



# SPIRITUAL REFLECTION GUIDE GOOD WORD NEWSLETTER

MAY  
2013



## FROM THE SPIRITUAL ADVISER

Just days after his election Pope Francis celebrated the Easter Vigil in Rome. In the light of such change in the universal Church and the anxieties that many people feel about the life of our local Church in 2013, his homily is a strong and beautiful restatement of the message of Easter. Here are some extracts:

Newness often makes us fearful, including the newness which God brings us, the newness which God asks of us. We are like the Apostles in the Gospel: often we would prefer to hold on to our own security, to stand in front of a tomb, to think about someone who has died, someone who ultimately lives on only as a memory, like the great historical figures from the past. We are afraid of God's surprises; we are afraid of God's surprises! He always surprises us!

...Dear brothers and sisters, let us not be closed to the newness that God wants to bring into our lives! Are we often weary, disheartened and sad? Do we feel weighed down by our sins? Do we think that we won't be able to cope? Let us not close our hearts, let us not lose confidence, let us never give up: there are no situations which God cannot change, there is no sin which he cannot forgive if only we open ourselves to him.

... How often does Love have to tell us: Why do you look for the living among the dead? Our daily problems and worries can wrap us up in ourselves, in sadness and bitterness... and that is where death is. That is not the place to look for the One who is alive!

...Let the risen Jesus enter your life, welcome him as a friend, with trust: he is life! If up till now you have kept him at a distance, step forward. He will receive you with open arms. If you have been indifferent, take a risk: you won't be disappointed. If following him seems difficult, don't be afraid, trust him, be confident that he is close to you, he is with you and he will give you the peace you are looking for and the strength to live as he would have you do.

...To remember what God has done and continues to do for me, for us, to remember the road we have travelled; this is what opens our hearts to hope for the future. ...May he make us men and women capable of remembering all that he has done in our own lives and in the history of our world.

May he help us to feel his presence as the one who is alive and at work in our midst. And may he teach us each day not to look among the dead for the Living One. Amen.

The full text of this homily can be found at [www.vatican.va/.../francesco/homilies/](http://www.vatican.va/.../francesco/homilies/)



## REMEMBER IN YOUR PRAYERS

You are invited to remember in your prayers the following members, volunteers and friends

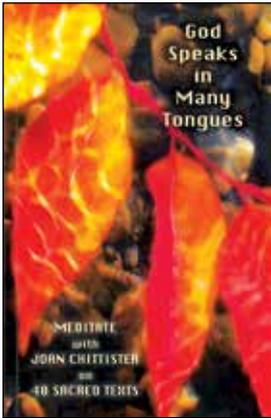
### Prayers for the Sick

- Jim Writer
- Andrew MacPherson
- Stephen Hellams
- Mary Lannen
- Barry Shand
- Patricia Sutherland
- Ron Hardy
- Alfred Morris
- Bernadette Farrugia
- Stella Cho
- Tulsa Manna
- Maria Kim
- Bill Raper
- Kevan Nash
- Clare Flanagan
- Bea Hopson
- Bernard Blackstock



## BOOK RECOMMENDATION: GOD SPEAKS IN MANY TONGUES

Author: Joan Chittister OSB Benetvision USA 2013



The Society's strategic Plan for New South Wales begins with a goal about Spirituality; Article 1.2 states: "The Society will promote ecumenical and interfaith contributions to the Society's work." We have, therefore, chosen to recommend a short collection of meditations gathered from a variety of sacred texts and entitled God Speaks in Many Tongues.

Reflection 11 of the 40 in the book has an immediate interest for Society members as an adaptation of a quotation from St. Vincent de Paul: "It is only because of your love that the poor will forgive you for the bread that you give them..." In her reflection Sister Joan adds:

"If the person you care for leaves your care, feeling more of a person than before you came along, you have succeeded... only then."

Some of the writings chosen are audacious, but then, that is the confidence of a mystic like St. Hildegard of Bingen in her poem about God's love for us: "God hugs you, you are encircled by the arms of the mystery of God." As we move into a new era for ourselves and the Christian community, with its hopes, and with its acknowledgements of failure, the author prays, "May this little book help us to break down religious barriers and create real spiritual bonds. May this little book be an adventure in finding new ways to see God and new ways to God."

We have a limited number of copies of this booklet available. Please make requests to [reception@vinnies.org.au](mailto:reception@vinnies.org.au). Preference will be given to people requesting for the first time.

**BEWARE THE RELIGION  
THAT TURNS YOU AGAINST  
ANOTHER ONE.  
IT'S UNLIKELEY THAT IT'S  
REALLY RELIGION AT ALL.**

JOAN CHITTISTER



## REMEMBER IN YOUR PRAYERS

We invite you to remember in your prayers the following members, volunteers and friends:

### Prayers for Repose of the Soul

Marie Leonard  
Alan French  
Frank McAlary  
Barry Sullivan  
Lorna Bowen  
Cecily Roach  
Josette Thierens  
Rose Wart  
Patricia Carroll  
Maree Griffin  
Reg Humphries  
Doug McKenzie  
Gerry Marshall  
Bill Hopson  
Alan McGregor  
George Van Demleux  
Rob Robinson  
Tom Doran  
Joe Doran  
Bill Johnston Watson  
Keith O'Meara

## PRAYER RESOURCES ONLINE



The annual econference sponsored by the Australian Bishops Conference and the Broken Bay Institute will take place on Thursday, 16 May. The topic will be the Gospel of Matthew. All details can be found at [econferences@bbi.catholic.edu.au](mailto:econferences@bbi.catholic.edu.au).

The Society Liturgy Kit for the Bicentenary of Blessed Frederic Ozanam is available on the Society website under [www.vinnies.org.au/member-resources-nsw](http://www.vinnies.org.au/member-resources-nsw)

More pastors are posting homilies online or on YouTube. Father Geoffrey Plant, the pastor of St. Michael's Lane Cove regularly offers his Sunday sermons on <https://www.youtube.com/user/GeoffreyPlant2066>

