

For the Glory of God

Rekindle Your Faith

Souls of the Departed and Why We See Them

Following are some of the stories given by Saints and Mystics as told by Father

Joseph M. Esper from his ***Saintly Solutions to Life's Common Problems***:

"In the twelfth century, the famous Irish bishop St. Malachy learned that his sister was destined to suffer a long time in Purgatory, for she had lived a very sinful life before repenting; his prayers eased her sufferings, but did not significantly lessen her time there. In the fifteenth century, the sister of St. Vincent Ferrer appeared to him as she was about to enter Heaven and revealed that had it not been for the many Masses he offered on her behalf, her time in Purgatory would have been much longer."

"A story is told about St. Teresa of Avila in this regard. A priest she knew had just died, and God revealed to her that he would remain in Purgatory until a Mass was said for him in the chapel of a new Carmelite house that was to be built. Teresa hurried to the site and had the workmen begin raising the walls of the chapel immediately, but as this would still take too long, she obtained permission from the bishop for a temporary chapel to be erected. Once this was done, Mass was celebrated there, and while receiving communion, Teresa saw a vision of the priest thanking her most graciously before entering God's kingdom."

The varying descriptions of Purgatory all connect in a similar vein: there are different levels comprising the seat of atonement located between Heaven and Hell (Hades). Far below Heaven and existing beneath the earth's core and just above Hell (Hades), are the levels of what we might call, *limbo*.

The descriptions of Hades provided by Saint Thomas Aquinas calculates *Four* levels to Hades/Sheol, the 3rd level of Purgatory being a part thereof, differs

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from still another account specifying *three* levels, and with other accounts referring to numerous levels, each said to bear a different form of punishment.

The common thread of these similar descriptions most convincingly establishes that there are several levels where a soul could go after death depending upon it's degree of sin, and absolution for sin, with the top tiers being where most of the Holy souls in Purgatory dwell prior to entering into Heaven.

Self-proclaimed spiritualists over the years have reported that there are seven realms between the earth and moon which replicate the seven levels of consciousness. Spirits whose visitations are well-documented have described being present in a place that sounds quite similarly to *Paradise*, though we know it is not Heaven because the majority of these souls have stated they have not seen God.

As to the proof of the existence of Purgatory, despite that no mention of the name *Purgatory* is found in the Bible, Jesus Christ gave us a clear description in His parable of the rich man and Lazarus:

¹⁹ ***“There was a rich man^[a] who dressed in purple garments and fine linen and dined sumptuously each day. ²⁰ And lying at his door was a poor man named Lazarus, covered with sores, ²¹ who would gladly have eaten his fill of the scraps that fell from the rich man’s table. Dogs even used to come and lick his sores. ²²***

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When the poor man died, he was carried away by angels to the bosom of Abraham. The rich man also died and was buried,²³ and from the

netherworld,^[b] where he was in torment, he raised his eyes and saw Abraham far off and Lazarus at his side.²⁴ And he cried out, ‘Father Abraham, have pity on me. Send Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue, for I am suffering torment in these flames.’²⁵ Abraham replied, ‘My child, remember that you received what was good during your lifetime while Lazarus likewise received what was bad; but now he is comforted here, whereas you are tormented.²⁶ Moreover, between us and you a great chasm is established to prevent anyone from crossing who might wish to go from our side to yours or from your side to ours.’

We learn from Luke Chapter 16, verses 19 – 26, that “when the poor man died, he was carried away by angels to the *bosom of Abraham*,” and when the rich man died, he went to the “netherworld where he was in torment, suffering ‘in these flames.’” We are told of a “great chasm” lying between one side and the other, preventing souls on each side from crossing over to the other. The mythical term “netherworld” refers to an area beneath the earth’s surface, and it is also a term used to refer to “the world of the dead.” So, then, Abraham’s Bosom, in describing *Paradise*, reveals that there is an uppermost level of Purgatory or limbo that is, perhaps, nearest to Heaven.

“Abraham’s Bosom” is a Jewish idiom for “paradise.” Jesus, after having died upon the cross, descended not specifically into Hades/Hell, where he would

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rescue Moses and Abraham and others from the times of the Old Testament, but to *paradise* from whence he would bring them, with Him, up to Heaven.

Jesus said to the beggar crucified beside Him, ***This day you will be with me in paradise.*** It is most agreeable that Paradise, as described in Abraham's Bosom, is not Heaven, so, then, the beggar, in going to paradise, had gone to a place of refreshment and light where Jesus does visit the souls waiting there for Heaven, souls not undergoing punishment, as opposed to Purgatory, where Jesus does not appear and punishment is necessary.

There is documentation on the spirits of the dead who have come to the living almost always acknowledging their existence in a place of *limbo*, nor have they seen God. We know that a soul cannot enter Heaven if not in a state of Grace, and we know that no one can freely escape from Gehenna (the Greek word for "Hell"), therefore, it is fair to say, to conclude, that there does exist a place, a sort of "ante-room," where souls reside while awaiting judgment. Until such time as we are able to witness for ourselves, we can rely, faithfully, on the visions and memoirs of the pious and the Holy Saints, and, if well-documented and proven, the dearly departed who have spoken through, and to, the living by virtue of the

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Grace of God.

While Purgatory may be inevitable for sinners who have repented before death but whose sins were far too grave to go unpunished, continued hope in salvation and eternity with God is not to be diminished, for it will come to those who aspire to “see” God, a God Who is a loving Father and the *Divine Mercy*.

“All who die in God’s grace and friendship, but still imperfectly purified, are indeed assured of their eternal salvation; but after death they undergo purification, so as to achieve the holiness necessary to enter the joy of Heaven.” — Catechism of the Catholic Church, par. 1030.

For over a century, the children of God have dreamed dreams and prophesied, for the spirit of God, through His spiritual “gifts,” has poured out upon His children the tools necessary to help defeat the evil one in these end times. Some are aware of these “gifts” while some are not.

Life beyond death is a truth of the faith long unspoken by Church officials. The existence of spirits of the dead returning to earth, and the possibility of "God-given abilities" has, for ions, been an arduous quest. Years have been lost to this truth until more recent decades. No longer is there a shunning of open discourse on the topic of spirits and life after death, though among some traditionalists the topic remains strictly taboo. The Holy Church has lifted the veil, so to speak, on

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this carefully guarded secret; that departed souls do, indeed, exist and do visit the living, further proven in large measure by modern science and the previous testimonies of all who have witnessed supernatural occurrences. The mystery of where “transcendental souls” go to after death, and from whence they come to visit the living, is becoming far less of a mystery than death, itself. Scientists continue to bolster the Church by exploring the field of the supernatural through conclusive and well-documented trials which include NDE’s, a/k/a Near-Death Experience, experienced by, and tested tirelessly on, scores of both witting and unwitting subjects. If we believe that Jesus’ Resurrection from the dead set a firm example for the faithful that we, too, will one day follow the Lord in rising from the dead, then we must accept, as proclaimed through the Resurrection of Christ Who said ***I am the Resurrection***, that life does, indeed, and without doubt, exist after death. To which of three realms we will find ourselves after death: Heaven, Hell, or *Purgatory*, depends upon the constancy and degree of sin or whether we choose to lead a Holy life.

Somehow scientists seem to feel the need to prove what the Bible has already confirmed despite that science has been a great asset in confirming Biblical claims

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for those who are in denial. Research and study on the topic of “transcendental souls” has been accepted knowledge in the universal church from the earliest of times. Today, the modern church is issuing homilies dealing with the last days and how the faithful should now be turning their focus on living for Heaven while learning to turn away from earthly possessions.

Vatican officials and church elect continue to study and research these and many other topics according to the changing tides of a complicated world.

Surprising to many, the Vatican has the largest and oldest library in the world on a range of topics to include the metaphysical. According to A.R.E., the Edgar Cayce Foundation: *“The A.R.E. Library, (is) the second largest metaphysical library in the world (after the **Vatican**).”*

More surprising is that The Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), on their website, reports efficiently on the Vatican library:

“the Vatican Apostolic Library is one of the world's oldest libraries, formally established in 1475, but actually much older; it holds a significant collection of historic texts including 1.1 million printed books and 75,000 codices (manuscript books with handwritten contents); it serves as a research library for history, law, philosophy, science, and theology; the library's collections have been described as “the world's greatest treasure house of the writings at the core of Western tradition.”

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It is not unlikely for a priest to suggest to members of his flock to read metaphysical books, i.e. ***Life After Life***, by Dr. Raymond Moody, in order to pacify those possessing supernatural abilities who fear they are doing the “work of the devil.” There are faithful parishioners who have, otherwise, become tolerant of, and accepting of the knowledge that supernatural abilities, or spiritual gifts, such as wisdom, prophecy, discernment, healing, and even the speaking of tongues are very real. For centuries those possessing supernatural abilities had been frightened, condemned, and cast out by the Holy Church, and any who utilized such abilities were punished as wicked blasphemers of God. For years Clergy guarded themselves in avoiding the topic of the power of “spiritual gifts,” outside of those mentioned in the Bible in spite of having been quite aware of the numerous Saints who had possessed additional supernatural abilities, long before becoming Saints. Numerous Saints and mystics, during their lives and mentioned frequently in memoirs, quite often had the power to bi-locate, to levitate, to see and speak to the dead, to heal, to discern, to cast out demons. The Roman Catholic Church, perhaps, knows more than they can divulge at any given time to the faithful under their tutelage.

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The unspiritual man does not receive the gifts of the Spirit of God, for they are folly to him, and he is unable to understand them because they are spiritually discerned. – 1 Corinthians 2:14

Simon, the magician, offered to pay for to receive a “gift” from God, from the Holy Spirit. ***Now when Simon saw that the Spirit was given through the laying on of the Apostles’ hands, he offered them money, saying, “Give me also this power, that any one on whom I lay my hands may receive the Holy Spirit.” But Peter said to him, “Your silver perish with you, because you thought you could obtain the gift of God with money! - Acts 8:20***

Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out demons. You received without pay, give without pay.. – Matthew 10: 8

The Bible specifically advises the faithful in God to rebuke fortune tellers, magicians, witchcraft, and mediums.

And I will cut off sorceries from your hand, and you shall have no more soothsayers. – Micah 5: 12

Do not turn to mediums or wizards; do not seek them out, to be defiled by them: I am the Lord your God. – Leviticus 19: 31

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Reference is made here to *mediums*; to not seek them out. Mediums/psychics, while they may have actual abilities, are *not* God, and, therefore, their word, however accurate, is not the Word of God. Accordingly, no one must conjure up the dead whether magician, wizard, fortune teller, spiritualist, et al., and that is for the purpose of bringing to bear demons and demonic situations.

God wants us to seek *Him* out, above all others. However, if the dead from Purgatory do appear to the living, it is only by permission of Jesus Christ. Hearing them and responding to them is, then, acceptable for the sole purpose of helping them to move toward peace.

To be perfectly clear, certain supernatural abilities, referred to as “gifts from God” or “spiritual gifts,” are bestowed by God *only* and for explicit purposes. There lingers, however, some confusion as to why some souls have specific abilities while others seem to not possess any at all. God bestowed specified spiritual gifts mentioned in the Bible unto the Apostles, all of who were, at some point in their lives, miserable sinners before turning to Christ.

Supernatural abilities do figure into God’s Divine Plan with notable definitive purpose or else these would not be bestowed unto the living, mostly at birth or,

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at least, from what might be recalled, as young children. Satan has no power over those baptized in Christ.

Baptism in Christ, in the Roman Catholic faith, is foremost a rite of exorcism, putting Christ as our single Protector over evil and of our lives which are promised to Him. At Baptism, we become one with the Father as His children. Thus, when our faith remains strong and dominant, the faithful remain victorious over the evil one at every turn, even during the darkest hours and the most trying of times.

The main devotion of the Catholic faith, as with all Christian belief, is memorializing Christ's death and resurrection from the dead. As it is a main objective of the Roman Catholic Church to save souls and to prepare the flock for salvation, Christ has showed us the way; that one day we, too, will die, but that we, too, will survive death because of *His* death upon the Cross, suffered for our salvation.

The sacrifice of Christ upon the Cross is commemorated in the bloodless renewal of the Holy Mass, in the Consecration and Offertory of His body and blood for our renewal and salvation. When we see the image of Christ dying upon the Cross for our sins, there should be no need to question the fate of the soul

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after death for He gave that testimony to us. Yet, those who fear death and dying search relentlessly for answers already revealed to us from the Cross of salvation. The immortal soul will return to God just as the physical body dies and returns to dust. Soul and flesh will be reunited again upon Christ's return. So, to the non-believers, the atheists and agnostics, and those from other faiths who believe in other gods, there is only *one* explanation acceptable. Jesus Christ was, is, and always will be; to wit: the only mortal soul to proclaim that he would die for our sins and, thereafter, resurrect from the dead, having done *just as He said*. The One Who has kept His promise to us is the *one* true God...*Jesus Christ*. Amen!

One of the more misunderstood passages from Scripture is found in The First Letter of John 4:1: ***Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God; for many false prophets have gone out into the world.***

This passage refers to testing the spirits of the people who claim to have spiritual gifts from God, lest they be false prophets. The Church is, indeed, aware that there are people who not only can discern spirits, but who can see departed

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spirits and communicate with them. A good portion of “clairvoyants” are not mere “fortune tellers or spell-casters,” but, are genuinely honest souls with true spiritual abilities utilized for the good and benefit of both the living and the dead.

Trusting and believing that God welcomes fully repented souls to Himself, the Just Judge allows souls who are not able to repent for sins at death to repent after death. According to several noted mystics, the Lord will give un-repented souls a “second chance” to redeem themselves, three times. Those who choose not to repent will be lost forever. We have a merciful God, therefore, trust in Him.

There are souls who await the fate of the final judgment and *second* death in torment and despair. Accounts from souls in Purgatory who say they have not seen God, are anxious to see Him Whose absence from them is said to be the most tormenting of all punishments.

When a departed soul is free and at peace, rarely do they ever return to the living other than to look in on loved ones left behind, especially around important occasions such as births, deaths, and other significant anniversaries, as allowed by God. The *signs* they might leave to the living in awareness of their visit, might be found in traces of a scented perfume, the smell of a cigarette, the fragrance of a

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bouquet, or even a tiny white feather that may suddenly float about out of mid-air before our eyes, or coins that randomly appear in unusual places. One belief is that feathers appear to us from the angels, another is that they are calling cards from the departed letting us know they have passed by. Souls from deeper levels of Purgatory have manifested items bound with scorch marks or have left scorched imprints of faces or hands.

While the Bible does not specifically mention the word “clairvoyant,” which denotes “clear vision,” the Old Testament refers to the prophets who can see into the future or see events as premonitions, as “seers.” In Samuel 9: 18-19 we read:

Then Saul approached Samuel in the gate, and said, “Tell me where is the house of the seer?” Samuel answered Saul, “I am the seer,” go up before me to the high place, for today you shall eat with me, and in the morning I will let you go and will tell you all that is on your mind.”

From the Old Testament Abraham, Jacob and Daniel had prophetic visions. In the New Testament, Joseph, Peter and Paul saw visions of the future. In the New Testament, *The Book of Revelations* is comprised of prophetic visions had by John.

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Peter, James and John, witnesses of the Transfiguration of Our Lord, all saw the deceased Moses and Elijah standing before them and talking with Jesus. They saw Moses and Elijah, *in the flesh*, as if they had reincarnated from the dead. They were able to see two men who had died centuries earlier, as alive as they for the brief moments they re-appeared to accompany Jesus home to Heaven.

I say to you, all of you reading here, the “seers” who have seen Saints and Angels, the visionaries who have been, and are, blessed to see apparitions of the Blessed Virgin or of Jesus, Himself, they were, and are, witnesses to those who reside in Heaven, those who have died to the physical and are now alive in the bounds of eternity. A certain “holiness” and humbleness about you permits you to be honored by the presence of the most Holy, should they desire to appear.

If you feel you have a “gift from God,” or supernatural abilities that are quite unfamiliar and concerning to you, turn within and ask the Lord for guidance. You will know if these abilities are true or not for the Lord will, in His time, make you aware.

Therefore I want you to understand that no one speaking by the Spirit of God ever says “Jesus be cursed!” and no one can say “Jesus is Lord!” except by

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the Holy Spirit. – 1 Corinthians 12:3

The beliefs of the wicked center on deceit and, therefrom, evil abounds. Quite a few verses in the Bible deal with demons and “unclean spirits,” namely; those spoken of by Jesus, Himself. There are many gifted professional mediums, clairvoyants, or psychics who do have true abilities and are given to do God’s Work and God’s Work only. They refer to themselves under those titles, though they should refer to themselves with a more worthy reference. They most often communicate with the souls of the departed, souls from Purgatory or earthbound spirits, and their work is not at all associated with divinity or the conjuring up evil. They protect themselves spiritually and, in some noticeable ways, adhere to Holy objects such as white candles, Holy water, and invoking the name of Jesus, during these communications, so, as to repel any evil spirits from intervening and breeding havoc upon the bereaved.

The great prophet, Daniel, to be found in the Old Testament, had for himself, “gifts from God” which could not be denied through countless confirmed proofs of prophecy and visions, and through his own abilities fairly equal to those of some mediums/ psychics. From the Book of Daniel 5: 11-12 we read:

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There is in your kingdom a man in whom is the spirit of the holy god. In the days of your father light and understanding and wisdom, like the wisdom of the gods, were found in him, and King Nebuchadnezzar, your father, made him chief of the magicians, enchanters, Chaldeans and astrologers because an excellent spirit, knowledge, and understanding to interpret dreams, explain riddles, and solve problems were found in this Daniel, whom the king named Belteshazzar. Now let Daniel be called, and he will show the interpretation.

Daniel, having had such abilities, was offered material gifts in repayment for the use of his “gifts” to solve and interpret a dream had by the king. Daniel

replied: *“Let your gifts be for yourself, and give your rewards to another; nevertheless I will read the writing to the king and make known to him the interpretation.”* – Daniel 5: 17

Daniel knew well that his abilities had come from a holy god, the “God of heaven” Who worked through Daniel, and to whom Daniel blessed and gave credit for his success. He said: *“Blessed be the name of God forever and ever to whom belong wisdom and might. He changes times and seasons; he removes kings and sets up kings; he gives wisdom to the wise and knowledge to those*

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who have understanding; he reveals deep and mysterious things; he knows what is in the darkness, and the light dwells with him. To you, O God of my fathers, I give thanks and praise, for you have given me wisdom and strength and have now made known to me what we asked of you, for you have made known to us the king's matter.” - Daniel 2: 20- 23

So, Daniel gave thanks to God for his ability to interpret the vision of the king, for God coming through in a dream to reveal the contents of the vision. Daniel remained in great favor with God. For those who God has chosen to work through, through gifts that only He has bestowed, we are, therefore, obliged to give Him thanks for our successes, for He is responsible for our ability to utilize these supernatural ways to promote His Will and His mercy.

According to God, the Bible and Christian belief, it is not the mission of those with supernatural abilities to contact the souls of the dead or to parlay with evil spirits and demons. We, the living, are to cast out demons. If a departed soul comes to us, and with the permission of the Son of God, only then shall we open communication, receive and give messages to the living, and offer prayers and masses. God extends His mercy to the souls from Purgatory by allowing them to

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receive help from the living, as He so desires it.

There exists bold contradiction between the Holy Bible and the various memoirs of Saints and Mystics on the subject of supernatural matters.

If you are Catholic/Christian and consider yourself a medium/psychic, spiritualist, et. al., perhaps, you might consider using your gifts to help others by the Grace of God and not as a way of earning a living. The purposeful insight we can offer to those in need, which comes from the Holy Spirit, is channeled through us by the Holy Spirit and, therefore, not by our own will. *The Lord giveth and He taketh away.* Spiritualists of any sort should never charge a fee at the expense of God's Mercy and of the deceased. Having special supernatural abilities does not warrant a salary and salary should not be sought.

Jesus said to his Apostles:

⁷As you go, make this proclamation: 'The Kingdom of heaven is at hand.'

⁸Cure the sick, raise the dead, cleanse the lepers, drive out demons. Without cost you have received; without cost, you are to give.

We do have a merciful God Who loves us, completely, even when He has to be a harsh judge over us and punish us for our sins against Him. Knowing not how

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close we may be to eternity, it would serve us best if we take a positive turn toward the spiritual light of God before it is too late to avoid the painful purging of fire, or the lake of fire. Never forget the words, key to our salvation: ***believe and repent***. Both are mandatory for salvation.

One day we, too, may need to ask for prayers from the living to help us along on our journey toward God and Heaven. Prayers for the Holy souls in Purgatory can only come from the living and should be a daily obligation. To live in righteousness and with love for all is the best way to move toward eternal Grace and spare one from the dark depths of the lower levels. Do your best to avoid Purgatory. Do your best to avoid Hell. Do your best to follow that yellow brick road all the way to Heaven.

May the souls of the faithful departed, through the Mercy of God, rest in peace.