

ON THE COVER

Why does the story of the Holy Grail continue to fascinate? Looking ahead to Holy Week, Catholic historian and frequent Angelus contributor, Mike Aquilina, traces the Grail legend from the table of the Last Supper and the foot of Christ's cross to the roundtables and battlefields of medieval Europe — to Hollywood and beyond. Page 10.

SHUTTERSTOCK IMAGE

IMAGE: Capturing a “selfie moment” with Archbishop José H. Gomez and teens attending the Religious Education Congress Youth Day, March 15, at the Anaheim Convention Center. More than 40,000 faithful from across the United States and other parts of the world attended this year’s Congress, one of the nation’s largest annual gatherings of Catholics. Our coverage begins on page 3 with Archbishop Gomez’s column and continues on pages 4-6.

VICTOR ALEMÁN





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NEW WORLD OF FAITH

BY ARCHBISHOP JOSÉ H. GOMEZ

To those who are Lazarus

(Adapted from Archbishop Gomez's closing homily at the 2018 Los Angeles Religious Education Congress, March 18. The homily was delivered in Spanish and English on the story of Lazarus in the Gospel of St. John, chapter 11.)

In the beautiful Gospel story about Lazarus and his sisters, Jesus says to Martha, "Your brother will rise." But right away he challenges her: "Do you believe this?"

Jesus is asking that same question today to you and to me.

Do we believe that Jesus Christ can raise our brothers and sisters from the dead? Do we believe that he can "take away the stone" of their hardened hearts and give them a new heart and a new spirit?

Do we believe that Jesus Christ can call to our brothers and sisters, just as he called Lazarus: "Rise up!" Do we believe that he can untie all the knots that tangle and bind our lives — and set us free to truly live as God created us to live?

That is the question Jesus puts to us today. And I know you believe he can do these things. That is why you have chosen to devote your lives to serving Jesus and the mission of his Church.

We are all here because we believe what Martha believes. We are here because we share in her confession of faith: "Yes, Lord, I have come to believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God, the One who is coming into the world."

Jesus is the One who is coming. But

we are the ones who must bring him into our world. Jesus Christ comes into the world through you and through me.

Here I want to share some words from one of the holy women of our times, Venerable Madeleine Delbrêl.

She once wrote: "Mission means doing the very work of Christ wherever we happen to be. We will not be the Church and salvation will not reach the ends of the earth unless we help save people in the very situations in which we live."

Madeleine lived near Paris, France, and died in 1964. When she was a young girl, Madeleine was artistic, a poet. And she loved to go to parties and go out dancing with her friends.

At age 15, she lost her faith, describing herself as a "strict atheist." She said every day for her the world seemed more and more absurd. She even wrote a kind of "manifesto" when she was 17. It was called "God is dead — long live death!" It was scary stuff that she was writing.

Madeleine eventually did find God. Or, as she liked to say, God found her. She heard the voice of Jesus and he led her to seek holiness and to continue his mission in the streets of Paris, living among the poor and the ordinary workers.

And she teaches us today that we are called to be "missionaries" in our homes, where we work, in school and in our neighborhoods.

Her personal experience as an atheist helped her to understand the world

we are living in. And through her eyes, we can start to understand the pain of so many people who can no longer hear God's voice or feel his love.

She said that in those years when she was lost and without God, "At the time, I would have given the whole world just to know why I was in it."

That is such a sad, beautiful line. And as you know from your own ministries, this, sadly, describes the reality of too many people in our society today. We are living in times when many people no longer know what purpose we are living for.

But you know and I know that the human heart is made for God. So, this must be our mission as Catholics, our mission as the Church.

We are called to speak to the hearts of our neighbors. We are called to tell them what every heart longs to know — the good news about who they are and why they are in the world! We are called to tell them to "Rise up!"

Let us be the voice of Jesus Christ to the people who are "Lazarus" in our time!

By the witness of our lives, by our words and actions, let us help Jesus to tear down all the walls of death — so that our brothers and sisters can rise up and live in the light of his freedom and love!

May our Blessed Mother Mary watch over you and keep us all close to the heart of Jesus. ♦

To read more columns by Archbishop José H. Gomez or to subscribe, visit www.angelusnews.com.



MADE FOR GOD

More than 40,000 faithful from around the world gathered at the Anaheim Convention Center on March 15-18 for one of the nation's largest annual gatherings of Catholics. Here are some of our favorite moments from this year's Religious Education Congress.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY VICTOR ALEMÁN / ANGELUS



