

pastor's page - the Church through time

A few weeks ago I touched history.



Reaching out my hand I felt the very stones which a young St Francis had touched with his hands. It was in the church of the Portiuncula, Assisi, on a day trip during our pilgrimage for the canonization of Mother Teresa.

St Francis had heard Jesus speak from a Crucifix, "Build My Church!", and in response he collected stones and did indeed repair this little church. Looking up at the higher stones I wonder what it



was like when the future saint set them in place: the weather, who was with him at the time, what was going through his mind, if he had jammed his thumb under that rock. Now you will find this church inside a much larger one, which is really cool.

From there, I and our pilgrimage group walked to see the rose garden when St Francis had struggled against temptations to impurity. He allowed the rose thorns to prick him, and now the roses there have no thorns! We saw wood from a stand he used for preaching. Later we went up to the upper city, Assisi on the hill, a beautiful stoned village with winding streets almost impossible to map, passing along the cobbled roads through archways which themselves had houses above. You could be sure that there are many, many tunnels below as well. Lucky that I could read a bit of old Italian to be able to find the birth place of St Francis, formerly the shop of his merchant father and, earlier, a cow stall. Like Jesus, St Francis was born in a stable. We saw the tombs of St Francis and his companions, and also the tomb of St Clare. In her church was the San Damiano Crucifix from which Francis heard those words of Jesus.

One thing that especially struck me was a series of modern paintings of St Clare and St Francis. They showed the story of Clare's vocation: her giving money to buy stones for the Portiuncula church, her running away at night so that her family could not stop her entering



Religious Life, her beautiful hair being cut off (shorn they called it) as she took her habit, and so on.

They were very life-like. It was as if some people in their twenties today were doing the same radical thing, listening to Jesus, giving up everything, upsetting their parents along the way, and becoming saints. And why not? God is real. God calls now, and if we listen and say yes, our lives will change, we will find great meaning, we will do great things, things that make a difference for eternity.

In Assisi, in Orvieto (you really have to go there one day if you can!) and especially in Rome we touched history.



We realized more fully that as Catholics we are so connected to and have been so blessed by Catholics all the way back to Jesus and the Apostles. It was our family burying their dead in the catacombs, bearing persecution in the coliseum, building great and lasting churches, expressing the Catholic world view in frescoes, building also a tradition of charity and learning which we now take for granted.

To be Catholic means to be steeped in History. We are founded upon the historical fact of Jesus' incarnation and work of preaching and healing and dying and rising, transcending History but also very much part of it. To be steeped in History leads people to appreciate the Church, so that many Protestants have found their way into the fullness of Christianity because they studied History.

A Catholic who doesn't bother about history is in danger of ingratitude and irreverence for all we



have received, most especially our Faith and liturgy. It is such a Catholic who will be tempted to make up theology and prayers that are not really Catholic, and end up exchanging the sublime for the silly. Young people who recognize our deep roots are inspired by the wonderful lives of ordinary people in the young days of our Church. They realize that we have a



serious responsibility to live well and hand on to the next generation the treasures of our Faith. As the Letter to the Hebrews says, we are surrounded by a great cloud of witnesses, because

the saints of the past are present, watching us from heaven, which is closer than we realized. "The Kingdom of God is among you!"

One highlight of our pilgrimage to the Canonization of St Teresa of Calcutta was Mass with Cardinal Pell at the tomb of St Peter. During the Mass we reflected on the gift of the Pope.

Cardinal Pell mentioned St John Fisher and St Thomas More who, though living in times of less impressive Popes, nevertheless grasped that the Papacy is a gift willed by God and essential to the Church. St Catherine of Siena also honoured the Pope because he is the successor of St Peter and the Vicar of Christ. May St Mother Teresa, St Peter and all the saints obtain for us great confidence as members of the Church with all her history, the Church founded by Christ.



Fr Thomas Casanova CCS

October Jokes



Like Father Like Son

I was on duty as an emergency-room technician when a father brought in his son, who had poked a tire from one of his toy trucks up his nose. The man was embarrassed, but I assured him this was something kids often do. I quickly removed the tire and they were on their way. A few minutes later, the father was back in the ER asking to talk to me in private. Mystified, I led him to an examining room. "While we were on our way home," he began, "I was looking at that little tire and wondering, how on earth did my son get this thing stuck up his nose and..." It took just a few seconds to get the tire out of Dad's nose.

Why did the banana go to the doctor? Because it wasn't peeling well!

Doctor, Doctor, I feel like a pack of cards. I'll deal with you later.

Numbing - At the busy dental office where I work, one patient was always late. Once when I called to confirm an appointment, he said, "I'll be about 15 minutes late. That won't be a problem, will it?" "No," I told him. "We just won't have time to give you an anesthetic." He arrived early.

A harried man runs into his physician's office. "Doctor! Doctor! My wife's in labour! But she keeps screaming, 'Shouldn't, couldn't, wouldn't, can't!'" "Oh, that's okay," says the doctor. "She's just having contractions."

A friend of mine was working as a nurse in a West Australian coastal town when a tourist came into the medical centre with a fishhook lodged deep in his hand. Since it was the weekend, my friend had to summon the doctor from home. The tourist was dismayed to see that the doctor was young, had long hair and wore sandals and a very casual shirt. "You don't look much like a doctor to me," he said dubiously. The doctor examined the hook in the tourist's hand and responded, "And you don't look much like a fish to me."

Earlier this year Winston lost his ear. It was replaced with a pigs ear by doctors. They cut it to size and made it look more human before sewing it, invisibly, in place. Several weeks passed before Winston felt it necessary to return to his surgeons. When he did, Winston complained bitterly, 'Doctor, I keep hearing this noise and it's doing my head in.' 'The doctor, totally unconcerned, answered, 'Don't worry, its just a bit of crackling.'

What does a dentist call his X-rays?
Tooth-pics!

Patient: I think I'm a pair of curtains!
Doctor: Pull yourself together!

Our nephew was getting married to a doctor's daughter. At the wedding reception, the father of the bride stood to read his toast, which he had scribbled on a piece of scrap paper. Several times during his speech, he halted, overcome with what I assumed was a moment of deep emotion. But after a particularly long pause, he explained, "I'm sorry. I can't seem to make out what I've written down." Looking out into the audience, he asked, "Is there a pharmacist in the house?"

Following my husband's physical exam, the doctor delivered some bad news. "Your white blood cells are elevated," he said. "What does that mean?" I asked. Looking concerned, the doctor explained, "Up."

Q: When does a doctor get mad? A: When he runs out of patients!

Lenny tells the psychiatrist, "Every time I get into bed, I think there's somebody under it."
"Come to me three times a week for two years, and I'll cure your fears," says the shrink. "And I'll charge you only \$200 a visit."
Lenny says he'll think about it. Six months later, he runs into the doctor, who asks why he never came back. "For \$200 a visit?" says Lenny. "A bartender cured me for \$10." "Is that so! How?" "He told me to cut the legs off the bed."

Doctor, Doctor, will this ointment clear up my spots? I never make rash promises!

Doctor, Doctor, my baby's swallowed a bullet. Well, don't point him at anyone until I get there!

Allan, a mechanic, was removing a cylinder head from a Harley-Davidson motorbike, when he spotted a world-famous heart surgeon in his garage. The heart surgeon was waiting for the service manager to come and take a look at his bike.

Allan shouted across the garage, 'Hey Doc can I ask you a question?' The famous surgeon, a bit surprised, walked over to Allan. Allan straightened up, wiped his hands on a rag and asked, 'So Doc, look at this engine. I also can open hearts, take valves out, fix'em, put in new parts and when I finish this will work just like a new one. So how come I work for a pittance and you get the really big money, when you and I are doing basically the same work?' The surgeon paused, smiled and leaned over and whispered in Allan's ear, 'Try doing it with the engine running.'



Why Go to Mass?

Grace D. MacKinnon



Dear Grace, When I was growing up, my parents rarely went to Mass on Sunday even though they were Catholic. They made sure we received the sacraments, but did not go to church themselves. Now that I have children of my own, I see that I am falling into the same pattern. Sometimes I think I've lost all my faith. I'm not sure if I've ever really understood why it's so wrong not to go to Mass. My father always said that He could worship God right in his own home. Even though I've been told that we as Catholics must attend Mass on Sunday, I often find excuses not to go, and I don't seem to feel guilty about it. What is wrong with me?

Many Catholics have trouble getting themselves to go to Mass. Do you know why? Because they don't know what is going on there! If they did, they would not be able to wait to get there. I heard a little story once that helps illustrate this. It seems there were two college students talking — one was Catholic, the other was non-Catholic. The young Catholic girl was trying to explain to her friend

what she believed regarding the Real Presence of Jesus in the Holy Eucharist. After listening for a while, the non-Catholic friend asked, "Are you trying to tell me that you actually believe that wafer of bread is the real body of Jesus Christ?" The other girl responded, "Yes, that's what we believe." Her friend then said, "If I truly believed that, I would crawl to your church on my hands and knees to receive Him!" Your father was wrong in thinking that he could worship God the same way at home as in the Mass. At the Mass, we worship Him in the highest way possible because there we have Communion with Him. We are united with Him in the most intimate and real sense. Jesus gives us the greatest gift on earth — Himself!

Allow me to ask you a question. Do you want to go to heaven someday? You will hopefully say yes, as most people would. But does heaven seem like someplace and sometime far away into the future? If it does, think again!

Pope Pius X declared that "Holy Communion is the shortest and surest way to heaven." The problem today is that we don't think enough about heaven. The lures of the world draw us away from thinking of it. Do you know that when we cross the threshold of the church and into the Mass, it is like walking into heaven? The Mass is a foretaste of the heavenly banquet that we will feast on one day.

Jesus said, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you have no life within you" (Jn 6:53). No life! The Eucharist, which is His body and Blood, is our

spiritual life. Without it, we are spiritually dead!

In life, we face a constant battle between good and evil. The Eucharist is the food we need to strengthen and sustain us in this battle. And that's not all. It not only strengthens us, but transforms us as well. We become different — we become more like Him.

One of the main reasons that Jesus gave us the Eucharist was so that every time we are at Mass and witness the sacrifice He made for us, hopefully we will be moved — transformed. Wouldn't it change you if you knew that someone had died for you? How often do we think about that when we feel tempted not to go to Mass?

If a Catholic does not desire to go to Mass, it's because he does not know what he has in the Eucharist. The martyrs of the early Christian Church died for love of Jesus in the Most Holy Eucharist. They happily went to their death proclaiming "We cannot live without Sunday!"

In his apostolic letter *Mane Nobiscum Domine* on the current Year of the Eucharist, Pope John Paul II wrote: "In a particular way I ask that every effort be made this year to experience Sunday as the day of the Lord and the day of the Church" (No. 23). Sunday should be a day that is at the heart of the Christian life, the pope urged. "Do not be afraid to give your time to Christ! Yes, let us open our time to Christ, that He may cast light upon it and give it direction" (No. 7).

The Mass should be the high point of our life. But is it? We each have to answer that in our own heart. Open your eyes and you will see what you have!

Wise Words

*Buffalos kill 7 people every year, Lions kill 500 people every year.

*Hippos kill 800 people every year, Spiders kill 5000 people every year.

*Scorpions kill 7000 people every year, Snakes kill 10000 people every year.

*And then, surprisingly, Mosquitoes kill 2.7 million people every year. Yes, the smallest are the deadliest!

Small 'sins', hardly noticed by many, are the most deadly to your spiritual life.

Avoid excuses for not praying for a few moments each day.

Sins of omission are just as deadly as sins of commission.

Gossiping and small lies, are committed more frequently and are deadly.

Mind those little compromises that you do daily. They are the ones that will bring your downfall.

St Thomas Aquinas on the spread of Islam

St. Thomas Aquinas, recognized as a “Doctor of the Church” for being Catholicism’s greatest theologian of all time, wrote that Islam spread by violence:

[Muhammad] seduced the people by promises of carnal pleasure to which the concupiscence of the flesh goads us. His teaching also contained precepts that were in conformity with his promises, and he gave free rein to carnal pleasure. In all this, as is not unexpected, he was obeyed by carnal men. As for proofs of the truth of his doctrine, he brought forward only such as could be grasped by the natural ability of anyone with a very modest wisdom. Indeed, the truths that he taught he mingled with many fables and with doctrines of the greatest falsity. He did not bring forth any signs produced in a supernatural way, which alone

fittingly gives witness to divine inspiration; for a visible action that can be only divine reveals an invisibly inspired teacher of truth. On the contrary, Muhammad said that he was sent in the power of his arms — which are signs not lacking even to robbers and tyrants. What is more, no wise men, men trained in things divine and human, believed in him from the beginning. Those who believed in him were brutal men and desert wanderers, utterly ignorant of all divine teaching, through whose numbers Muhammad forced others to become his followers by the violence of his arms. Nor do divine pronouncements on the part of preceding prophets offer him any witness. On the contrary, he perverts almost all the testimonies of the Old and New Testaments by making them into fabrications of his own, as can be seen by anyone who examines his law. It was, therefore, a

shrewd decision on his part to forbid his followers to read the Old and New Testaments, lest these books convict him of falsity. It is thus clear that those who place any faith in his words believe foolishly.



Fr Jacques Hamel, martyred in France while offering Mass, July 26, 2016. “Fr Hamel, pray for us and for the conversion of Muslims.”

The Mysterious Origin of the Prayer to St. Michael



by ChurchPOP Editor

There is a real spiritual battle going on all around us. Our faith teaches us that humans aren’t the only intelligent creatures God made, that God also made angels and that some of those angels fell away in rebellion. The two sides continue to fight for human souls today.

A popular prayer that references this battle very explicitly is the Prayer to St. Michael the Archangel. Composed by Pope Leo XIII in the 19th century, there is a short version that many Catholics have memorized, and then a longer version used for exorcisms.

What makes this prayer particularly interesting, though, is

its supposed origin story.

One day after celebrating Mass, Pope Leo XIII was found staring blankly. A moment later, he suddenly snapped back to the present and quickly shut himself into his private office. A half an hour later, with his attendants knocking to see if everything was okay, he emerged having composed the Prayer to St. Michael. From that day forward, he was known to regularly recite the prayer.

What did he see that inspired the prayer? In one account, he had a vision of demonic forces circling Rome. In another account, Leo actually heard a conversation between God and Satan, in which God allowed Satan to choose one century in which to do his worst work. And what century did the evil one choose? The 20th century.

Since the 1930s, various articles in Catholic publications have recited stories like this. Unfortunately, it’s not clear if there’s any truth to them, since the earliest account don’t

appear until about 45 years after Leo XIII composed the prayer. At least one article published in the 1950s credits Leo’s personal secretary as a source, but it’s unclear how accurate it is, since no sources from the 1880s refer to the story.

Either way, the lesson is the same: don’t be naive, spiritual warfare is all around, and keep praying!

Here’s the Prayer to St. Michael:

**St. Michael the Archangel,
defend us in battle.**

**Be our defense against the
wickedness and snares of the
Devil.**

**May God rebuke him, we humbly
pray,**

**and do thou, O Prince of the
Heavenly hosts,**

**by the power of God, thrust into
Hell Satan,**

and all the evil spirits,

**who prowl about the world
seeking the ruin of souls.**

Amen.

Shunned for supporting natural marriage, former Mozilla CEO is back with new browser



LifeSiteNews 28/9/16 The former CEO of Mozilla has released a new Internet browser called **Brave**.

Brendan Eich, the creator of JavaScript, continues to lead the technological revolution with Brave, an innovative concept in Internet browsers.

After blowing away the competition with the Internet browser Firefox, Eich has come up with Brave, a nearly ad-free, lightning-fast browser that eliminates intrusive ads as well as common but unwanted tracking tack-ons.

A tech legend for his Java and Firefox contributions, Eich was betrayed by his contemporaries and forced out of business as CEO of Mozilla, the company behind Firefox, **because he supported natural marriage**.

When it was revealed in 2014 that Eich donated \$1,000 to California's Proposition 8 ballot proposal, which defined marriage as the union of one man and one woman, he was blackballed, even though Proposition 8 was supported by the majority of Californians and easily passed in 2008.



brave

Eich was publicly shamed because he believed in natural marriage and family. He was openly called a racist, Nazi, and inhumane.

But the tenacious techie didn't give up. Eich came up with a whole new concept in web browsers: the ad-free, tracking-free, fast internet browser Brave.

In Nov 2015, Eich raised \$2.5 million to create an advanced super-technical team. By Aug 2016, the company had raised \$4.5 million in seed money to launch the browser.

Brave is called an entirely new way to browse the web without being intrusively tracked, and without time-consuming download ads.

Internet users have been using ad blockers like Adblock Plus to cut down on the ads that slow Internet browsers down. But even with ad blocker software, users still see a lot of ads because the blockers have special arrangements with major advertisers to let their ads through.

Even the ad industry has acknowledged it has "alienated" users with so many ads slowing down computers.

Internet analyst Al Hilwa told Forbes that Brave "recognizes the key fact that browsing has become truly onerous and ever slower, even as devices have become faster." He pointed out that the "complex web of ad downloads" is far greater and more time-consuming than the website content itself.

In contrast, Eich's new Brave blocks everything. It doesn't load any of the advertising software code and also blocks tracking from

the start.

"On the desktop, Brave provides a 40 percent to 60 percent speed increase, and a 2x to 4x speed increase on mobile devices," Brave's Catherine Corre told LifeSiteNews. "Therefore, mobile users also see a direct reduction in both battery and data plan consumption."

"Brave also protects users with leading privacy and security features such as encrypted data traffic, fingerprinting shields, phishing protection, malware filtering, and script blocking," Corre explained in an email.

Because of Eich's history, Brave was opposed before it was officially launched. Major media websites took legal action to stop it, sending a cease and desist letter, claiming Brave was illegal because it blocked advertisements.

But Eich defended Brave, explaining that it does not replace the publisher's own ads. "We do not tamper with any first-party publisher content, including native ads that do not use third-party tracking."

"Brendan picked the name 'Brave' because we need users who will take a stand and fight back," Corre told LifeSiteNews. "We see third party ads and tracking as toxic, and we block that by default."

To compensate websites and advertisers, Brave inserts non-obtrusive, non-obnoxious ads that do not track users. Revenue from the ads helps pay websites, ad networks, and users. Brave's address bar even has a timer displaying how quickly a webpage loads.

Who says those who stand up bravely can't win in today's politically correct world?

Conscience In the Catholic View.

Does Conscience stand in obedience to the moral law? Yes! Not the obedience of a slave to his master. It's the obedience of a scientist to the truth, or a famished man to a feast, or the ear to sound ... or of a hunting dog to his quarry. Conscience is made for moral truth. It searches for, finds, probes and understands more deeply, then directs action as best as it can in accord with it. How can this be a threat? Is a hand a threat to a glove, or a key to a lock? A healthy conscience doesn't close us down and restrict us. It opens us up to the good and ultimately to God. It makes possible the flourishing of the gift of freedom. *E. Christian Brugger*

A Coal Alone

author unknown

A member of a certain church, who previously had been attending services regularly, stopped going. After a few weeks, the pastor decided to visit him. It was a chilly evening. The pastor found the man at home alone, sitting before a blazing fire.

Guessing the reason for his pastor's visit, the man welcomed him, led him to a comfortable chair near the fireplace and waited. The pastor made himself at home but said nothing. In the grave silence, he contemplated the dance of the flames around the burning logs.

After some minutes, the pastor took the fire tongs, carefully picked up a brightly burning ember and placed it

to one side of the hearth all alone. Then he sat back in his chair, still silent. The host watched all this in quiet contemplation. As the one lone ember's flame flickered and diminished, there was a momentary glow and then its fire was no more.

Soon it was cold and dead. Not a word had been spoken since the initial greeting. The Pastor glanced at his watch and realized it was time to leave, he slowly stood up, picked up the cold, dead ember and placed it back in the middle of the fire. Immediately it began to glow, once more with the light and warmth of the burning coals around it.

As the pastor reached the door to leave, his host said with a tear

running down his cheek, "Thank you so much for your visit and especially for the fiery sermon. I shall be back in church next Sunday."



IF YOUR GOD LETS YOU DO WHATEVER YOU WANT, THEN YOUR GOD IS YOU
Chris Stefanick

CatholicLink

IF YOU HAVE TO LOWER YOUR MORALS IN ORDER TO FIND LOVE, THEN IT IS NOT LOVE THAT YOU ARE FINDING
JASON EVERT

CHASTITY PROJECT.COM



“Pray and fast for marriage in October.” Bishops of Australia

This is a close up photograph of Mother Teresa's foot.

A national month of prayer and fasting for marriage and families will be initiated in October 2016 by the Australian Catholic Marriage and Family Council.

“The month of prayer and fasting is intended to be held in parishes across Australia during October 2016 as the nation prepares for a conversation on marriage,” Bishop Michael Kennedy, the Bishops Delegate for Marriage and Family, said.

“I encourage you to support your parish community to celebrate Mass, pray the Rosary and undertake Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament during this time with the special intention of marriages and families in mind.”

What a blessing for Australia that the Bishops are calling for a month of prayer and fasting for marriage!

The battle for marriage continues in Australia. Reading mainstream media one is lead to believe that natural marriage will be swept aside. This has not happened in

many countries despite heated public and parliamentary debate.

Pray the rosary in October, knowing that this is the weapon that Mary asked us to use to defeat evil.



The West Wagga Wag

West Wagga Parish



Serving: Ashmont,
Collingullie,
Glenfield, Lloyd,
and San Isidore

THE PLANT MAZE

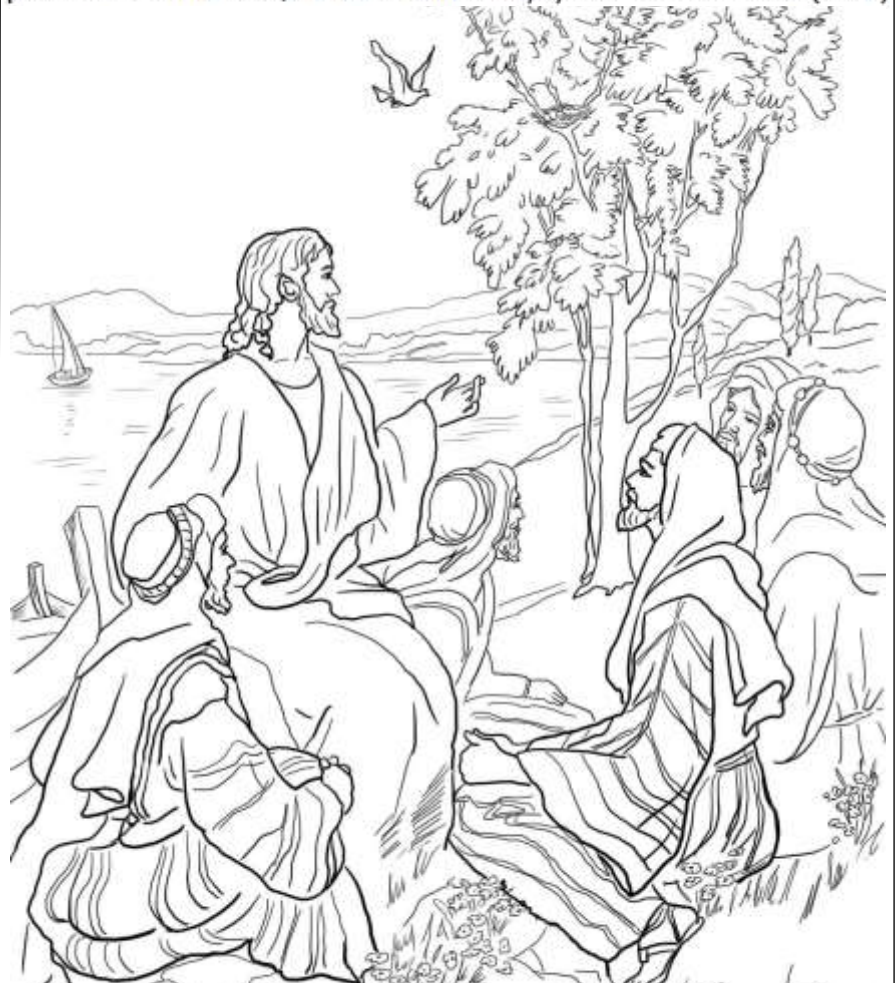


Find the words below hidden in the 225 letters to the right.

- | | |
|----------|-------|
| MULBERRY | DRINK |
| UPROOTED | SMALL |
| INCREASE | FAITH |
| MUSTARD | SEED |
| APOSTLES | LORD |
| PLANTED | DUTY |
| SERVANT | OBEY |
| PREPARE | TREE |
| REPLIED | SEA |
| SUPPER | EAT |

A Mustard Seed Faith

He replied, "If you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to this mulberry tree, 'Be uprooted and planted in the sea,' and it will obey you." Luke 17:6 (NIV)



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B	P	L	O	P	Z	W	T	G	I	E	T	E	P	E
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