

Now what?

A woman finds God's grace in her empty nest

Mary Katherine Bushey LMC

I am a wife and mom with two sons living at home who are working and going to college. They don't need me the way they used to and I have to admit, I still have an ache in my heart whenever I remember how it used to be. I work in the home, am involved in my church, and am very busy with my household duties, so why do I feel that somehow life is over for me? I'm only 54 years old! Shouldn't I be looking at this as a change in my life, not an end?

Of course I should, but I wasn't, and knew this was something that needed to be taken to the Lord.

While praying with the Scriptures, I felt God was telling me to take John 4:34 and make it my own prayer. I wrote Jesus' words on a note card. "My food is to do the will of my Father and to accomplish His work." I then added: "Though I do not know what my mission for today is, I thank You Father for You have awesome plans for me!"

The *Catechism* says we all have the same primary mission which is to "know, love, and serve God in this life." What that means to me is that I have to be open to God's will each moment of the day. As Sr. Margaret Mary (Intercessors of the Lamb) has told me, I need to remember to ask God for each grace. Too many times I am trying to do things myself.

I used to wonder, how does one really do everything for the honor and glory of God? Well, it is doing those household duties, my job, etc., with love in my heart for God (whether I feel it or not) and to be

open to the Holy Spirit's guidance throughout the day.

By remembering to ask God for the grace I need and to be open to Him "speaking" in my heart, He'll put someone in my path, whether at the grocery store or on a phone call, who will inspire me in some way. Or maybe it will just be to smile and say "hi."

For example, the other day I was on my way into the doctor's office when I noticed a man by the door staring blankly outside. Usually I would just go right by the person, but I felt God was telling me to smile and say hello and so I did.

Now that may not sound like a big deal but when we, with God's grace, look at it through His eyes, it is a big deal.

When I think of my humdrum day, I am reminded that seeing my day through God's eyes is anything but boring. Only in heaven will I know what God has done with all those boring chores that I gave Him and how He transformed them into heavenly deeds.

When I get up and am still groggy and a bit grumpy thinking "Now what? My day is just a boring usual day," I can believe in what the Scripture says "I will lead the blind on their journey; by paths unknown I will guide them. I will turn darkness into light before them." (IS 42:16) How awesome is God's grace!

MaryKatherine is a wife, mother, and Lay Missionary of Charity



Women of Grace & News & Growing in Grace

Sharon Teipen from Fishers, Indiana writes: “About 10 years ago my friend and I heard there was a women’s conference in Cincinnati, Ohio, just a two hour drive from home. We heard Johnnette was one of the speakers and we wanted to go. That was the day Johnnette broke open the scripture of Ephesians 1:3-4 in a powerful way as only she can do. She was selling her new book *Full of Grace*. I bought a copy. Once you are filled with the love of Christ and Holy Mother Church you just want everyone to know and feel the same

way. I loved the book so much I later ordered 25 copies to pass along to family and friends and sometimes just a woman I would see at daily Mass. I later bought more copies and brought them along to the local women’s prison.

“A few years later I heard about the study and figured I was not the only one who had been touched by this book. To date I have seen 24 women graduate from the class and am now facilitating in my new parish. It has been wonderful to see the ladies grow through the class, learning so many things about our faith that they either missed or forgot during their earlier education in school. The ladies seem

to love the stories of the saints and the many prayers and quotations in the workbook. My most gratifying fruit was to see a lady be convicted to get her child baptized and others who wanted to go to confession whether it was for the first time or after many years had



Back row (L to R): Sharon Teipen, Fran Werner, Donna Price, Fr. Dudzinski, Julie Dilick. Front row (L to R): Sharon Ganley, Susan Vozniak, Janell Lenahan

of Grace & Views in Indiana

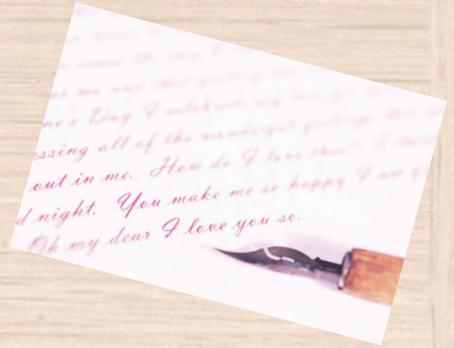
lapsed since their last confession.”

Sharon Ganley, who attended one of the classes, said: “I enjoyed the class tremendously; I have grown on a spiritual path I thought would never happen..... In the last four months I have seen miracles. They are all around us! We just have to look and thank the Lord.

“In class we were asked to write a prayer for the Lord. My husband helped me, we put our ideas together. The prayer was from the heart and it meant more to me than any gift my husband could have given. What a gift from God to be able to share my growth in faith with him. The Lord is coming in loud and clear!”

Fran Werner says she received a special “connection” through the study. “I had taken Bible study and Apologetics courses before but never felt the connection to God and Mary the way that I have experienced through Women of Grace,” she said.

“I feel chosen by God; blessed with the gifts and graces I need to bring the love of Christ to the world. I only wish that I had been able to take this study when I was younger because I feel as though I still have a long way to go to be able to use God’s blessings to make a difference. Chapter seven



spoke to me, shouted, screamed at me about the importance of striving for wholeness and reconciling my heart to God so that I can become capable of reconciling others.”

For Janell Lenahan, the experience was unforgettable. “This has been a life changing experience!” she said. “I have learned so much yet I know I still have a lot to learn of God’s wisdom. My desire to learn more about God’s will has increased my desire to attend Mass, go to confession and experience all the joys of the Catholic life. Thank you so much!”

Donna Price agrees. “This has renewed my spirit and given me new strength in aiding humanity in not falling.”

Susan Vozniak said the study “opened my heart more to God and the understanding of why I am here on earth. I have a better understanding of my purpose. I feel I learned so much more than my years growing up. I look forward to meeting with other women and discussing God’s purpose in our lives.”