steps from Anger to Peace* – its on [www.rondachervin.com](http://www.rondachervin.com)

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### December 30, 2007

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Watched movie *Joyeux Noel* about French, Scottish and Germans meeting between the trenches in WWI to celebrate Christmas. Afterwards I thought I should ask Jesus about war.

He seemed to say: I cannot prevent the consequences of worldliness in all its forms of power and greed but I can bring good out of evil as in the respites in the film.

Line from a poem about Shakespeare by Jeanne Murray Walker in the *Cresset Magazine*:

“When did he guess that if God loves us, it must be because our aptitude for suffering breaks his heart?”

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### December 31, 2006

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Is Gregorian Chant the sound of trust?

Praying about the Order of Consecrated Widows that is starting. Had given myself a Jan. 1 deadline to see if the Archbishop wanted to advise me. No answer. But my sense is that Jesus wants me for this new thing (revived of course) of Consecrated Widows under the bishop, not to be sister in an order of consecrated widows. I think I am more of an individual, like Catherine de Hueck Dougherty or Dorothy Day, or Lily.

I am not part of a group of lights, but a single light on a candle stick?

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### January 1, 2007

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Jesus

I, Jesus, take delight in My apostles. I look into the world and see My friends, serving each other and growing in love and truly I experience delight. My friends, you will be well rewarded. The holier you become, the easier it will be for you to come to heaven. That is My goal for you, that you become so holy on earth that your death be a time of great peace and joy. How I anticipate the homecoming of each of My beloved servants. I plan for the day and prepare for the great rejoicing that will take place. You will be welcomed into eternity by a multitude of apostles, all of whom served before you. You will recognize your friends and family in heaven and they will assemble to greet you. Such joyous reunion. Such well earned reward. My friends, your life will pass quickly, far more quickly than you can imagine. I speak to you today to remind and encourage you. I remind you that you are committed to Me, to My will. Begin each day remembering that you have made a commitment to serve heaven on that day. If you pledge your allegiance to God, you are on the side of God. If you are on the side of God, you are working against God's enemy. I want you to reject all that comes from the enemy. Be diligent about your time in silence and I will reveal anything that I wish you to reject or abandon. I draw you into My heart, further and further. There is always a need to advance. Today, I call you to make an even greater commitment to advancing in holiness. I will help you, of course. I will make your path even more clear to you. I come today to remind you of your pledge, but also to encourage you. I look into the world at this time and there is darkness, it is true, but there is also light and that light comes from your commitment to Me. The angels see your service and they rejoice. The saints see your service and they applaud. Our mother, Mary, sees your service and she is comforted. I, Jesus Christ, see your service and I experience delight. You are part of a team, My

team. We are the team that brings salvation and we do that through love. In your heart I am placing a love for humanity. You will experience this love individually, for each person with whom you come in contact. This is how I experience love. I love all mankind and I do this one person at a time. You must do the same. Love those around you, particularly those in your family. Treat each person with dignity and respect because if people see that you are good, they will understand that I am good. Be at peace. I am with you in everything and your service delights Me.

**January 4, 2007,**

My baptismal feast. Elizabeth Seton, a nun widow, my beloved friend.

Working with Anne on Widow series. She is so much more empathetic and compassionate. I realize I am less empathetic because I am jealous of the widows whose marriage was better and therefore the grieving more. I need to get healing on this. I was thinking that this made me less able to do the series.

Jesus: No. Because of your difficult marriage you threw yourself into My heart early on. This makes you able to speak survival to the widows and unhappily married potential widows who will watch. Let Anne carry the compassion part. That's why the Holy Spirit led you to choose her. Now, stop, don't rush along. Stop and bring to Me again your hurt at the problems in your marriage. I brought so much good out of that evil. I saved you from the pit of despair. Martin is trying to help you now from heaven. He understands his sins better and your sins of desperation and retaliation.

Realized I am envious of my sister's marriage!!!! Explains a lot of the tensions in relating to them as a married couple!

**January 6, 2007**

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There are a few reasons I am writing to you, Fr. Patrick, the head of the hermit village Catholic Solitudes where I lived for several years):

As I slow down it is so clear to me in my prayer times how much your spiritual way is with me, even if only in the tiniest form compared to the hermit version of it. Thank you. One is often think of seems banal but is really profound. You once said about what to do all day - have your prayer times and then respond to what comes along!

For workaholic projectitis types like me, that is so radical and I mutter this advice to myself from time to time.

Epiphany – Father Ken's sermon was about the many parts of the Epiphany scripture about the whole world being united by faith in Christ, as contrasted with our desire, often, to define ourselves by division – as in I am this color and they are not; or this race, etc. I thought of how I used to divide myself from the congregation on Sunday on the basis of they not being daily Mass Catholics (I mean those who could easily go to daily Mass but chose not to). But since being at St. Charles I am getting the grace to love to sit at Sunday Mass and revel in the faithfulness to Jesus expressed in regular going to Sunday Mass. I think this change comes from my spiritual friendship with Fr. Ken so that I see some things the way he might see them – an opening to other ways of understanding things. Maybe less critically?

Jesus seems to tell me: I love to see my beloved disciples at daily Mass, but I also love to see my disciples who come only on Sunday. You cannot know how many times during the week they lift their hearts up to me. After purgatory everyone will be with me every day for all eternity.

At the Hispanic Mass tonight they sung Silent Night in Spanish syncopated. I was feeling very tired and kind of glum and it amused and revived me greatly even though musically it is so

weak. Jesus seemed to tell me that I am tied because I am sharing in the family anxieties about work and finances right now. I have to give those anxieties to Him whenever they come over me.

Watching a film that none of us liked much at home this evening with lots of us joking about its defects, I enjoyed the humor and closeness.

Jesus: Stop trying to control everything in the house. I love everyone here and you will all help each other.

Since I am old I need to have Carla even more around the main floor of the house. Just seeing the “caretaker” helps. This is part of the new plan we are trying. It is good for me to humbly accept her help. She has a great heart for helping me. I was touched that she folded some of the garments that were mingled with her wash. I have never folded garments myself ever. It is good for a grandmother to help a lot and be helped a lot.

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### January 8, 2007

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I bought some copper toned brown material in crinkle cotton which seems as close to sack cloth as one could easily wear for summer dress – got the idea while hand sewing it that I could be a penitent dedicated widow. Got very high on this idea. Also for the EWTN series to start off in the black dress Diana got me for Christmas, then move to a regular dress like the blue print and then to this sack cloth type dress! Seemed like finding a way to be different that is just my own vs. a seeming religious outfit. Anti-conventional? Exhibitionist?

Jesus seems to say: “Identity” through garb is important. I want you to be happy in your dedicated widow image. Don’t over-analyze it. Do what seems good to you. That something makes you feel free, even in the sense of playful, is good when it comes to choices between good things. You are trying to do something symbolic to be liberated from the insecurity that goes into having to wear acceptable clothing to society, where you want your clothing, the Cross, the Miraculous Medal to be a statement. Look how much good the teens themselves and those who see them get out of wearing Catholic T-shirts.

I spoke to Fr. Ken about this and he thought it was right on, based on what he thought was the need to have varieties of expressions for this renewed vocation in the Church. It made me glad that he confirmed it since I am so aware of the role of self-deceit in life.

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### January 10, 2007

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First day back at the college. Good warm talks with Pastor Andrew and Phil Blosser. The course evaluations from last semester were available. I was discouraged by some nasty remarks. About 1/3 disliked the course and gave it an overall rating of C or D but 2/3 liked the class and were between B and A. More A’s than C’s and D’s. Even though I know it was an experimental first time teaching these students at the college and that there were lots of rough spots, I felt bad and wanted to stop teaching after this semester.

Jesus: I wanted to flee from the Garden of Gethsemane. Offer the pain for precisely those students who rejected you. You have a lot of wonderful things in the course, inspired by the Holy Spirit. Try your new method this semester and don’t make any decisions to leave until you see how it is going.

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### January 11, 2007

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Response to letter from a friend of Evie’s who is into international business systems:

Dear Frank,

It is the second day of the new semester at the college where I teach so I will start with an initial response and continue more on the weekend:...

On the abortion is murder question and punishment. Since it is the doctor who performs the killing it was doctors who went to jail in the past, not the woman. I think punishment was lighter not because it was not thought of as killing the innocent but because of compassion for women in panic and guilt about sex outside of marriage.

On the missionary issue - Jesus said "go out and baptize all nations." He didn't just die for his tribe but for the whole world. If you read the missionary documents of the Church since Vatican II they are written to include respect for the truths in other religions but still conviction that everyone needs Christ. I like to say about this "How could you know Jesus and not want everyone to know Him?"

More later, Shalom, Ronda

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### January 10, 2007

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Saw young woman from class last semester who was suicidal. I had intervened to bring her to counseling and pray for her every day. She looked great and said she was much better and responded to my hug. Deo gratias. Alleluia.

Jesus: Of course sometimes even when you pray I allow bad things to happen for my own reasons, but please have more trust that I can help.

At the swimming pool during visitors' swim there was an older woman talking to her friend: "Can you believe my husband is such a micro-manager he takes out the dishes I put in the dishwasher to wait to be full and re-organizes them. I thought this would be a good one for "retired couples" woes!

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### January 13, 2007

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Jesus: Don't be anxious about anxiety!

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### January 15, 2007

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I wished I could hug every black person I saw today for Martin Luther King Day as if it were their feast day, but figured they wouldn't really like it if I did.

Father Ken was commenting on the idea of perfection in the words of Jesus, as in how could he grow in perfection as the Scripture seems to say. He thought perfection meant having completed the work He was sent to do. I piped in "so when we are told to be perfect He means that He wants us to become what He wanted us to be, to finish our work on earth? Yes, Fr. Ken said. I can't be without flaws, so I prefer this meaning.

Sigh of relief. I know they always say saints, except for Mary and Joseph, still had defects. After all St. Ignatius slammed the door on his disciples just before his death!, etc.

All happy about dedicated widow plans sewing the copper colored "sack cloth" dress. Wrote to my sister, Carla about it, and immediately the joy went out thinking of her disapproval. This morning analyzed it this way:

Dear Carla, - e-mail to my sister, Carla, entitled "healing opportunity?"

The minute I wrote you about the dedicated widow plan, all the joy went out of it. I woke up depressed and disgruntled. Thought about it. I think it harks back to childhood. "Twin doesn't want to play, then there's no joy" syndrome.

I decided I have to want to do it between me and Jesus irrespective of the opinions of others about it. I am "pretending" to be individualistic, but my emotions are all tied up with approval. I think our mother made love and approval very tied together.

Let's rap about this some if you care to.

Love and prayers, Ronda

Jesus: Yes, this is a healing time in your family. Through both Fr. Eckley and Fr. Ken I have confirmed the dedicated widow plan for now. Of course the devil wants to find a way to stop you since following your rule helps you in stability and peace and you could bring other widows into the same benefits so the devil is telling you that it is all exhibitionism, melo-drama, etc. especially since these feelings followed on a cold letter from a former male mentor where his response to your joyful loving letter was a cold seeming thank you and nothing back. You left that mentor's close guidance because of that coldness, so now come right into my warm arms and the ease of Fr. Ken's understanding of you when you see him today. I want to help you all day long with these set-back experiences – to bring them up again so you can bring them to me once more for healing love.

Fr. Ken immediately saw what the dress meant when I showed him the half sewn version. It meant so much to me that he understood my purpose and didn't think it had all those negative reasons.

It is so wonderful what a good spiritual friend and/or mentor can do to sweep aside the devil's stratagems to make us feel absolutely miserable about all our motives.

Helpful letter back from my sister, Carla.

Dear Ronda,

I guess she did.(link love and approval) That's an important insight right there!

You're right, I like the idea of you just going ahead with a private rule, vows, etc. under Fr. Ken. But, as you guessed, why the outer garment? There's something connected with Martin and grieving I guess...wouldn't he like you to be as attractive and beautiful as you are? "I have come that you may have life!" I know widow's publicly wore black for a year and then shed them to resume life, and you want to resume life very dedicated. No one can miss that dear Ronda. Well, know I'm with you, with love, separate from all else. love, Carla

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## January 16, 2007

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Trying to explain about dedicated garb – in prayer I could find some reasons I haven't articulated too well yet:

solidarity with others who are dedicated to the Lord by a special dress even if it isn't a habit? being, like them, more covered vs. sort of loose hippies dresses which seem too wide open.

It is appropriate, not scrupulous, even for an old woman to not want to look open to men if she is only open to Jesus.

Realized my sister probably wouldn't understand this too well because she has always had dignity and focus in her body whereas I have always been floppy and ambiguous.

Pastor Andrew loves having me come to the Lutheran services and pray for the unification of the Churches. He seems to love my spirit. It is good to have even more close friends at LRC and vicinity.

### January 19, 2007

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Feeling very weak with joint pains and extreme fatigue. I am thinking it is a side effect of Metformin my diabetes medicine recently started. Thinking maybe I will not be able to teach soon.

Jesus: When you feel weak, you need to trust in Me, not take refuge in schemes.

### January 20, 2007

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Blue grass concert at parish. At first I just loved it. The loud music distracted me from my problems. I said to a friend: see there is more in life than my problems. But after about  $\frac{3}{4}$  of an hour I could hardly stand it and just longed for classical music. Is it that popular music is too horizontal? If the words are religious as in Gospel then I like it better, of course. Maybe classical music is a miracle given that the other kind is so much more easily appreciated by the masses.

### January 21, 2007

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I love how at the Hispanic Mass they have the birthday children come to the center in front of the altar to be hugged first by the altar servers and then the family and the priest. How their specialness is in this way appreciated within the Church family as well as their own!

Jesus: be gentle with those you love who are suffering and gentle with yourself, too.

### January 23, 2007

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About my fatigue and digestive problems that have me so worried about the future, I think I am afraid that if I cannot go out to teach I will just fall into the quicksand of too much leisure.

Jesus: It would frighten you to know all the sufferings you will have before you die. I promise to make you holy. For the rest, trust and see what happens. Your trust in Me is more important than any happening in the future.

### January 26, 2007

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Feast of the Conversion of St. Paul

Jesus: I am helping you. Trust Me. Can't you see Me bringing good out of all as I did with St. Paul?

### January 27, 2007

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Gratitude for friendship of Pastor Andrew

Jesus: See the bridges I told you I had put there for you to cross?

I came home and in spite of the usual fatigue after the long Friday, ending with the evening Mass (so beautiful always and so consoling to see the indefatigable sacrifice of Fr. Ken), I felt as I was going to bed on the verge of a new breakthrough.

Jesus: I want so much for you to break through, interiorly, to a much deeper trust. Let me do it in you. Your only agenda: Be Mine – Mine whether you are sick or tired or joyful. Sing My song all day.

### January 28, 2007

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Looking through gorgeous elaborate gift book called *In the Footsteps of Jesus: Pilgrims in the Holy Land*, hadn't noticed before that they had this droll way of describing the history of Jesus and of pilgrimages as if every picture was an illustration of a newspaper article such as *DEMONIAC'S WITS RETURN* and *Pigs Jump to their Deaths*. They have artists' works from all eras and I was thinking how Heaven loved seeing artists tracing the great holy events of the Bible.

### January 29, 2007

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I have a strange rebellious student – he wrote in his journal that he handed in about how he was reincarnated from a cow – wonderful, no one bothers cows, and then a mouse where he was alarmed that humans were so afraid of him and eventually was eaten by a cat. Presumably tongue in cheek but he was also sassy to me in class.

Jesus: He is lost right now. Pray for him and ask Me to cast out the demons.

### January 31, 2007

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Reading Toni Morrison's book *Love – entangled loves*. A climax line is this: "Dreams are only nightmares with lipstick." Cynical but interesting in terms of fantasies of perfection co-dependents tend to indulge.

Jesus: Only my love can transfigure tangled human loves by bringing mercy and forgiveness when there is so much knotted love and hate – also the prayers of Our Lady of Knots.

I DIDN'T USE FOLLOWING TEXT FOR A MINI-TALK BUT IT WAS CATHARTIC TO WRITE IT, SO I AM INCLUDING IT HERE:

'SOMETIMES I'M GROUCHY, BUT IT'S NO FUN'

### February 1, 2007

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I happened to be commending the young (to almost seventy year olds anyone under 50 seems young) manager of our neighborhood Eckerd's drugstore on the pleasant way he treats customers. He replied with a grin, "Well, sometimes I'm grouchy, but it's no fun."

I laughed at his nifty way to put it.

I rarely describe myself as grouchy. Usually I am either happy or furious. So, I wondered, it sure isn't fun to be furious? Wouldn't I rather be having fun?

In Abraham Low's anger management program one of the phrases we are supposed to repeat frequently to ourselves is "anger is your worst enemy; humor is your best friend." Surely humor comes under fun.

So, let me take a typical event that makes me angry and see if I can transition into humor and fun right now, on the spot, as I compose this mini-talk for you.

I have a tall, handsome, sportsman student in one of my classes who clearly hates my style of teaching or the content, or both style and content. This he indicates by a yawn of sophisticated boredom or a sneer. Often he opens a book unrelated to the class holding it visibly in front of him while I am trying to pour my pearls of wisdom into his skull.

Enraging.

Between classes I plot suitable punishments for the young man's behavior, gnashing my teeth while doing so. Of course there is nothing wrong with constructive plans for insisting on better class room manners. It is the gnashing of teeth I need to get away from. Would humor help?

How about laughing at myself for my vain wish that all my students would love and adore me as the greatest sage they've ever had the privilege of having as a professor? How about marveling at the brinkmanship of a student playing games with me at the risk of flunking the course if he misses most of the relevant instructions for what is wanted on papers and tests?

Ahem. So far this humor seems more bitter than side-splittingly funny.

Okay, how about thinking up a truly funny way to trump him next class. How about kneeling in front of his desk and begging him to pay attention to my wisdom lest he wind up unable to graduate because of this one course he forgot to make up after flunking it?

Or, starting the class with a prayer like this: "Dear Lord, please put directly into the heads of any students who don't like my teaching style, whatever truths You know they need to improve their lives."

Ha! Ha!

Sounds a little manipulative. Could put off a serious non-Catholic student who never conceived of mingling humor with prayer.

How about reading the Scripture passage where, after his beautiful sermon, they tried to throw Jesus off a cliff in his home town. And then add as commentary – "I'd rather you threw me off a cliff than just ignored my teachings."

Hard to pull off, I think. Could make the whole class think I am a melo-dramatic freak, not to mention so vain as to compare my speeches to those of Jesus.

How about just catching his eye when he walks in the classroom, smiling and waving at him. If I can't catch his eye I could call out when his name comes up on the attendance roster, "How ya doing?" and then wink if he looks up.

Jesus seems to say to me in my heart, "Ronda, you can't laugh in a good way unless you love someone. Why not start with forgiving a student who might be so caught up in either error or despair that he has no room for truth or even respect for authority figures?"

Let's make Jesus smile.

Consulted other faculty and administration. More simply, they regard such behavior of a student as a violation of professional courtesy. I decided to pray a lot and apply the penalty in the syllabus of asking the student next time he acts up to leave the class with a 5 pt. penalty off the grade. With grace I was able to talk about the rules beforehand with sufficient emotional control and then when he violated them again to tell him to leave. He declared – "I will be the first martyr."

It turns out he is rather well known for this. His advisor is going to talk to him about accepting the rules or taking a Drop/Pass in the course.

Later reading journals by other men and women on sports' scholarships it is clear that many of them simply regard the purpose of college, not at all as the Mission Statement would have it, but simply as a sports' arena. They get athletic scholarships and, more or less, the fee they have to pay is to sit in these core classes they have no interest in.

Perhaps we liberal arts profs are simply holding chairs in a cultural survival that has evolved into another form – sports and professional schools?

Jesus seems to say – "I love everyone. In these circumstances they can still be reached by philosophy courses in the framework of faith in Me. Most of them already love me. So even though this mind set of many of them makes it harder, let the Holy Spirit work through you as long as it is possible. Try to see some of the sporty students who are so difficult, as "poor" in culture. Your cultural riches were a gift. Follow St. John Bosco and don't let yourself feel superior because they make you feel insecure being big males who don't understand your type. But they have good will because they love Me.

## February 4, 2007

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Me, Speaking #5 Liturgy as Encore February, 2007

I took a new friend of mine, Amy, to a Mass. She was baptized in the Episcopal Church but not brought up to be religious. Watching her watching the liturgy, so familiar to me, I thought of this analogy probably because my priest is an organist and Amy is a cellist.

Suppose an organist started his daily practice each day with a favorite Bach piece and ended his practice with the same piece. Over time it would become “his song,” and he would never tire of it. It would become the framework of his time at the organ.

Similarly, the priest intones the words of the liturgy every day and on the weekend many times. He must experience it as God’s song. And think that if he sings it well enough to his tired flock, it will sing in their hearts as they go through their difficult week or day. It will become the framework of their lives.

I am thinking of a lovely way Catherine De Hueck Dougherty, of Madonna House fame, used to console the burdened. She would say, “everything happens between 2 Masses.”

The same might be said for the repetitious words of the rosary. Often boring for children forced to repeat them in family prayer, for devotees they become Mary’s song and we her choir.

After Vatican II there was a move to replace the simple rosary, thought to be said in too rote like a manner, with the Scriptural rosary, broken up on each decade and sometimes each bead with Scripture passages. I liked it at first, but then found it required too much effort. I was relieved to read in the book of some psychologist of religion, that the rosary, like prayers in several other religions, is like a “mantra.” the purpose is not meditation on religious mysteries, but letting them soak into the unconscious. Isn’t that true of our favorite songs, whether they be popular or classical? We have taken in the meaning of the song so that at the very first notes the entire mood of it infects us with glee or hope.

Praying in tongues is much the same, especially singing in tongues. An interpretation helps but we don’t want to hear more and more elaborate interpretations or variations. We want the meaning permeating the melody to lift us into another realm – the kingdom of heaven.

I think of daily Mass sometimes as keeping one foot in heaven – especially so that the other foot doesn’t get caught in the quicksand of my often compulsively anxious thought patterns.

It is considered to be a sign of success if at the end of the concert the people rise to their feet and yell “encore.”

Our whole lives of liturgy and rosary and praying of the psalms – what are they if not encores?

In heaven, I imagine that musicians get to play along with their favorite composers. To extend the analogy – what will be our joy one day to attend the heavenly Supper of the Lamb?

## February 6

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Learned shocking news of Peter’s death – former son in law, father of 4 grandsons who live with me. We lived together with Martin many years. I loved him very much and prayed so much he could be freed from his alcoholism which led to his death at 53.

The next morning after the news, praying the rosary in the car with the boys Nicholas and I felt Peter’s presence. Carla had a long good healing dialogue with him and “saw” him whirling around happy. Patricia Treece saw his grandmother and an angel with him at his death seemingly alone in his apartment in L.A.

Diana had to handle so much awful stuff to help Peter’s brother and his wife, Kit and Kate with the details of this. She was so valiant, especially while trying to give up smoking.

Carla’s friend, now mine, Amy, is visiting. She is a poet, cellist, nurse. I taught her the mercy chaplet and the rosary. She loves it. Fr. Ken came over to be with the family about the death, and

the boys opened up some also; lots of sharing on their best memories. Sign of how good it is to be a flexible personality type in these circumstances. I had a heavy planned agenda of how to deal with everything, but Carla invited Fr. Ken and said the boys were not ready to talk about their father, but then after more desultory dinner conversation they were. Carla will go to the Memorial Mass for his soul that Fr. Ken will celebrate.

### Feb. 8, 2007

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I was upset about something here and planned an escape. Then realized that this is my new form of symbolic victory, not rage (fight) but escape (flight) vs. trusting in the Lord and waiting to see how things develop. Hating to feel bad even in the slightest way, I rush to flight schemes.

### Feb. 10, 2007

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Jesus: Where are you running to? Everything is in Me. Quo vadis? Surrender.

### Feb. 11, 2007

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Insight at Mass about all these fantasies of flight whenever I feel blocked even on trifles. Try for Lent to give up fantasies and commit for a year to stay.

Carla thinks my fantasies of flight are a safety valve and I can't get away from such fantasies..

Jesus: When you feel hurt, rejected, try showing the pain vs. anger or rational pleas.

I would curl you into a ball and bring you to heaven except that I know you want to do the last bits of good you can do on earth...so grin and bear all the uncertainties, aches and pains, anxieties, disappointments. I will bring good from everything.

At Mass, I meditated on poverty of spirit – I thought that fantasies of escape are ersatz riches, symbolic victory.

### Feb. 13, 2007

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(Most of the family members coming to Peter's memorial Mass are not Catholics. I wondered if it was my responsibility to make sure they didn't come to Holy Communion. My friends thought not, that it is up to Fr. Ken. He agreed to mention it but then Peter Hartman, the organist, started a musical thing just at the moment that was apt for Father Ken's little speech about non-Catholics not receiving. Happily, the family members whispered to me a question about receiving, and I said no but they could come up with hands folded on their chests for a blessing. They did. Carla loved the Mass for Peter and Diana said she would go every week if she had such a priest. All this was deeply moving, thank you, Jesus.

Some of the students seemed to have gotten a lot out of the excuses segment in the ethics portion. Jesus told me I should not think in academic terms but of my work as ministry and witness.

### February 17, 2007

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Funeral of Deacon George. I approached the Bishop after the Mass. I was amazed how sweet was the look in his eyes when I was talking about consecrated widows.

Jesus: Don't try so hard to box everyone into a category. Expect surprises. Just cling to me and let Me surprise you.

I blew up a photo of Peter holding one of the boys as a baby – since no one could figure out which baby, it seemed like the copies I gave each to hang near their beds represented Peter's "archetypal" fatherhood. These little things a grandmother could think of are so important to me and to them.

### Feb. 18, 2007

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Oh dear Jesus, I am so tired of putting things in order for out of town trips.

Jesus: You knew it would be a hard time and you asked Me to stay very close. I am very close. Just rest as much as you can and stay with me, praying My name.

### Feb. 21, 2007

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Someone blew a shofar for Ash Wednesday and about 500 people were there! The choir did an Allegri like piece that Fr. Ken and Peter composed. It was sublime.

### March 13, 2007

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Letter to my chairperson:

Dear Larry,

This is a very sad letter to write. I have tried 3 different strategies for reaching the largely Freshman students in that philosophy class. Nothing works in terms of making it seem good to me to struggle on for another semester in the Fall. I could give you 25 reasons but most of them you could think of yourself. I think, bottom line, that I am just not able to teach well when there is so much resistance no matter what the cause. I searched my soul and went back over my whole teaching career on this discernment:

I did great with hippish students of the late 60's because enough of them were seekers to make up for the party types. Then I went through about 13 years of misery trying to reach those party types.

I did great with seminarians for obvious reasons - they loved having their mandatory philosophy taught with a mix of spirituality and psychology because that is how they think.

I had fair success with grad students at Steubenville - a strong Catholic school, but not well with the undergrads who were the opposite of party types but so uptight they wanted only formulas not creative explorer type teachers, or so I analyzed it.

I did very well at the tiny college with seminarians and small classes of previous home-schoolers.

Now, at LRC, I am back to struggle and mostly misery.

After discussing this with my spiritual director, I am feeling that I don't want to teach the Freshman classes even though much good was done and some students were very responsive. I would be happy to try classes for majors and/or electives on a Tues/Thurs basis in the Fall if such classes should open up.

I regret the inconvenience to you of this change of plans.

Let me know that you received this letter. With prayer and sorrow, Ronda

Dear Jesus, I didn't get a clear word from you, only a sense that I should consult Fr. Ken who thought this was the right decision. I do trust that you will give me whatever would be good to do in the future instead.

Jesus: I am trying to heal you of this father wound where you think that God hates you unless you are doing things that are painful because your own father was a Stoic who wanted boys. Your father did love you and delight in your feminine traits but he couldn't show it until later in life. Remember he told you that you were such a loving person and he appreciated that. Remember the Holy Spirit told you that holiness is having nothing but love in your heart – not resentment and rage, surely. God the Father accepts your decision. Forgive the students for who they are. They can be saved without philosophy. I save, not philosophy, even your way of teaching philosophy with Me in the center. They do love Me and know Me. Now make an act of forgiveness of them and ask pardon for your anger at the frustration of trying to teach them. Make the rest of the semester even more beautiful and loving.

Ronda: Dear Father God, You created all human beings, and only a small percentage to be touched by you through liberal arts, per se. I know you do reach them through great books and thinkers with truth and awe, but usually through beauty and truth itself as it comes in their lives. You know my desire to reach them through words and philosophical truths but I know You are going to be helping them without my mediation. You will help them in Your own ways. Please forgive my anger at them. I offer now the frustrations of the rest of this semester for graces to be poured upon them directly. May none of them be lost and may I someday see them radiant with joy in your kingdom of heaven. Amen.

### March 16, 2007

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Fr. Ken talked at the college. Some listened raptly who never listen to me! One student wanted to see our church afterwards. Tears of joy came thinking of how wonderful Fr. Ken is.

Jesus: Right. You are not a lone ranger. You need Fr. Ken and Pastor Andrew and Phil and Larry and Marianne and Bev and Karen and Doug. So, Ronda, you want to retain your link of LRC and enjoy the good part. I want you to just sit here in Church and luxuriate in the good around you, the beauty, the family, friends, the parish, the Trinity.

### March 17, 2007

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Fr. Ken gave a sermon about "I make all things new." He challenged us to think what that means for each of us right now. I think I don't need to dwell on patterns that repeat in the family, the school, but hope for newness in me as well.

### March 20, 2007

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Jesus: In the family I am trying to bring healing and that means I have to let the wounds open again. Trust. You need more rest. Take it.

### March 22, 2007

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Big crisis in the family. I went to see Mimosa apartments right next to the Church.  
Jesus: You are suffering with Me for all of them. Please believe that your pain will be their grace.

### March 23, 2007

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Feeling so confused about staying or moving out.

Jesus: I don't want to tell you about the future because I want you to cling to Me so closely in prayer that it doesn't matter where you are. Please trust and pray every prayer with personal yearning

I decided to stay unless there is a clear sign God wants me elsewhere.

March 25, 2007

I am doing an idea-edit for a book by wonderful woman writer, a Christian therapist, Clare Ten Eyck, It largely concerns women dealing with sexual issues from childhood.

Due to lots of anxiety at this time, I rather suddenly decided it couldn't hurt to consult her professionally about my own problems. These concern, among other things, the need to constantly fantasize about leaving my present situation with my dear family.

As I began the telephone therapy sessions my prayer was: Mary, help me to submit to Jesus as the Lord of my future. Blessed Francis Libermann (a saint who was consumed with anxiety), Karl Stern (a Jewish convert who was a psychiatrist), and Mary, Exalted Widow pray for me.

Here are some notes from the first session – not direct quotations, but my way of putting the insights Clare gave me sometimes in other words.

Spiritual warfare involves the devil attacking the weakest psychological place in us. Look at the anxiety attacks when they come to see what other emotions are going on.

I said I thought fear of rejection was predominant, but the next Monday I was anxious for a long, long time, about 5-6 hours without any rejection theme around, that I could find.

In spite of lots of therapy in the past – over a 55 year period would add up to about 7 years put together from different times of crisis, Clare thinks that even though it is the same wound, God wants to heal me in a deeper way each time the wound opens. I need to believe this vs. just wanting to blame other people in the present crisis.

She asked when was the first remembered feeling of anxiety.

I remembered staying with grandma while the separation of our parents was going on. She suggests writing these memories in the third person to get more into how a child would experience it vs. a present day hind sight analysis so I will start with that memory.

#### GRANDMA AND FIRE ISLAND

The twins were 8 years old. Carla and Diana (I changed my name to Ronda after the separation. Ronda was the name my father wanted to name me when I was a baby but my mother's choice, Diana, won out – I hated the name Diana because I was called Danny for short,

a boy's name but ironically, after I changed my name to Ronda they called me Ronnie, another boy's name)

(Again, writing my memories in the third person) They had visited their grandmother and grandfather in their summer house in Fire Island before. But this time would be different because neither of their parents would be with them during the visit. On the ferry when their mother turned them over to their grandmother she said, "I'll be back to get you soon," but did not specify. She told them nothing about the reason for the visit being that Mommy and Daddy were breaking up. Both parents thought that having fights in front of the children was wrong. They had never heard any arguments between their parents. They had never been separated from their mother before for even a whole day. Their father often left on business trips.

Diana felt anxious, therefore, at being parted from her mother.

She didn't like either of her grandparents. Her grandfather was a stiff old man from Colombia in South America – a Sephardic Jewish Mason (the Mason part she only found out decades after his death since it was a secret). The worst part about him was that he was a dentist and the pain of his ministrations was the worst she had ever known in her childhood years. Her grandmother was a loving woman but crazy and also a cleanliness fanatic. At all visits to her house, she insisted first on scrubbing the little girls' faces and necks and hands and arms and also combing the knots out of their hair. Also she tried to teach them little things about her Christian religion. Since Diana and Carla's parents were militant atheists they ridiculed Grandma Grace as being stupid and weak.

For these reasons, Diana felt anxious about this visit. She refused to eat some of the things her grandmother prepared. She felt compelled to learn the little song, Jesus, loves me, this I know, but later in bed made fun of it with her sister.

NEXT MEMORY OF ANXIETY,

After the separation their father moved to an apartment with his new wife and step-daughter about 10 blocks away. Diana and Carla moved with their mother to a house on the same block. Instead of the beautiful apartment on Riverside Drive overlooking the Hudson, they now lived in an apartment near Central Park. It was large but had mice and cockroaches. Their mother took a part time job and therefore was not home when they got home each day from school as she had been at the Riverside Drive apartment.

Ronda (name changed at her insistence), 8 years old, felt afraid to walk home because on the same block was a bully. He was an Irish Catholic kid, Johnnie, maybe about 6 years old but tough, and he liked to force even older kids to cross the street to the other side or he would threaten to ride into them on his tricycle. So brutal was the face of this little kid that both girls were frightened of him and felt they had to obey him.

They told their mother. She said that next day she would leave her job earlier and meet us at the corner and talk to the boy's mother. Diana felt sure that her powerful mother would be able to solve the problem immediately. The three of us walked down the street and sure enough the little boy appeared on his tricycle and told us to go over to the other side of the street. This was his side of the street. My mother started trying to reason with him. Out of a second or third floor window a large unkempt fat woman leaned out and yelled "Get out of here. Your girls must have been bothering my son."

Ronda was sure her very eloquent mother would have a good comeback for that. She was shocked when instead her mother suggested they cross the street and then suggested that in the future they should take a long detour and come home by a different route.

That made Ronda feel much more scared. She didn't want to walk blocks out of her way so she convinced her twin sister that they should run all the way from the corner to their apartment house, as if playing a game, so they wouldn't get anywhere near the kid.

Early Third Person Narrative involving sensuality:

Little Diana and Little Carla were 2-3 years old. (Their father always played classical music very loudly in the evenings when he came home from work. He especially liked sensual music such as Ravel's Bolero) After their bath they were used to coming into the living room and dancing around naked to the music. One evening their play became noisy and more boisterous than usual. Their father suddenly barked, "Enough is enough," and smacked them on their behinds. Neither parent had ever spanked them before and their father never spanked them again, with may explain this memory being so strong for both of the twins. Diana always though Daddy had only spanked her, but she asked Carla who said it was both of them.

Notes on Praying about the Sensuality Problems:

Clare: Sensuality is associated by you with being punished for being out of control.

I have difficulty with present very sensual members of my family because I think of it as out of control with horrible possible results.

Clare suggested that I needed to forgive these people for their sensuality. It was a new idea even though I have often forgiven many of these people for other things in the past that are related.

I also have anxiety now because at almost 70 I see my daughter's home as a refuge after trying 8 different living situations in the 14 years since my husband died but I am not sure it will work out.

In the session we talked about my relating sensuality to rejection because of my husband's early on infidelity and also that in spite of my being the most sensual ever in the marital act he started having very little sex with me after the birth of my twins, as if they were such adorable beauties, which they were, that I should become Cinderella serving the new little princesses.

Clare says that shame comes when we feel rejected for no reason we can fathom. So this could be a repeat of the feeling that my father rejected me for no reason. That he set me up to be sensual with the nudity and music and then spanked me. My husband won me partly by his sensual personality combined with all the depth, but then rejected me for no reason I could fathom.

This could explain my persistent syndrome of expected to be rejected by men just for being spontaneously me. I usually think they will reject me because I am sharp and argumentative as my mother was, but Clare thought that argumentativeness could have been the defense I threw up against my parents' sensuality and that of others.

Of course my intellect is also my gift but it could be refined by the intuitive feminine, Clare suggested.

Now, I am thinking that intuitive feminine is associated for me with sensuality and therefore I am suspect of it, unless it takes a religious form as in the much more physical charismatic prayer mode with the swaying and clapping and dancing and singing in tongues and laying hands on men as well as women.

When I woke up the day after the evening phone session these things came to mind in prayer:

Sensuality is also vibrancy which is a trait I share with the more sensual members of the family.

Jesus seemed to want to tell me these things:

Since your mother made an idol of spontaneity, I thought you needed discipline through your father.

I gave you the legacy of vibrancy, but I wanted it to be controlled so I used your father to keep you from living out the tragedies coming from the sensual in your mother's life. But with the separation my plan was for you to develop on your mother's philosophical lines. Her love of you was tainted by the wrong sensuality but she gave you the warmth that you have by her strong love of you.

I have used your sensuality to make you a vibrant speaker and teacher and a vibrant mystical Catholic. You are sealed in My heart and you don't need to be afraid.

Your daughters have the vibrancy and the wrong sensuality but they are controlling it better now, partly through graces you have won for them in prayer.

With the bully on the street, I was there, so you weren't hurt, just threatened. I sent angels to protect you in those streets of New York.

In spite of all these beautiful insights and messages I had one of the longest anxiety attacks this morning after the session. Until typing this all up I felt kind of hopeless about the whole enterprise of digging this all up again. But now writing the words it seemed Jesus sent, I feel hopeful. I am thinking it would be natural to feel more anxiety having to remember all this again all in a clump.

Maybe this is my 70's crisis?

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### March 27, 2007

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Forgiveness of sensuality in the family and in myself:

Dear Jesus, I give you the pain the sensuality of others in my family caused me, for their journey through eternity or for their conversion on earth. Send the Holy Spirit to show me how their sensuality was related to weaknesses so that I can more easily forgive.

Forgiveness of:

Parents: Because without their sensuality I would not exist to know and love you and all the other realities you created that I love.

My mother: Part of it was her way of compensating for her childhood deprivation from her own mother's coldness. She was seeking love desperately from women and men through sex. I forgive her for the legacy of sensuality she passed on to me and my daughters. I forgive her for bringing my daughter to the abortuary to have my first grandchild aborted.

Please heal my daughter from the scars of this.

My father: Stuck between his own Don Juan father and puritanical mother he didn't know how to love daughters. He had hoped we would be sons, so he treated us like sons. I forgive him for not giving me a good start with men and thank you for the healing in his late life on our visits.

Myself: I forgive myself for seeking love through sex as a teen, desperate for approval and love from male figures.

I accept that because you use sex to bring new human beings into the world You have to give us such a strong sensual drive lest we be self-enclosed prideful Stoics instead of vibrant relational husbands and wives and pro-creators

I forgive myself for romantic attachments to other men when I was married trying to compensate for my husband's seeming rejection. I thank You for the help of Andre the therapist at that time.

I forgive myself for being frisky with men even now because I never learned from my mother how to be positive feminine.

My husband: I forgive him for the dark sensual side of his great joie de vivre. I forgive him for his sins because he didn't find a good way to balance love of his twin daughters as babies with being a husband.

My son: I forgive Charlie for wanting to compensate for feeling inferior as a male because of being less tall and less sporty by his sensual sins.

I thank you, God, for sending me all those wonderful pure men who have fathered me so much in spiritual mentoring – Balduin, my godfather, Charlie Rich, Fr. Shaules, Fr. Leo, Fr. Eckley, Fr. Ken.

Our Lady, fully human, teach me how to be vibrant without taint of seductive, possessive, co-dependent sensuality.

Thank you Jesus, for being my true love as a widow dedicated to the Lord, and all through my life as a Catholic by coming into my body in the Eucharist.

Help me to stay here with the family without obsessive fantasies about other places to move, unless You very clearly want me to go elsewhere!

This exercise suggested by Clare left me feeling joyful, hopeful, and with new energy.

### March 29, 2007

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Got a good idea to do courses at Karen's house, LRC, and the parish on SPIRITUALITY OF THE EMOTIONS. These would be very practical sessions – over 10 weeks once a week with a teaching and then an exercise they share about next time.

I think the fresh energy comes from the work with Clare.

Talked to a friend about heavy problems at a place I used to be.

Jesus: I want you to show compassion to each of your friends in their troubles but not to think you have to solve them. Focus on things you can do such as spirituality of the emotions. You are not good at mediation or diplomacy so you can not help much except by listening and prayer. Don't get into needing to know what is happening in those on-going conflicts. It is all in My hands. I love each friend more than you do.

### April 1, 2007

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Session 2 with Clare

On healing the family tree, Clare suggested that I name each sibling that was aborted and have a Mass said for them.

Live siblings of aborted babies are anxious. They get the unspoken message that if unwanted children can be disposed of then one has to be very good and very careful.

There is also grief in the culture because of the many abortions. I could be mystically carrying the anxiety of many, maybe the anxiety of the aborted babies as they felt the probing knife. This could be impacting me.

Hand compulsions could be related. As a child, fingernail biting, rolling paper, doodling, then compulsive knitting, picking at fingers.

In therapy Clare said we start with what is now and then go back, even into the womb.

I told her my father said that he was not sure about having us but that mother wanted us.

Clare pointed out that we need the father for protection. It is his body that protects us. I have lots of reasons to feel unprotected – my father's leaving when we were 8. If my father had approached the bully on the block then the mother probably would have scolded him, but my mother wasn't a powerful protector in that instance. I added that since Martin got deathly ill, I didn't feel him as being such a protector anymore – latched on to spiritual friendships with men to find protectors. I could forgive myself for that more than I do.

But I have had good male friends and priest figures who have been protectors in different ways.

My present situation isn't very secure. The qualities that were missing in childhood after Dad left are still missing, said Clare. Even if our security is in Jesus, practically we have to do certain things to provide safety for ourselves. It is not wrong to assess what will give me security. Clare says **GOD WILL DO EVERYTHING FOR YOU THAT YOU CAN NOT DO FOR YOURSELF.**

If I felt really safe, I would not have to fantasize about other possibilities. I feel fragile. Therefore I try to find safety.

Clare prayed in tongues and gave the interpretation herself that Jesus will tie up the loose ends in a totally satisfying way. He will break the bondage through the generations, cut the

cards, and set the whole family free. She saw a waterfall opening up and pouring down on the family.

The family's aborted babies could be sort of like ghosts. I got names immediately while in the session. She said it was not important what these names meant. What is important is to identify each separately with a name because that makes them real persons to me. My prayers for them could be a kind of penance for my mother.

Names:  
Allegra  
Daniel  
Margo  
Sylvia  
Gregory  
Celeste  
Frank  
Tatiana  
George  
Diana  
Leon  
Nathan

### April 3, 2007

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My daughter, Carla, said that I want to live alone and also have someone to talk to every minute!

True.

Jesus: I am using her to help you. Be not afraid. It is a hard time for you. Hold tight.

### April 4, 2007

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Ros Moss told me about her idea for an order of sisters. I felt attracted if wary.

Jesus: For now encourage her, but don't leap.

### April 5, 2007

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I thought maybe Ros' order should have consecrated widows around it. She doubted that. She thought it would be hard enough helping older women to adjust to her community without having other options nearby.

A conflict about moving is that I want to be with Catholics spiritually but with the family for emotional reasons, especially because most others don't understand my personality, but also because I love them so much. At the end Carla said if I left now the door was always open. I was moved by this declaration and the deep love in her eyes.

I left for prayer time before Holy Thursday service determined to leave the house.

Before the Mass I prayed for the 12 aborted siblings as Clare suggested. I told Fr. Ken about this. He thought maybe they are praying for me. I thought maybe my mother wants to help me from purgatory through them and through Clare.

I decided to pray 3 Hail Mary's for each one by name. When I started praying I got these images:

Jesus, Mary and Joseph holding each little corpse in their embrace as they were born knowing that one day they would have 2 sisters, me and my twin who would know Jesus in the Church and start a new line in the family of believers.

I saw the 12 wearing red martyr robes in heaven and dancing in the mode my sister does with heads upward and arms flung forward in entreaty.

I seemed to be learning that they had prayed that we would be saved from abortion, allowed to live and be baptized and safe in the Church and that they prayed for all the grandchildren also in their stay in the womb and their births.

It seemed they have been our permanent intercessors.

I lit a candle for each one.

Jesus: Good. I know your pain to have no one in the family who knows Me in the Church as you do. I honor your pain and I WILL SAVE THEM ALL! Do you believe Me?

Ronda: Lord, I believe, help thou my unbelief.

Ros Moss was visiting. She says only Jesus can heal the members of my family, not me, and they need to know it is Him when He does it by ruling me out.

During the Mass I strongly felt I should leave the family house and live nearby, still visiting and helping the kids in the faith, unless God sends me a strong sign otherwise.

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### April 6, 2007 Good Friday

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Ros thought I should stay with the family out of love and totally accept whatever is difficult.

Jesus: I don't want to coerce you on this. I will be with you always no matter what you choose (between 2 goods). Love and do what you will.

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### April 7, 2007 Holy Saturday

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I felt the heaviness of all the sins of our family battling for the souls of the present ones.

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### April 8, 2007 Easter Sunday

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Thought of all the good that came from being with the family.

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### April 9, 2007

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Reading the student journals – some seem really to have gotten the truths I wanted them to.

Jesus: I told you I had my bridges you could walk on. Your sacrifices are never in vain.

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### April 11, 2007

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Worrying about the future, Jesus seemed to say “You have given your whole life to the Church, the Church will take care of you.”

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### April 12, 2007

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I took the apartment adjacent to the Church. Carla is relieved I will still be nearby vs. moving far away and is willing to go with the plan for my taking dinner and swim, etc. with them every day.

I wanted a one bedroom but they only had a two bedroom on the ground floor. I am hoping to make the master bedroom into a hospitality room.

Spoke to Clare, the therapist. She thought it was a wonderful decision to move, not coming out of neurosis. If one lives in a very tense place then it is harder to draw close to God. Spiritual growth she thinks takes place more in solitude. If Jesus led me to this, He will not abandon me.

I thought if God gave me a way out I should take it.

Clare said that in prayer she thought I need to spend more time with Mary so I can see how she is trying to mother me about the siblings and miscarriages and all the children. I could use the quiet prayer time to open myself to Mary. The fact that I feel distant from her is because of the hurts which lead us to project on Mary or Jesus or the Father that they dislike us. I could ask Mary to lead the prayer. She might want to do something new such as rocking me in her arms.

I thought that, of course, it is painful that my place of refuge didn't work all together as I hoped. Mary wants to be my refuge. Clare said I need to allow her to nurse me and take me through every stage of life.

Clare prayed in tongues. I felt the warmth of Mary surrounding me and recalled that Mary gives the Medjugorje visionaries hugs before she leaves them. Clare said she felt the presence of Mary tenderly embracing me. The lightness of the apartment is a sense of Mary. She heard Mary telling me "You will rest beneath my smile."

Clare said she saw a large Jesus behind Mary in the rays of divine mercy pouring that mercy on the apartment. She had a sense that in that apartment I would be satisfied.

She thought I should let the apartment be rather bare.

After talking to Clare I did feel as if Mary wants to be with me there in the apartment.

Mary: Yes, I do, my poor little Jewish Catholic philosopher, so zealous and so sad.

I thought I should call her Mother Mary.

Ronda: Mother Mary, lead me in prayer

Mary: Like Martha you are busy and troubled about many things. I want to bring you into my Son's peace. Sit quietly in this chapel where He dwells and breathe us in, JMJ. Pray, Jesus, Mary, Joseph bring me peace...and stop scruples that offend against trust. You will be distracted. That's all right. I am your mother.

Prayer of quiet came right away.

Mary seemed to tell me that it was not a mistake to have lived with the family. "There was much love and healing. But without much quiet prayer time, as Fr. Patrick used to say, you cannot become peaceful. Put that quiet prayer first in the apartment. You are not too busy. Your angel will remind you. No strain. Pray "JMJ peace" silently during Mass.

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## April 15, 2007

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Tears of joy at Maxi's first communion with Carla there. I thought, the Church is my womb; the priest is like St. Joseph bringing Jesus to us. Each time He is born again in the Eucharist.

Carla said about the move that I shouldn't feel badly. She wants her house to be a cave of refuge for everyone in the family where we can come for healing of stuff out in the world.