



## CLARIFICATION ON THE “PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL” AT WEEKEND MASSES

The Prayer of the Faithful gives parishioners an opportunity to lift up to the Lord your special need within the praying community. It was never intended to be a “laundry list” of multiple prayer requests from an individual worshiper at Mass. Therefore, starting on the weekend Masses of July 12th and 13th, an individual worshiper at Mass is humbly requested to *publically* proclaim only *one* petition per Mass. If you have more than one petition, you are more than welcome to state one of those at the next weekend Mass. *The purpose of this ruling is not to stifle prayer but to keep any one individual from dominating the public Prayer of the Faithful by proclamations of multiple petitions.* Thanks for your understanding of one prayer petition at Mass. The others can be rotated at weekend Masses celebrated through the weeks. Remember, God hears your prayers whether you say them publically or privately.

### A JULY 4TH STORY

One year, 11-year-old Jim’s family was having the “extended family” 4th of July cookout at their home. One of the special treats that year was the lighting of the fireworks that they had bought illegally out of state. Just before they were to arrive, a cousin calls, saying their neighbor’s plans had just fallen through, and could they bring them along to the picnic. “Sure, the more the merrier!” Upon arrival and meeting of their cousin’s neighbor, it is discovered that he’s a police officer. The father turns as innocently as he can to Jim, and whispers to him to grab the paper bag of fireworks sitting in the kitchen and hide them somewhere quickly. Jim disappears, and the father changes the topic to food for the day. This family had brought some chicken to grill, so the father tells them the gas grill is all set to use out back – just turn on the gas and push the ignition button. They head out to the back as Jim comes back in through the front door. The father hurries to him and says, “Whew, that was close! That man’s a police officer, and he almost saw the fireworks. Did you hide them real well?” “Oh, yeah, nobody will ever think to look in the grill!”

### QUOTES ON AMERICA

“Ninety eight percent of Americans are decent, hard-working and honest Americans. It’s the other two percent who get all the publicity. But then again, we elected them.”

“I’ve got nothing against any individual American except there aren’t any. They’re always African-American, Irish-American, Polish-American. There’s never an American-American you can blame.”

“Americans will put up with anything provided it doesn’t block traffic.”

“In America anyone can become President. That’s the problem.”

“Undocumented immigrants have always been a problem in America. Ask any Indian.”

“An American can eat anything on Earth as long as it’s between two pieces of bread.”

“If you surveyed 100 typical middle-aged Americans, only two would know their blood type, but all of them would know the theme song for the “Beverly Hillbillies.”

“You can always count on the Americans to do the right thing – after they have tried everything else.”

### FR. MIKE’S SERMON FOR FOURTEENTH SUNDAY

It happened every Friday evening, almost without fail. Old Ed came strolling along the beach to his favorite pier. Clutched in his bony hand was a bucket of shrimp. Ed walks out to the end of the pier, where it seems he almost has the world to himself. He is alone with his thoughts.

Before long he is no longer alone. Up in the sky a thousand white dots come screeching and squawking, winging their way toward that lanky frame of Ed standing there on the end of the pier.

Before long, dozens of seagulls have enveloped him, their wings fluttering and flapping wildly. Ed stands there tossing shrimp to the hungry birds. As he does, if you listen closely, you can hear him say with a smile, “Thank you. Thank you.”

In a few short minutes the bucket is empty. But Ed doesn’t leave. He stands there as though transported to another time and place.

If you were sitting there on the pier with your fishing line in the water, Ed might seem like just another old codger, lost in his own weird world, feeding the seagulls with a bucket full of shrimp. But they would do well to know him better.

His full name: Eddie Rickenbacker. He was a famous hero in World War I, and then again in WWII. On one of his flying missions across the Pacific, he and his seven-member crew went down.

Captain Rickenbacker and his crew floated for days on the rough waters of the Pacific. They fought the sun. They fought sharks. Most of all, they fought hunger and thirst. By the eighth day their rations ran out. No food. No water. They were hundreds of miles from land and no one knew where they were or even if they were alive.

Every day across America millions wondered and prayed that Eddie Rickenbacker might somehow be found alive.

The men adrift needed a miracle. One afternoon they had a simple service and prayed for a miracle.

When the prayers ended, Eddie leaned back and pulled his military cap over his nose to take a nap. The others did likewise. Time dragged on. All he could hear was the slap of the waves against the raft. Suddenly Eddie felt something land on the top of his cap. It was a seagull!

Eddie and his starving crew made a meal from the bird. It was not much for eight guys. But this one bird was God’s answer to their prayer. They used the bird’s feathers and organs for bait. With it, they caught fish, which gave them food and more bait....and then more food. From that one seagull they had enough food to live until they were found and rescued after 24 days at sea in a little raft.

Eddie Rickenbacker lived many years beyond that ordeal, but he never forgot the sacrifice of that first life-saving seagull. That’s why almost every Friday night he would walk to the end of the pier with a bucket full of shrimp to say, “Thank you.”

Like Eddie, there are times when we feel so helpless in life. We are adrift in life’s troubles. We don’t know where we’re going or how it will end. But God gave those men a raft so they would not sink to a certain death. God gave them food to sustain them as they waited for rescue. Jesus is the raft that keeps you from sinking into the waters of despair. Jesus is the food to strengthen your journey through the raging storms. Was it not Jesus whose power calmed the waters when the Apostles cried out in fear? Does not Jesus have the power to calm the storms that frighten you? Isn’t it wonderful to have a God who isn’t afraid to get wet....?