

OPERATION – Special Intention

I live in the beautiful foothills of Southern California, a nice quite little city. A person can walk around with his/her dog late at night, you can even leave your windows open! Usually when I get home from work on Friday I park the car and it doesn't move until Monday morning. I enjoy walking, I walk to the store, to Church, and every night I take a nice slow walk around town.

One particular Saturday I walked past a group of loud anti-war protestors. Imagine that, loud and protesting in my quite little hamlet. I sat on a nearby bench and watched them. They were holding signs and yelling to motorists to beep their horns in support, (hey what about noise pollution).

I watched for a while and wondered to myself, "What choice do we have in this Jihad, *which literally means to "struggle", notably to "struggle in the way of God"*? My goodness what if a wife of a soldier or parent who has son or daughter who volunteered to be put in harms way or worse someone who lost a loved one passes by? These people are not even appreciating the irony that their right to picket and yell comes at a cost to others."

I sat and wondered what could I do in these difficult and troubling times? As any parent or individual who has experienced trials and tribulations has learned, sometimes the only thing we can do is to pray. With that in mind I then decided to create OPERATION – Special Intentions.

The idea was to have first-class relics of the Military Patrons available for public veneration allowing individuals a prayerful opportunity for petitioning God to hear their intentions.

I commissioned a Russian Orthodox Monastery to paint a one of a kind icon with the images of St. Anthony of Padua, patron of sailors, St. Therese of Lisieux, patron of pilots and air crews and St. Ignatius of Loyola, patron of soldiers. Even that was a unique idea; imagine a Russian Monk painting an icon with Catholic saints. I mounted three first class bone relics in separate wooden cross reliquaries and I was ready to go. Often times I am amazed at what a difference one person can make, especially when those individuals work together.

I called the Our Lady of Angels Cathedral of Los Angeles and presented my idea. We had a meeting and they asked to have the relics for a

four month tour of the Archdiocese of Los Angeles. As soon as the press release hit the wire I started getting phone calls. I received two calls from the Los Angeles Times newspaper. The religion writer was interested in writing a feature on prayer and was very interested in the relic tour.

We had a nice long phone interview/conversation. The writer was interested in the Catholic use of the words; petition, intercession and intention. I did my best to explain what the words and actions mean to me. Of course the simple way is to quote the definition from a Catholic dictionary, but my heart felt good God loving intentions aren't defined in the dictionary. The word intercession in Latin is *intercedo*, it means, to interpose. It is defined as, the going between two parties in order to plead before one on behalf of the other.

She said that she is not Catholic and that Protestants don't use those particular words. Here is my take on that. All people in one form or another, whether religious or secular practice petitions and intentions daily. Protestants whether Baptist, Lutheran, Anglican even Evangelicals employ petition and intention methods. You can turn on any Evangelical TV program to witness people asking for miracles or money, "can I have a witness". As a matter of fact those antiwar protestors put their intentions and petitions out on the street corner.

Sometimes all we can do is to pray, any parent knows that. Providing the public the opportunity to gather together to pray for safe return of their loved ones or the souls of their lost husbands, wives, sons and daughters can only be good. Good for them, their healing, the souls of the departed, the safe return of loved ones, and most of all good before the Throne of God the Father.

I created "OPERATION-Special Intentions" for the spiritual benefit of the friends, family, and members of our Nations Military Forces.

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Cathedral information:

<http://www.olacathedral.org/>