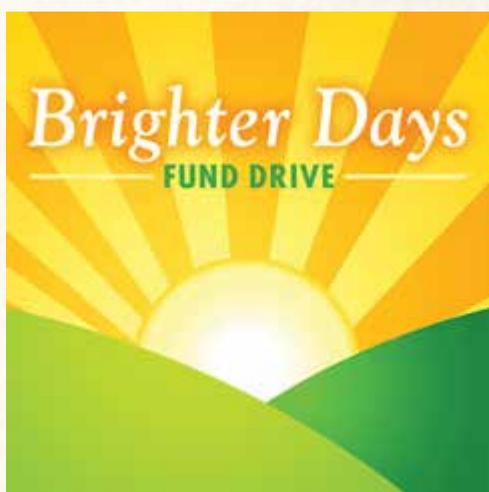




**Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary – Aug. 15 Mass**

Celebrate the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary into heaven with video of the day's **Mass online** all day at [www.HeartoftheNation.org](http://www.HeartoftheNation.org). Because Aug. 15 falls on a Saturday, there is no holy day Mass obligation in the U.S.



While hoping for brighter days, not everyone can donate in these difficult times. Please help if you can with a gift in any amount to share your faith through Heart of the Nation!

## Getting the Picture

In times like these, we easily become nostalgic for the “good old days.” Remember drive-in movies? Parked with the car’s front end on a downslope, people in the back seat could see over the heads of those in front. A speaker removed from its stand got hooked over a partially opened car window, at least in the days before a car radio could provide sound without the crackling or cutting out of those clunky speakers. Still, the number of drive-ins dwindled until pop-up versions made a comeback during the pandemic. People could again load the car with pillows, popcorn, and favorite soft drinks before safely heading to summertime motion pictures.



Fr. Mark Payne  
Chaplain

Jesus invited Peter, James, and John to join him on a mountain. Picture the scene of the Transfiguration, an occasion that Catholics celebrate on August 6. Jesus looked more dazzling than any cinematics on a silver screen. Moses and Elijah appeared in conversation with the Lord, although the sound seems to have cut out. (Scripture doesn’t tell us what they said to one another.)

In one of the advantages of drive-in movies, people can talk without disturbing others around them. On that Biblical mountain, Peter spoke up about his idea to set up three tents, one each for Jesus, Moses, and Elijah. The suggestion probably came from the Jewish tradition of setting up booths during a feast commemorating the ancient Israelites’ desert journey as tent dwellers heading toward the Promised Land.

Then, loud and clear, the Apostles heard the heavenly Father telling them to listen to His beloved Son. The vision of heavenly glory ended, and intermission began as Jesus instructed His friends not to tell anyone about His Transfiguration until after the Resurrection.

When the first drive-in movie opened in 1933, it cost 25 cents per person or a dollar (\$20 today) for a whole carload. Your donation to Heart of the Nation will provide just the ticket needed to keep Sunday Mass available on your viewing screen.

*Fr. Mark*

***“Your televised service this week was unbelievably great. The enthusiasm, even with social distancing, was palpable. Blessings!”***

*~Sherill*



***“Thank you for us being able to receive Jesus spiritually. God Bless You..”***

*~Chiqui*



***“The ability to participate with the Heart of the Nation family is quite fulfilling.”***

*~Ronald*

## Talking to a Wall Can Work

In a mountain cave where Elijah had taken refuge from murderous persecutors, a voice from heaven said that the Lord would come by. The visit sounded casual, until a driving wind, an earthquake, and fire assailed Mt. Horeb. It seemed only natural to look for God in those powerful events. The prophet, however, recognized the Lord in the whispering sound that followed.

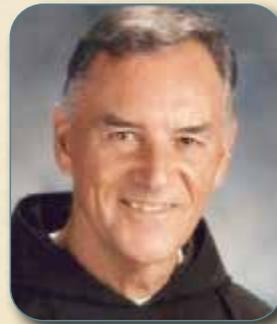
In the wake of a natural disaster, in the midst of a pandemic, or in the face of solitary struggles, we sometimes feel as if our faith has hit a wall.

We want a spiritual sledgehammer to break through the brick and mortar, a ladder to surmount the wall, or a map showing how to get around it. God knows that we don't need those kinds of tools when we come to a “whispering wall.”

In a quirk of architecture, curved walls and domes sometimes result in what science calls “whispering gallery waves.” Instead of traveling in a straight line as usual, the sound waves make their way along curved walls.

Inside the Basilica of St. Peter, in Rome, tourists who climb stairs to the

gallery encircling the dome can experience whispers wondrously heard. Two people, standing back to back and facing the wall, can talk in faint voices but clearly hear each other from more than 130 feet across the dome.



**Fr. Tony Scannell  
Chaplain**

At times, it seems like God has turned His back to us, and we don't feel particularly close to Him. Our Lord invites us to face the wall that impedes our faith, talk to Him, and listen for the gentle

whisper of His voice.

After the mountain-rending prelude, Elijah recognized the Lord's quiet presence. God spoke to him, sending the prophet on his way with new direction. Each of our lives and all of our days have purpose in God's plan, too. We have the Word of God to guide us and remind us to listen.

An inscription at the base of the dome at St. Peter's Basilica recalls New Testament words from one of the Sunday Gospels this month. Jesus called Peter the rock on whom He would build the Church. As the building continues, God has much to tell us.

In our impatience, prayer may seem like talking to a wall. In faith, we realize that we always have the whisper of hope.

## Together in Faith

When the Disciples saw Jesus walking on water toward their boat, the Lord told them not to be afraid. Peter then had faith enough to go onto the water but started to sink in the fearsomely turbulent sea. Jesus caught him.

“We come to Mass as a way of letting the Lord show us His love and calm our fears,” explained Fr. Mark Payne, chaplain for Heart of the Nation. “Every prayer and gift we offer to the Lord shows our love for Him.” In our own turbulent times, please donate or pledge any amount that you can to help Heart of the Nation bring people together in prayer, worship, and love of the Lord.



## Act of Spiritual Communion

My Jesus, I believe that You are present in the Most Holy Sacrament. I love You above all things, and I desire to receive You into my soul. Since I cannot at this moment receive You sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart. I embrace You as if You were already there and unite myself wholly to You. Never permit me to be separated from You. Amen.

~Saint Alphonsus Liguori

## Marian Prayer For Greater Faith

Blessed Virgin and gentle Mother,  
Who bring comfort in times of pain,  
Together with me,  
please ask Jesus  
For help in His love unrestrained.



Holy Mary,  
chosen by God,  
Having known joy,  
wonder, and sorrow,  
Thank you for the  
faith you have shown,  
Giving hope of better  
tomorrows.

Heaven's Queen, crowned  
with humility,  
Alongside Lord Jesus  
enthroned,  
In my need, I pray for faith  
and grace  
To bear more than I could  
alone.

Amen.

*The Memorial of the Queenship of the Blessed Virgin Mary is on Aug. 22.*

# St. Alphonsus Liguori and the Act of Spiritual Communion

Known as a plainly speaking preacher and a compassionate confessor, St. Alphonsus Liguori also knew what it meant to mess up. On Aug. 1, Catholics celebrate the memorial of this patron saint of moral theologians, confessors, vocations, and people with arthritis. Viewers of Heart of the Nation's Sunday Mass pray his Act of Spiritual Communion during distribution of the Holy Eucharist.

Born in 1696, the eldest son of a European nobleman, Alphonsus became a highly respected courtroom lawyer until the day that he had to openly concede a high-profile case. In his preparations, he had misread a crucial document and had no one but himself to blame. God used the mishap as one of the ways He called Alphonsus to priesthood.

Next, in a vision of light, Alphonsus heard a voice calling him to relinquish his worldly privileges. He became a priest and, later, a bishop. A religious sister told him of a vision she had of Alphonsus establishing a religious order. He founded the Redemptorists, dedicated to spreading the Gospel among the poor.

As a missionary, he never traveled far, but he found plenty to do in what is now southern Italy. Under his leadership, the Redemptorists trained catechists and visited group meetings that attracted thousands of participants. The meetings provided prayer, reflection, and catechism, while markedly reducing theft, violence, and prostitution.

Alphonsus, a moral theologian and writer, bridged Church law and individual conscience by teaching the value of an informed conscience. The current *United States Catholic Catechism for Adults* explains that the Word of God, Church teaching, the Holy Spirit, and prayerful reflection all have a part in the ongoing formation of good conscience.



Photo courtesy of the Redemptorists

## Spiritual Communion

Unable to receive the visible Eucharist, the faithful can still receive God's grace through spiritual Communion. You may make an Act of spiritual Communion anywhere, anytime, and as many times as desired in a day, each with a partial indulgence available.

Indulgences reduce punishment for sin, either on Earth or in purgatory. To seek a partial indulgence, while free of mortal sin, state your desire to receive the indulgence. Then pray an Act of Spiritual Communion.

At Mass on March 20, as the worldwide coronavirus pandemic spread, Pope Francis said that Catholics unable to confess a mortal sin to a priest should confess directly to God. Acknowledge what you have done, ask for forgiveness now "with all your heart," pray an Act of Contrition, and promise to go to Confession as soon as possible.



With gratitude, Heart of the Nation welcomes new members to the Circle of the Heart monthly giving club. As a member, you will be included in prayers placed before the altar for every Sunday TV Mass. To join, please mark the box on your donation reply card, and indicate the amount of your pledge. (If you need to change or cancel your pledge, just contact Heart of the Nation.) **Thank you!**

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