

Trends

In a survey this question was asked: "Why did you choose the particular church which you now worship with?" The results were: 9% because of the architectural beauty of the building. 18% because of convenience to their homes. 3% because of the ministers of the church. 22% because there were people in the church whom they respected. 34% because neighbors or friends invited them to that church. Your life and personal invitation are vital ingredients to the growth of the Lord's church!

John 15:14: "You are My friends if you do whatever I command you."

Sentence Sermons

"Carry the Bible when you are young and it will carry you when you are old" —Unknown

"A Bible that is falling apart belongs to someone who's life is not falling apart." —Unknown

2 Timothy 3:15: "and that from childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus."

News & Notes

- Please pray for those mentioned in the announcements after services and others listed on the bulletin board in the foyer of the church building.
- Please pray for my son and his wife as they seek to start a new congregation in northern Michigan. Please pray Ryan can raise enough support to do this important work. Please read his recent report on the foyer bulletin board.
- Please pray for one another! "comfort each other and edify one another, just as you also are doing." 1 Thessalonians 5:11
- Please pray for Rody and Tessie Gumapd. They are suffering from a variety of health problems.
- Please keep sisters Virginia Brown and Wilma Cardwell in your prayers. Their faithfulness sets such a good example and gives encouragement to all! Ditto for Al (our Barnabas!).
- Pray for all the lost souls, especially those in the greater Bloomington area. Pray that Westside might be an influence for good in this community.
- Pray for the all of our students: elementary, secondary and college. Our young people are now back to school.
- There are many needy saints, including preachers! Can you help?! Let me know.

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Editor: Craig Thomas (812-320-9569); craigthomas82000@gmail.com

Please direct questions and comments to the editor.

Words of Life

Westside
church of Christ

"Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life."

John 6:68



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Catholic Sacramentals

Craig Thomas

Having trouble selling your house? Order the "St. Joseph Home Selling Kit." Having trouble losing weight? Order the "St. Margaret of Cortona Package." The latter package contains a wide variety of "sacramentals" including "A bottle of Holy Relic Oil." This oil is guaranteed to have "been touched to 15 first class relics..." of "14 saints," plus the "holy house of Loreto..." Strong stuff! And, for a "limited time" this package has been marked down from \$33 to \$29.95! Further, you'll find it comforting to know that if your sacramentals have touched "First Class Relics" it automatically makes them "a 3rd class relic!" That's guaranteed! A "Certificate of Authenticity [is] included!" These and many other sacramental "packages" can be obtained on-line (e.g., [Cukierski Family Sacramentals, LLC; www.cukierski.net](http://www.cukierski.net)), and are guaranteed to be "in FULL OBEDIENCE to the Magisterium of the Holy Mother Church."

1) **What are sacramentals?** The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (#1677) says "Sacramentals are sacred signs instituted by the Church." A Catholic scholar (M. D'Ambrosio) says they're another way God "communicates his truth to us..." The *Catholic Encyclopedia* tells us sacramentals may include certain "blessed" "acts" or "things." The "acts" would include certain ritualistic prayers; e.g., praying the rosary, making the sign of the cross, bowing, etc. "Things" can be a host of objects: crosses, crucifixes, candles, beads, bells, medallions, statues, salt, holy water, prayer cloths, pictures, oils, ashes, rocks, beans, etc. If you can imagine an object, there's a sacramental made out of it somewhere. You can even get "holy water" in a "spray bottle" that promises to rid "the evil one... anywhere that [it]...has been sprayed!"

2) **What do sacramentals do?** The *Catholic Encyclopedia* and the *Roman Catholic Sacramental* (sic) *Foundation* claim, among other things, sacramentals: A) "arouse the piety of the faithful"; B) "secure the sanctification of the faithful"; C) "distinguish the members of the Church from heretics"; D) "drive away evil spirits"; E) "effect delivery of the soul from sin and the penalties thereof"; F) can "be employed to obtain temporal favors"; and G) are "more powerful than purely private prayer." One sacramental (the "Holy Brown Scapular" of the Carmelite

Order) promises “Whoever dies clothed in this shall never suffer eternal fire.” And, “no other devotion renders our salvation so certain.” (*The Bride and the Dragon*)

3) **What’s wrong with sacramentals?** Sacramentals are the corrupt fruit of centuries of human tradition and superstition gone wild (Matt. 15:9). God’s word is “truth” (Jn. 17:17) and the basis of our “faith” (Rom. 10:17), not physical objects, even though they’re “blessed.” Satan “flee[s]” when we “submit to God” and “Resist the devil,” not through beads or spraying “Holy Water” about the house (Jas. 4:7). Prayer, confession, and repentance deliver “from sin and the penalties thereof” (1 Jn. 1:7-9; Acts 8:22), not wearing medals or praying to a “saint” using a “prayer” cloth, card, or magnet. God hears our prayers and they’re effective (Jas. 5:16; 1 Jn. 3:22; 5:14-15) without resorting to the adoration of “images” (Ex. 20:4-5). If one desires to “never suffer eternal fire” let him hear and heed the words of Christ (Jn. 12:48; 1 Jn. 2:3-5; 2 Thess. 1:8), not trust the “Holy Brown Scapular.”

“Little children, keep yourselves from idols. Amen.”

1 John 5:21

Those putting their faith in sacramentals face a hopeless situation.

“You shall have no other gods before Me. 4 ‘You shall not make for yourself a carved image — any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth”

Exodus 20:3-4

Don’t fear! There’s even a sacramental package for “Hopeless Situations,” it’s the “Mary Undoer of Knots Package!” (no kidding!) It’s “One of the most POPULAR packages!” (www.cukierski.net). How sad that people put their faith in such hocus-pocus (2 Tim. 4:4) and not in God’s eternal word (1 Pet. 1:23-25).

Editor’s note: I wrote this article in 2008. I checked the web source mentioned and could not find some of the items mentioned above for sale. However, there are many such websites selling various and sundry “sacramentals.” To check for yourself, just Google “catholic sacramentals store” or some variant of that phrase.

John F. Kennedy Had It All

Larry Ray Hafley

John F. Kennedy had everything. All this world could provide was his. The fragrant flowers of glory, honor, wealth and fame enveloped and adorned him with its choicest blooms. He was a man of pomp, power, passion, and position. A prize winning author, a decorated war hero—the list is endless.

(1) **Wealth:** His family’s fortune is legendary. He was an heir to multiplied millions of dollars. He was one of the richest men in the world.

(2) **Position:** He was elected president of the United States. He was the most powerful man in the world.

(3) **Personally:** He exuded grace, wit, charm, and charisma. He was an eloquent speaker. He was generally regarded as one of the most handsome men in the world.

(4) **Wife:** He was married to an elegant, sophisticated woman, Jacqueline Bouvier Kennedy. She was admired as one of the most beautiful women in the world.

(5) **Education:** With great, natural intelligence, educated at exclusive, private and public schools, with a degree from Harvard, he was one of best educated men in the world.

“For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul? 27 For the Son of Man will come in the glory of His Father with His angels, and then He will reward each according to his works.”

Matthew 16:26-27

If a man of the world could have the ideal life, he could not imagine, even in his most fanciful dreams, that he would achieve the status of John F. Kennedy.

Then came Dallas. Tragically, an assassin’s bullet ended the magical, fairy tale life. In death, the man who had it all lost it all. He left and lost his

“For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad. 11 Knowing, therefore, the terror of the Lord, we persuade men;”

2 Corinthians 5:10-11

wealth, his position and power. His handsome countenance was destroyed. In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, his wife was a lonely widow. There is a lesson here. Nothing the world gives you is yours to keep. Like a merciless bankruptcy court, death comes and sweeps it all away.

You and I will never approach the level of John F. Kennedy. What most of us have would be considered as mere crumbs by those of his stature. When you are tempted to neglect your soul and scurry for the glitter, glamor and glory of this world, remember that, “It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment” (Heb. 9:27). Jesus said that if you gain the whole world, but lose your own soul, you have made a bad bargain (Mk. 8:36, 37). Moses had nearly everything Kennedy had, but he gave it up in order to go to heaven (Heb. 11:24-26).

Yes, John F. Kennedy had everything. Then death came, and he had nothing.