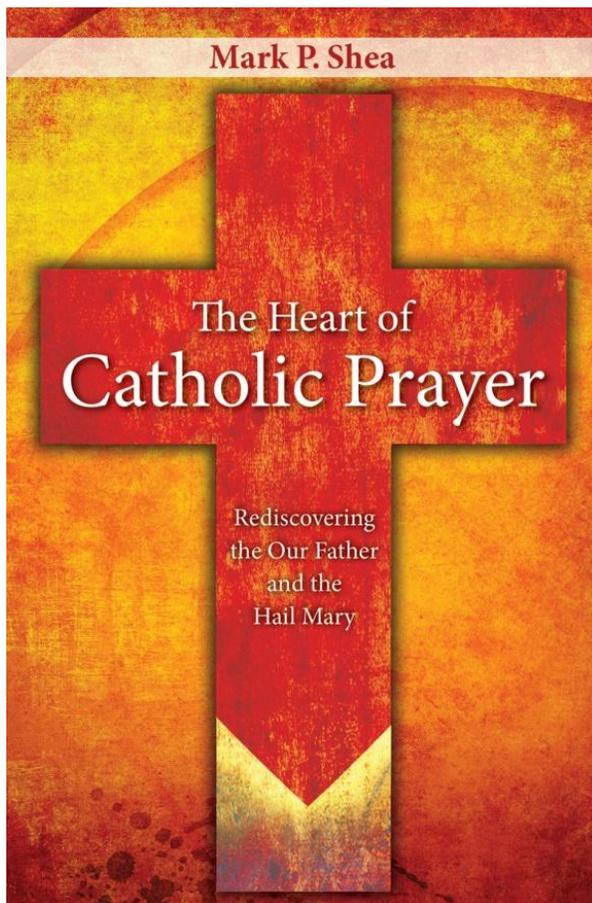


FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Unearthing new meaning in two very familiar prayers



HUNTINGTON, Indiana, May 15, 2012 – Because people don't really know what they are doing when they pray, God sends them help, says one of the most renowned authors on the Catholic faith. The prayers most Catholics have known since childhood -- the Our Father and the Hail Mary -- often dissolve into rote recitation with little thought to their meaning. But there is infinite power to their words.

With Christ as teacher in the school of prayer – through example, Scripture, and the Liturgy of the Mass, says Mark Shea in his new book – he shows how the 'Our Father' is a deeply covenantal prayer between a child and his Father (Luke 11:2). Shea likewise explains the role of Mary as spiritual mother and intercessor (John 19:27), and how Christ intended that she continually stand by the faithful through their crosses in life and death – just as she did with her Son.

Shea's latest book **The Heart of Catholic Prayer: Rediscovering the Our Father and the Hail Mary (Our Sunday Visitor, 159 pp)**, provides readers a line-by-line analysis of the Church's most foundational prayers – the Our Father and the Hail Mary.

Shea weaves the contemporary with the historical, and the theological with the practical, as he elucidates these two foundational prayers. His fresh and penetrating perspective leads readers through each line, unveiling their true meaning. Readers can then appreciate the value of the prayers as personal meditation, as well as their place in the rich tradition of the Church.

“To learn and understand the Our Father and the Hail Mary is to learn the deepest contours of the Church's interior life, for both are prayers that come from the Holy Spirit, who is the soul of the Church,” writes Shea.

About the Author

Mark P. Shea, a popular Catholic writer and speaker, is a double-jump convert: raised as an agnostic, became a non-denominational Evangelical in 1979, and entered the Catholic Church in 1987.

She is the author of the books: **Mary, Mother of the Son; The Work of Mercy: Being the Hands and Heart of Christ; The Heart of Catholic Prayer: Rediscovering the Our Father and the Hail Mary; Making Senses Out of Scripture: Reading the Bible as the First Christians Did; By What Authority?: An Evangelical Discovers Catholic Tradition;** and **This is My Body: An Evangelical Discovers the Real Presence.**



A frequent TV and radio guest, Mark also speaks nationally and internationally on many topics of faith.

He also finds time to be an affiliate and devoted friend of the Catherine of Siena Institute and boosts their phenomenally important work wherever and whenever he can. Further, he is an award-winning columnist, contributing a daily blog to Patheos, a thrice-weekly blog and his "Connecting the Dots" column to the National Catholic Register, as well as numerous articles in many other magazines. He has been happily married since 1983 and he and his wife have frequent adventures with their four sons.

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