



The Holy Wayfarer



Guild of St. Benedict Joseph Labre 2019 Newsletter

Letter from the Guardian

A blessed holy season of Lent and Easter to all of you! Many of you have asked about my family. My brother Scott is sixty-six years old and was placed in a group home after some fifty years of hospitalization. This, we believe, is a direct miracle from the late Fr. Benedict Groeschel, CFR who personally told us that when he dies, one of the first things he was going to do was to pray for Scott. Less than two weeks after he died we received a call from the state that Scott was chosen for a new type of group home that was being set up in Massachusetts. Scott remains very sick but is doing the best he has done in his entire life. You can see our family pictures of him on our [facebook page](#). My mother, Mildred Duff turns 89 years old. She has obviously slowed down and needs your prayers.

Have you seen our website this year? It has much improved. Come visit our [Room of Hope](#) where you can partake in many spiritual gifts. This year has presented many challenges for the Guild as our costs have gone up and our monies of support have gone down. Everyone who electronically

receives this newsletter represents three others who do not have a computer and desires to receive it. Please! Would you consider contributing a five, ten or twenty dollar donation, it would significantly help with printing costs in order to reach our members.

Our prayer groups are beginning to grow. Do you have friends who perhaps would like to gather for prayer and support? Our group guidelines and model can be a way for you to get started. Have you ever seen the blue Catholic Pieta book? This very popular devotional has one of the prayers of St. Benedict Joseph Labre for the protection against storms and earthquakes.

Lately, it seems turbulent weather and natural disasters are increasing and I feel an urgency to implore you to pray with us, our patron's prayer which is located on the back. Let us ask St. Benedict Joseph Labre to pray for our protection.

God Bless!

Timothy Duff, STM, BCC



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What's New for 2019

Hold Ctrl key and Click
each bullet

◆ [Our Weekly Blog](#)

Tim routinely writes blog articles

◆ [Weekly E-News](#)

Weekly e-newsletter sent containing blog articles

Our Room Of Hope

- ◆ [Online Chapel](#)
- ◆ [Click to Adore](#)
- ◆ [Light E-Votive Candle](#)
- ◆ [Start a Support Group](#)
- ◆ [Reflections on his life](#)

Feast Day
April 16th



Lent 2019– Let's Model St. Benedict Joseph Labre

When Pope Leo XIII canonized St. Benedict Joseph Labre he called him: "Holiness Itself!" Now that we are about enter another Lenten season, it is a perfect time to renew our baptismal promises. The Church reminds us to reflect on what does it mean to be holy. As followers of St. Benedict Joseph Labre, we have been given a special insight into the answer. He is our perfect model. He knew that God dwelled within his soul and he fell in love with Him. His prayer life and many sacrifices united his soul completely to God. St. Benedict's love compelled him to imitate Christ's virtues of patience, kindness and gentleness. The many pilgrimages he spent traveling on the road allowed him to become the holy wayfarer and to show his love to others. We can also copy our patron and follow our own call to holiness. As we imitate his virtues, offer our own prayers and make sacrifices, we become like our saint. Seeing a family member suffer from mental illness can bring much pain and suffering; sometimes it can be very difficult living with them and even communicating with them. This gives us a great opportunity to practice the virtues St. Benedict Joseph. When we do, this will be on our road to Holiness. Our Lenten goal for 2019 is to become "Holy" like our St. Benedict Joseph. Soon, our new novena to him will be available to help you. Please pray that we will have the funds to print it in 2019.

St. Benedict Joseph' Life

Every Wednesday (American EST from 6pm to 7pm) my family and I adore our Lord in our local parish. This is when I read each chapter and write my reflections. I have been posting them on our website and sending them out weekly (as possible) to the members on our email list. Perhaps you would like to receive them. You can also join us as we now have live stream Adoration on our website. We are united in the hearts of Jesus, Mary and St. Benedict Joseph Labre.

The following are my on reflections on "The Life of Benedict Joseph Labre" which was originally

MMOMI Merciful Mother Of the Mentally Ill



- ◆ **Become a member**
- ◆ **Help get the word out**
- ◆ **Request Masses to be said at your parish for us**
- ◆ **Become a 40 Hour Adorer**
- ◆ **Become "PRAY-ER'S"**



... St. Benedict Joseph' Life

written by his confessor Father Giuseppe Marconi in Italian and then later translated in English by Father James Barnard in 1785. This book was one of the main instruments used for his canonization process to begin.

Completion of Chapter 2- **The Employments of the Servant of God in his Infancy**

edited by Theresa Duff

As little Benedict Joseph grew in age, so did his Wisdom of God and practice of virtue. Fr. Marconi attests that rather than the usual childhood play, "he would make little oratories". There were profound prayer gestures. Fr Marconi also says that these were an intuition of his future. The word in the book is "presage". This caused Benedict to desire great devotion and desire to serve the priest at the Altar during Mass. His parents testified that his heart was constantly filled with this desire.

Another profound virtue that was noticed in little Benedict Joseph was his devotion to the sacred churches. Townspeople were so edified by him that most of them would show up at Mass in order to get a glimpse at little Benedict Joseph serving at the Altar in such a mystifying and devout manner. Fr. Marconi says that at a very young age little Benedict Joseph's heart was fixed on the Sacred Mysteries. He also states: "he never entered into them but with such a degree of reverence as afforded edification to every beholder." (Paragraph 3) Such profound language is used here that it must be quoted: "When a soul is free from every earthly affection and full of God, Whom the liveliness of its faith represents as being in a state of immolation upon the altars, when a soul is truly sensible of and truly grateful for all His favors, where can such a soul experience more celestial sweetness than in the temples and before the holy altars." (paragraph 3)

Fr. Marconi stated many people witnessed that not only did little Benedict Joseph have an edifying presence while serving Mass, that he also sought instruction in the faith in the same way. He was always filled "with a holy eagerness and was desired to hear, read and meditate on the Word of God" (P4)

At that time, on most Sundays, people engaged in all sorts of recreations throughout the day. Fr Marconi stated that little Benedict would attend such things out of obedience to his parents. The author emphasizes a second time that he had no inclination or relish in such things. Little Benedict Joseph would often leave them to hang with adults in order to have a more serious conversation. Fr. Marconi mentions here how most children follow their childhood imaginations and play- but not little Benedict Joseph.

Fr. Marconi then passes moral critique of Benedict Joseph at this early stage of development. He attests that these movements of the saint to leave children's play and the like are not from a "melancholic temperament" but are from an exalted and pure motive of the heart. The author further embellishes on this point by saying that whenever it was out of obedience or civic duty, little Benedict Joseph would have a good graceful way about him and engage in "innocent diversions." His uncle M. Vincent testified he was "always contented with his companions and cheerful in his recreations."

Fr. Marconi declares that this is only attributed to God and that little Benedict Joseph was called to such a state of perfection: "Learn of Me, for I am Meek and Humble of Heart."

At the same time, the Holy Spirit was at work by moving our saint to contemplation at an early age. He began to love solitude and silence. According to Fr. Marconi, Benedict Joseph became happier and more content in his soul to follow his vocation. The more he practiced these things, the happier he became. Yet, he remained open and docile, and he was a pleasure to be around, so much so that he attracted other children and adults to himself.

Fr. Marconi says that his childhood terminated earlier in the development of Benedict Joseph than in most children. His love of reading and study grew in proportion to his desire for solitude and contemplation. He began to distaste worldly childhood things and began to move towards penance, sacrifice, and self-contempt. (Keep in mind our saint at this stage is not quite seven years old) The author concludes by stating that he always put the obedience of his parents first. "During the whole course of his life, he never departed from the abdication of all earthly things, which he had resolved on and practiced from his tender age. But this which was, in his infancy, a kind of novitiate to that state of evangelical poverty which he practiced with so much rigor during the rest of his life, was at that time looked upon only as an effect of natural bashfulness."

Prayer After The Reflection

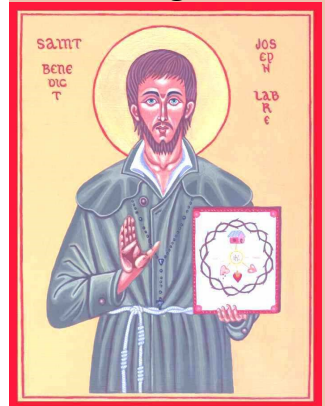
by Anne Costa

Dear Lord in heaven, we are blessed by the example of young Saint-in-the-making Benedict Joseph Labre who displayed such joy and reverence beyond his years. May he inspire in us a likewise holy eagerness and purity of heart. St. Benedict Joseph Labre, intercede for us to grow in detachment from the things of this world that distract and disturb us so that we might be filled like you were, with a heavenly gaze and peace of heart. Thank you, Jesus, for the hope you inspire and the help we receive from our Patron, Saint Benedict Joseph. Amen.

Anne Costa is a wife, mom and grandmom, the author of six books for Catholic readers and an inspirational speaker. She is currently working with the John Paul II Center for Women and delivers Spiritual Boot Camp - Catholic Mom Edition...power-packed videos to encourage and affirm Moms to help them stay fit for the Kingdom and strong in their faith. Anne lives with a mental illness and is an advocate and friend of those who do the same. Her prayer reflections may be found on our website after every reflection on the life of St Benedict Joseph Labre.



Icon of
St. Benedict Joseph
Labre
Holding the Guild
Logo



The Chaplet
of St Benedict Joseph
Labre
is available on Holy
Cards

Request one
with a donation to help
cover costs.

Chapter 4- An Account of the Youth of Benedict; his Conduct Under the Direction of His Uncle - He Makes his First Communion

The Chapter begins with Fr. Marconi describing the transition of Benedict Joseph in his infancy to that of his youth. The confessor draws an analogous comparison to that of St. Malachias which is described in a eulogy by St. Bernard who states:

The youth of St. Malachias was entirely a piece of his infancy. He preserved the same purity, simplicity, the same innocence of morals. The only difference that could be observed in him in those two different stages of his life was that in his youth he entertained a still greater desire to grow in wisdom and in grace...He took upon himself certain particular devotions and observances, and by his means raised himself to a degree of virtue and holiness to which it was difficult for others to attain. P1

According to Fr. Marconi, there is a universality in the making and development of saints. He calls it "The Same Divine Spirit". The fruits of the grace given may differ from person to person in lieu of the particular age and states of the soul when a person is called to sainthood. He recalls, that the source, "the foundation and substance is the same in all." P2 Father Marconi goes on to state that by a particular disposition of Divine Grace some are called in the first instances of their life to holiness. These persevere, hear their vocation and follow it. P2

There were multiple testimonies from the time of our saint that show this to be the case of our Benedict Joseph. Fr. Marconi states this was especially true of Benedict's parents. His parents declared:

He gave them constant proofs of his sincere piety by his assisting at the Divine Offices and instruction with a degree of attention and reverence truly edifying; of wisdom and prudence, of never saying or doing anything unbecoming, of obedience, by always doing what he was ordered, with cheerfulness and alacrity, of peacefulness, in always behaving towards his mother, his father, his brothers and sisters in such a manner as never to give them any occasion of uneasiness or offence...A disposition, adds his parents, as to make this child most dear and amiable to them, as he likewise was to everyone he knew. P3

Possessing these qualities, moves his parents to decide to formally educate Benedict for the priesthood. Now at the age of 12, his parents work things out with his uncle (the priest) that he prepares for his first communion. Benedict can hardly contain himself at this news: "his soul was filled with sentiments of joy, of love, of humility and of a holy fear." The saint himself had obviously been preparing for this major spiritual event in his young life. He was filled with a desire to make his first general confession. (Keep in mind that Benedict Joseph maintained his baptismal innocence throughout his life.)

Fr. Marconi was moved by Benedict's preparation and it is worthy to account: "This would be the first of five or six general confessions he would make throughout his lifetime. The venerable Benedict, being persuaded that, without the grace of God we can do nothing, not even discover our own faults, so as to view them in that light in which we ought to consider them, first implored the light of the Holy Ghost and besought Him not only to bring to his remembrance his sins with all of their different circumstances, but likewise to discover to him the true state of his soul, his bias and inclinations." P5

The Story of Benedict...



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St. Benedict Joseph's Format for making a General Confession

- He proceeds to state each Commandment and their corresponding virtues; he is examining his life from the time he made his last confession examining and comparing his life: all his actions from the time he had made his last confession.
- He divided his life into many segments, carefully comparing them to the particular virtues of each commandment.
- He took special note not to judge himself "This he considered as the province and privilege of the minister of Jesus Christ,"
- He explained what temptations he had experienced and how he behaved under them.
- He explained what special graces God had given him and in what particular manner he had responded to them.

St. Benedict Joseph's Attitude of Prayer after making the General Confession

- He offered a fervent prayer to God asking for a true contrition of heart
- He made a serious consideration of all of the motives which faith suggests to move his self to it.
- "Above all, he endeavored to excite in his soul a sorrow for his sins." This allowed him to take on an attitude of penance.

Notes: There are no childhood representations of our saint. The next reflection will start on Benedict's particular understanding of sin.

Prayer After The Reflection

Dear Lord,

The example of St. Benedict Joseph's youth is a sweet reminder of how we are to completely entrust ourselves to your perfect care. He depended on you for everything and received many graces to exercise virtues that were pleasing to you and those who knew him. Thank you, Lord, for your direction, your judgment, and your unending mercy. Help us to approach you in confession with the same confidence and contrition of heart that St. Benedict Joseph displayed. Amen! by Anne Costa

Second Reflection from Chapter 4

An Account of the Youth of Benedict; his Conduct Under the Direction of His Uncle- He Makes his First Communion

Benedict Joseph offered to his confessor a first general confession at the young age of 12 years. God gave him a profound and sensitive understanding of the meaning of sin. Fr. Marconi says it best:

Above all, he endeavored to excite his soul for a sorrow for sin, founded on those motives which render it perfect contrition, by considering sin as an ingratitude committed against God, a disobedience to His law, and an outrage offered to His infinite and essential sanctity. In his accusation of himself, he preserved order, clearness, humility, precision, and sincerity to an admirable degree. P8

From this profound sensitively also grew his respect for the Catholic priesthood and reverence for the confessor acting in persona Christi (the person of Christ). Benedict's reverence was so edifying that Fr. Marconi uses words referring to that confessional moment: "After he listened to the words of his confessor with very great respect... venerating his words as oracles sent from heaven." P9

Benedict's piety and devotion to the love of God were again apparent. Listen to how Fr. Marconi ends the account our saint's reception of absolution:

"Before receiving, he knelt down and humbly bowing his head, he renewed his sorrow for his sins, and endeavored to excite in his soul a most lively act of contrition, after which he

Our Merciful Mother of the Mentally III



Sr. Isidora's Rosary Meditations

Request one and include a donation to cover the costs

Prayer St. Romuald (Romn Missal)

O God, who through Saint Romuald renewed the manner of life of hermits in your Church, grant that, denying ourselves and following Christ, we may merit to reach the heavenly realms on high. Through our lord Jesus Christ, your son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

modestly raised his head, to give his confessor to understand that he was ready to receive absolution.” P9

Benedict's admitted to Fr. Marconi (at 12 years old) that he learned from St Teresa of Avila that: “a multitude of sinners plunge themselves into eternal misery by making sacrilegious confessions.” P 10

Benedict's Mystical Vision of Penitents

He offers a reflection to Fr. Marconi on confession. Benedict tells Fr Marconi that he distinguishes people going to confession into three classes: He names them the perfect penitents and the false penitents. Benedict then confides in Fr. Marconi that they appear to him in three processions or lines of people and each takes a different road.

The first class of people who were composed of a very few were the perfect penitents. “Having probed the wounds of their souls to the bottom”, had manifested them with sincerity and obtained a sincere sorrow. These people had truly penitential tears. These had achieved true contrition by appeasing the divine justice by their fasts, their prayers, and alms. Benedict looked at them as holy penitents and described them to Fr. Marconi as: being clothed with a white and luminous robe, who in the moment of their death are carried to heaven and enter in triumph into the eternal tabernacles of the Living God.” P10

According to Benedict, the second class of people he saw, were still very few in number and were called the imperfect penitents. Their garments, Benedict says, “were tarnished with a red color”. These people fully complied with the conditions necessary for a good confession but had not done enough penance. They relied too much on the pardon they obtained. Therefore, these people had very little zeal in performing their prescribed penance attached to the confession; he mentions that they also neglected taking advantage of the many indulgences offered by Holy Mother Church. Thus, not satisfying the Divine Justice for their sins. Benedict said, “heaven remains shut against their desires to enter, and they are pushed back towards Purgatory, to complete the satisfaction which Divine Justice demands, and to be purified from everything which has defiled their souls.” P11

Benedict recalled the third class of people from his vision and named them the false penitents. He said they were far more numerous than the two other classes of penitents. These appeared to him as clothed with smelly and dirty garments. These penitents were negligent in their examination of conscience, by being destitute of a true contrition or a firm purpose of amendment. Benedict also says that those in this class: “were both overcome by a wretched fear and shame, willfully concealed any part of their sins and by that means, defiled their souls.” P12 These poor souls appeared to him as sacrilegious hypocrites, who go to hell by the very road which ought and was intended to lead them to heaven.

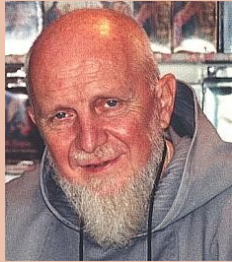
Fr Marconi says that this vision was so moving for Benedict that it imprinted on his mind and heart a dread and horror of sin. The was one of the graces God used to preserve Benedict's innocence against temptation and to allow him to reap the full benefit of the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

St Benedict Joseph Labre and Fabriano, Italy



In June 1771, early in his career as a pilgrim recluse, Saint Benedict Joseph visited Fabriano, Italy, to venerate the relics of Saint Romuald, the founder of the Camaldolese monks. Being treated with kindness by a local family and desiring to thank his benefactors, he wrote out in Latin this set of aspirations, drawn from, or inspired by Holy Scripture, the Creeds, the Papal Laudes, and his own piety, exhorting his hosts to pray in these words for protection against thunder, lightning and earthquakes. Just a few years later, during his lifetime, a devastating earthquake did strike Fabriano, but the home of this family and the houses immediately around it stood firm and unharmed. Subsequently, copies of this "blessing" were printed and distributed at Fabriano.

St Benedict Joseph's prayer at Fabriano is found on the next page



What does the Gospel teach?

"Take Courage, It is I. Do Not Be Afraid"

(Mark: 6:50)

"The person is a suffering human being and although the mind and emotions are affected, "The Heart", the center of the being, is still owned by God. "

To anyone struggling with this illness, either they have it themselves or someone they love suffers with it... we have the words of Our Lord: " Come to Me all you who are burdened and I will refresh your soul." (Matthew 11:28)

"The message of St. Benedict Joseph Labre is: Whoever you are, Whatever you have, give it to God with all of your heart."

By the late

**Rev. Benedict J. Groeschel CFR
EWTN 1996**

Comments and Feedback
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Concerning the Pieta Catholic Prayer Book

There is a very famous prayer book known as the Pieta book. Many people seem to ask where does this mysterious blue book come from? Here is the true story: Tom Zimmer, an American from Florida had a radical spiritual experience in Rome, Italy. He spent many years of his life living in Loreto, Italy where the Holy House of Loreto is located. Tom is the person who put all of those prayers together. He lived as a hermit pilgrim emulating his life after Our Lord and being like St Benedict Joseph Labre in so many ways. I was privileged to have met this man three times during my trips to Loreto. I still have the letters he would write to the Guild from almost twenty years ago. Tom was another one of those special people called by God to live a life of humility, poverty and penance.

He attended hundreds of thousands of Catholic Masses throughout his life and spent much of his days in prayer. Tom placed the prayer of St Benedict Joseph in the Pieta book for a reason. A good friend of mine, Dr Claude Curran knew Tom personally for several years and shared a story Tom's life. There is a Youtube video telling this story.

Look up the link: Hermit of Loreto

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zhA9tjOjj0k>

St. Benedict Joseph's Prayer to Avoid Storms and Earthquakes Given at Fabriano, Italy

Jesus Christ, the King of Glory has come in Peace **t** .

God became man **t** , and the Word was made flesh **t** .

Christ was born of a Virgin **t** .

Christ suffered **t** .

Christ was crucified **t**

Christ died **t** .

Christ rose from the dead **t** .

Christ ascended into Heaven **t** .

Christ conquers **t** . Christ reigns **t** . Christ orders **t** .

May Christ protect us from all storms and lightning **t** .

Christ went through their midst in Peace **t** ,

And the word was made flesh **t** .

Christ is with us with Mary **t** .

Flee you enemy spirits because the Lion of the Generation of Juda, the Root of David, has won **t** .

Holy God **t** . Holy Powerful God **t** . Holy Immortal God **t** .

Have mercy on us. Amen.!

t = make the sign of cross



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