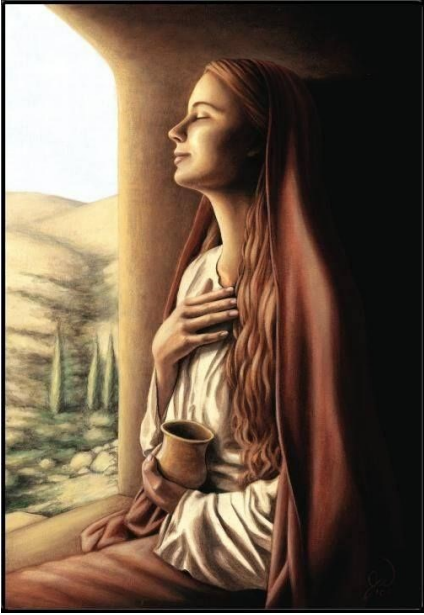


## FROM FR. JASON



Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Pope Francis, on summer, once commented, “In this period, students are free from scholastic duties and many families are taking their vacation; it’s important that in the time of rest and detachment from daily concerns, they can re-energize the forces of body and spirit, deepening their spiritual path.” Here is a list of some ideas for your family to help you live your Catholic faith together all summer: visit an Adoration Chapel, do yard work for an elderly neighbor, make a pilgrimage to your Cathedral (or a nearby basilica or pilgrimage site), invite friends over for a backyard barbeque and family rosary, go through your clothing and toys and share with a young family or donate to a local charity, visit a cemetery and pray for the dead, go to Mass and Confession on the First Fridays of the summer, stay up late and pray Night Prayer under the stars, host a lemonade stand on behalf of your local pregnancy resource center, have a movie night and watch *The Chosen*, offer an afternoon or evening of babysitting to a family with young children, take your grandparents to Mass and breakfast on the feast of Saints Joachim and Anne (Friday, July 26), and finally, go on a hike and pray the Rosary.

This week, on Monday, we will celebrate the Feast of St. Mary Magdalene. Here is an excerpt from a homily by Pope St. Gregory the Great on the Gospel of John read for this feast. I found it helpful and encouraging to continue being vigilant during this time of summer, asking the grace of conversion every day in prayer.

“When Mary Magdalene came to the tomb and did not find the Lord’s body, she thought it had been taken away and so informed the disciples. After they came and saw the tomb, they too believed what Mary had told them. The text then says: *The disciples went back home*, and it adds: *but Mary wept and remained standing outside the tomb*.

We should reflect on Mary’s attitude and the great love she felt for Christ; for though the disciples had left the tomb, she remained. She was still seeking the one she had not found, and while she sought she wept; burning with the fire of love, she longed for him who she thought had been taken away. And so it happened that the woman who stayed behind to seek Christ was the only one to see him. For perseverance is essential to any good deed, as the voice of truth tells us: *Whoever perseveres to the end will be saved*.

At first, she sought but did not find, but when she persevered it happened that she found what she was looking for. When our desires are not satisfied, they grow stronger, and becoming stronger they take hold of their object. Holy desires likewise grow with anticipation, and if they do not grow, they are not really desires. Anyone who succeeds in attaining the truth has burned with such a great love. As David says: *My soul has thirsted for the living God; when shall I come and appear before the face of God?* And so also in the Song of Songs the Church says: *I was wounded by love*; and again: *My soul is melted with love*.

*Woman, why are you weeping? Whom do you seek?* She is asked why she is sorrowing so that her desire might be strengthened; for when she mentions whom she is seeking, her love is kindled even more ardently. *Jesus says to her: Mary*. Jesus is not recognized when he calls her “woman;” so, he calls her by name, as though he were saying: Recognize me as I recognize you; for I do not know you as I know others; I know you as yourself. And so, Mary, once addressed by name, recognizes who is speaking. She immediately calls him *rabboni*, that is to say, *teacher*, because the one whom she sought outwardly was the one who inwardly taught her to keep on searching.”

Peace,