

# HOLY REDEEMER



# GRACE NOTES

## October Newsletter - 2022

### Introduction...

In the Catholic Church the month of October is dedicated to the Holy Rosary. According to an account by the Dominican, Alan de la Roch, Mary appeared to St. Dominic in 1206 after he had been praying and performing severe penances in an effort to combat heresy. Mary praised him for his valiant fight and then gave him the Rosary as a mighty weapon and told him to preach it to others.



Usually, five decades are recited in a session. Each decade provides an opportunity to meditate on one of the Mysteries of the Rosary, which recall events in the lives of Jesus and his mother Mary. In the 16th century Pope Pius V established a standard 15 Mysteries of the Rosary, based on long-standing custom. The 15 mysteries were divided into three sets:

- *The Joyful Mysteries* (The Annunciation, The Visitation, The Nativity, The Presentation of Jesus at the Temple, and The Finding of Jesus in the Temple)
- *The Sorrowful Mysteries* (The Agony in the Garden, The Scourging at the Pillar, The Crowning with Thorns, The Carrying of the Cross, and The Crucifixion and Death)
- *The Glorious Mysteries* (The Resurrection, The Ascension, The Descent of the Holy Spirit, The Assumption of Mary, and The Coronation of the Virgin)

In 2002, Pope John Paul II added a new set of mysteries, termed *The Luminous Mysteries*, which include The Baptism of Jesus in the Jordan, The Wedding at Cana, Jesus' Proclamation of the Kingdom of God, The Transfiguration, and The Institution of the Eucharist.

The mysteries are frequently prayed on specific days of the week: the Luminous Mysteries on Thursday, the Glorious Mysteries on Sunday and Wednesday, the Joyful Mysteries on Monday and Saturday, and the Sorrowful Mysteries on Tuesday and Friday.



## On the Shoulders of Giants – Saint Stephen

*Isaac Newton said that all he had accomplished in life was due to “standing on the shoulders of the giants” who came before him. Each month we will remember one of the giants upon whose shoulders the parishioners of Holy Redeemer are perched.*

In Christianity, a martyr is a person considered to have died because of their testimony for Jesus or their faith in Jesus. Early Christians considered martyrs as powerful intercessors, and their examples of faith unto death were treasured as inspired by the Holy Spirit. In Western Christian art, martyrs are often shown holding a palm frond as an attribute, representing the victory of the spirit over flesh, and it was widely believed that a picture of a palm on a tomb meant that a martyr was buried there.

Examples of Christian martyrdom are not restricted to the early Church; various international agencies have estimated that over 70 million Christians have been murdered for their faith since the time of Christ’s death on the cross. This month we are remembering the life of St. Stephen, widely regarded as the first Christian martyr, who was put to death in 34 AD at the young age of 29. Stephen was a Hellenist (a foreign-born Jew who spoke Greek) who lived in Jerusalem and converted to Christianity. Stephen was also the first of seven deacons appointed by the Apostles to serve the practical needs of the early Church, specifically to attend to the temporal relief of the poor. Stephen was known for his wisdom and holiness, as well as his forcefulness as a preacher. It was this latter quality that would eventually set him on the path to his death.



Many Jewish leaders found themselves perplexed with how to handle the formerly Jewish followers of Jesus, particularly Stephen, who frequently taught in the synagogues and was described in the Acts of the Apostles (6:8) as “filled with grace and power... working great wonders and signs among the people.” When members of the synagogues questioned Stephen’s view of the scriptures, he challenged them to debates, which he invariably won. Humiliated, they accused Stephen of blasphemy. The Jewish authorities, already wary of the preaching of the Apostles and the growth of Jewish converts to their message, had Stephen arrested and taken before the Sanhedrin, the supreme legal court of Jewish elders. Despite the false testimony brought against Stephen, his innocence was obvious. “All those who sat in the Sanhedrin looked intently at him and saw that his face was like the face of an angel.” (Acts of the Apostles 6:15).

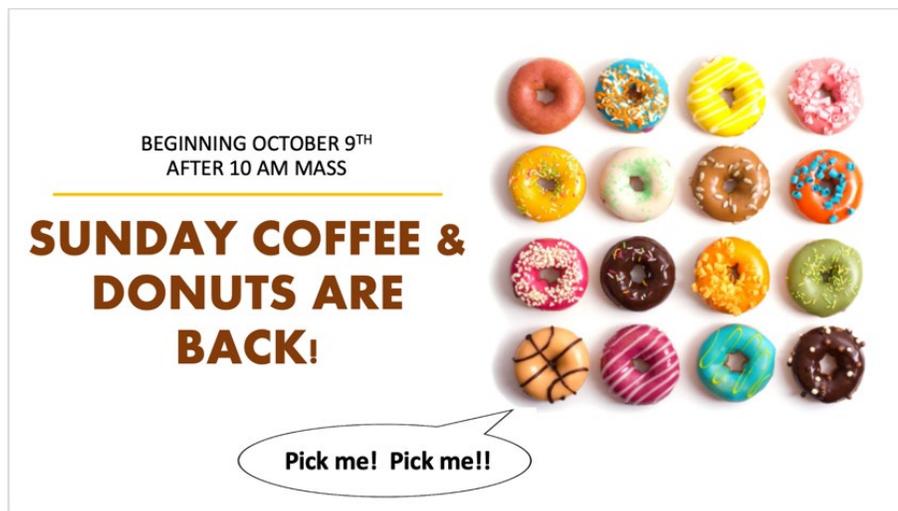
During his trial, Stephen stood by his arguments: “You always oppose the Holy Spirit; you are just like your ancestors. Which of the prophets did your ancestors not persecute? They put to death those who foretold the coming of the righteous one, whose betrayers and murderers you have now become. You received the law as transmitted by angels, but you did not observe it.” (Acts of the Apostles 7:51-53).

Thus castigated the crowd could no longer contain their anger and proceeded to stone Stephen. Among the crowd that witnessed the stoning was Saul, who would later experience a radical conversion and change his name, becoming the Apostle Paul. In response to the stones raining down upon him Stephen looked up and cried, "Look! I see heaven open and the Son of Man standing on the right hand of God!" Stephen prayed that the Lord would receive his spirit and that his murderers would be forgiven, then sank to his knees, and "fell asleep."



### The Return of Coffee and Donuts After Mass

We are delighted to report that beginning Sunday, October 9<sup>th</sup> coffee and donuts will again be served following the 10 am mass. The Coffee and Donuts Social Hour will take place outside the church (between the church and the parking lot). The Social Hour will continue to take place outside as long as weather permits and will then move to the parish hall. Parish Council members will be present on October 9<sup>th</sup> to serve participants and give everyone a chance to chat about all things Holy Redeemer.



### Let Us Build a House Capital Campaign

"A Church isn't a building but a community of Christians supporting each other's faith in Jesus Christ and sharing faith with others," Father Sullivan noted in a recent homily. "Yet, a welcoming church building is an essential tool for evangelization." He also quoted Catholic hymn writer Marty Haugen's song; *All Are Welcome*. "The song's lyrics encourage the faithful to build a house of worship where love dwells, prophets speak, and hearts learn to forgive." To be a welcoming place, a church needs to be all those things, and it starts by being physically accessible for all.

Father Sullivan noted that accessibility is a serious challenge for the current Church, which has not been renovated in over forty years. The anticipated cost of the proposed Holy Redeemer renovation project is \$3 million. Parish savings will provide half of the necessary costs, and proceeds from the recent sale of land to the Town of Chatham for affordable housing will also contribute to the renovation project. The parish plans to raise the remaining \$1 million through a “Let Us Build a House” capital campaign which began in mid-August and will continue through the fall.

We are delighted to report that nearly 80% of the required \$1 million required for the renovation project has already been raised. Thank you to everyone who has already contributed. If you have not already done so please help us raise the remaining 20% with a donation to the renovation project.

## Television Review

For the second year in a row, the television show “Ted Lasso” won the Emmy award for Outstanding Comedy Series. Ted Lasso is a small-time American college football coach, plucked from Kansas to coach an English Premier League soccer team, despite having no experience coaching soccer. As described by the show’s creator and star – Jason Sudeikis -- “This show is about good and evil, truth and lies. But it’s mostly about our response to those things.”



It’s a daunting challenge, but one he truly believes he can accomplish. Because if there’s one that Ted does well it’s believe. He believes in himself, he believes in me, he believes in you, and he believes in the innate goodness in everyone. "Do you believe in ghosts, Ted?" the soccer team owner asks cynically. "I do," Ted replies. "But more importantly I think they need to believe in themselves."

Perhaps the most important thing about Ted is his motto, which was first coined by Walt Whitman. “*Be Curious, Not Judgmental.*” Ted is curious about everything, and refrains from judging anyone or anything. And nothing can wear down his good nature and optimism, not the hostile British press that laughs at him, not a soccer team that hates him, and not a boss that wants to see him fail. He simply will not think less of anyone and constantly believes that everyone has good in them, with absolutely no exceptions.

It's a serious point to make in a television focused on comedy – and Ted Lasso is a genuinely funny show -- but it’s hard to think of an area of life or an interaction that would not be improved by thinking the best of people as our default and being curious, not judgmental.

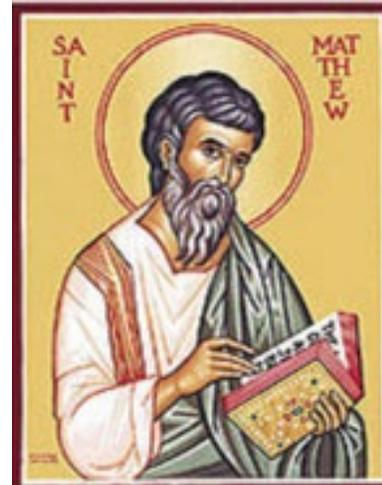


## Who Exactly Were The Gospel Writers?

In Christian tradition, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John are considered to be the authors of the four canonical Gospels. But who exactly were these four individuals? Were they contemporaries of Jesus, providing “real time” accounts of his life and works? Or did they live a generation or two later, and merely summarize stories that their forebearers handed down? Did they have a shared purpose in writing their Gospels, or did they take different points of view?

Given that we take for granted much of our Christian history, we thought it would be interesting to provide some information about who the authors of that history were.

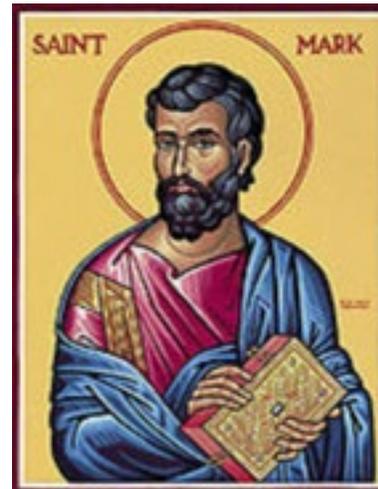
**Matthew** - Matthew was one of the twelve apostles of Jesus. He was born in Galilee and made his living as a tax collector; as such he would probably have been literate and able to write highly educated Greek. And his fellow Jews would no doubt despise him for what was seen as collaborating with the Roman occupation force. After receiving his call, Matthew invited Jesus for a feast. On seeing this, the Scribes and the Pharisees criticized Jesus for eating with tax collectors and sinners, prompting Jesus to answer, "I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance."



Matthew was a man who could have moved comfortably in political circles, and his Gospel mentions things that someone in such a position would know. For example, his account of the Resurrection tells that those assigned to guard the Jesus's tomb saw two angels roll back the stone that covered the door of the tomb. They told their superiors what had happened and were offered money to instead say that the Jesus' followers had crept in and carried His body away. Matthew must have been informed about the bribery, and his gospel is the only one where this bit of information is mentioned.

After tracing Jesus' genealogy back to Abraham, Matthew mentions certain details related to the infancy of Christ that are not recorded elsewhere, such as Joseph's confusion on learning that Mary is pregnant, the homage of the Wise Men, the flight into Egypt to escape Herod's soldiers, the massacre of the innocents, and the return of the holy family from Egypt. It's worth noting that one passage in Matthew's Gospel -- "And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church" -- has become the basis of Roman Catholic belief in the divine institution of the papacy. Matthew's version of the Lord's Prayer is also the version used in liturgies throughout Christian churches.

**Mark** – Mark (his full name was “John Mark”) was the son of a widow named Mary, in whose house the disciples occasionally met. Mary’s house may in fact have even served as the location of the Last Supper. He was a follower of Jesus but would likely have only been in his teens when Jesus was in Jerusalem. After the Resurrection, as Jesus’ message was beginning to be spread, Mark traveled with the Apostle Paul and later accompanied the Apostle Peter to Rome and stayed by him while he was in prison.

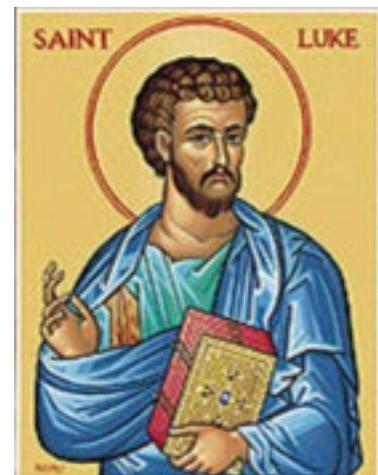


Therefore while Mark was not a primary witness of the life of Jesus, he appears to have acted as a scribe to Peter, whom Jesus knew and selected to be an inner circle disciple.

Mark’s is the shortest of the four Gospels, presumably written during the decade preceding the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 AD. Most scholars agree that Mark’s Gospel was used by Matthew and Luke in composing their accounts; more than 90 percent of the content of Mark’s Gospel appears in Matthew’s Gospel and more than 50 percent in the Gospel of Luke. Although Mark’s text lacks literary polish, it is simple and direct, and is the primary source of information about the ministry of Jesus.

Mark’s explanations of Jewish customs and his translations of Aramaic expressions suggest that he was writing for Gentile converts, especially for those converts living in Rome. Mark’s Gospel stresses the deeds, strength, and determination of Jesus in overcoming evil forces and defying the power of imperial Rome. Mark also emphasizes the Passion and devoted the final third of his Gospel to the last week of Jesus’ life.

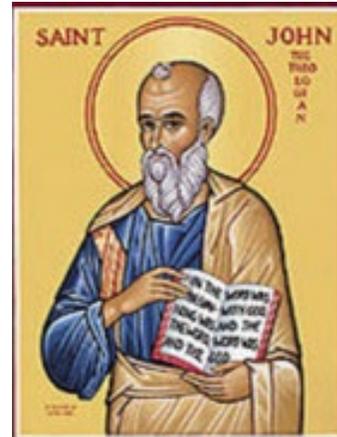
**Luke** - Luke was a physician and an associate of the Apostle Paul. He was not an eyewitness of the events of Jesus’s life, but that he had access to those who were. Indeed, religious scholars have suggested that Luke’s writing about the birth of Jesus likely came from information provided by Mary herself. Who were the other people Luke interviewed about Jesus? The list would have been long. Many of the people who knew Jesus would still have been alive and would have remembered such important moments in their lives.



Given his background as a physician it is interesting to note that Luke describes medical matters far more often and to a greater degree than the other Gospels. In one instance he is quick to note that the Apostle Peter’s mother-in-law suffered from a high fever, while in another instance he described a man’s body that had “swollen with fluid.”

Despite its similarities to the other Gospels, Luke's narrative contains much that is unique. Among the notable parables found only in Luke's Gospel are those of the Good Samaritan and the Prodigal Son. In addition to his Gospel, Luke is widely assumed to have written the "Acts of the Apostles." The two books combine to provide the first Christian history, outlining God's purpose through three important historical periods: the period of the Law and the prophets, which lasted from ancient Israel to the time of St. John the Baptist; the period of Jesus' ministry; and the period of the church's mission, from the Ascension to the return of Christ.

**John** – The fourth and final Gospel was written by the Apostle John ("the beloved disciple" of Jesus), although many religious scholars believe that other individuals may have contributed to the writing.



The gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke are typically referred to as the "Synoptic Gospels," because they include many of the same stories. John's Gospel differs from the other three in several important ways: first, it covers a different time span than the others; second, it locates much of Jesus' ministry in Judea; and third, it frequently portrays Jesus' teaching in theological terms. Finally, John has the most unique material in his book: about 90 percent of the information in John's Gospel is not included in the other three.

John's Gospel also wants to make certain his audience understands the purpose of the text, indicating that he has chosen not to record many of the symbolic acts of Jesus but has instead focused on certain episodes in order that readers "may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in his name." His Gospel also continually adds interpretative comments to clarify Jesus' motives such as explaining the miracle of the loaves and fishes as symbolic of a deeper spiritual truth ("I am the bread of life; . . .").

**Summary** - Numerous accounts of Christ's life were written in the centuries following his death, yet only four have been accepted as authentic by the Christian Church. The second century Gallic Bishop Irenaeus declared the four Evangelists -- Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John -- to be the four pillars of the Church. And so they remain to this day.

## We're Here For You



*Weekend Mass Schedule* – Celebrated every weekend on Saturday at 4:00 pm and Sunday at 8:00 am and 10:00 am

*Watch Mass Online* – If you are unable to attend Mass in-person, please watch mass online at [www.holyredeemerchatham.org/live-stream-mass](http://www.holyredeemerchatham.org/live-stream-mass)

*Weekday Mass Schedule* – Celebrated Monday through Friday at 8:00 am

*Our Lady of Perpetual Help Novena* – Celebrated on Monday after daily Mass

*Sacrament of Confession* – Celebrated Saturday from 3:00 to 3:45 pm

*Open Office Hours* -- Father Sullivan is available at the rectory from 3:00 - 4:00 PM every Monday afternoon to speak with parishioners on any topic.

*Sacrament of Baptism* – Celebrated during Sunday Mass. Please contact the rectory at 508-945-0677 for an appointment to discuss an upcoming baptism.

*Sacrament of Marriage* – Couples are asked to contact Father Sullivan at 508-945-0677 at least 12 months prior to the date of their wedding. Couples also need to make certain that the Church is available before scheduling their wedding date and the location for their wedding reception.

*Holy Communion at Home* – If any parishioner is unable to attend mass due to an illness, injury, handicap, or age, and would like to receive Communion at home, please contact the rectory at 508-945-0677 and a Eucharistic Minister will bring Communion to you.

*New Parishioners Are Always Welcome* - If you are new to the area please contact the Rectory at 508-945-0677 to register with the parish, or speak with Father Sullivan after Mass.

*Facebook* – Follow us on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/holyredeemercatholicchurch](http://www.facebook.com/holyredeemercatholicchurch)

## Getting to Know the Members of the Parish... Ginny Forgeron

There's a lot about Ginny Forgeron's story that might make you think "There but for the grace of God go I." A difficult childhood, the tragic death of a son shortly after he graduated from high school, working two jobs to make ends meet, caring for a large extended family with many health-related challenges. But Ginny would never think of looking at her story that way. Her approach? "There *because* of the grace of God go I." Speaking with Ginny she seems at times like the very embodiment of Matthew 11:28-30: "For my yoke is easy and my burden is light." Other times her unshakable determination makes her seem more like something from Tom Petty and the Heartbreakers: "I'll stand my ground / Won't be turned around / I'll keep this world from draggin' me down / And I won't back down!"



What's at the core of Ginny's story? Her faith in God. Simply put Ginny's faith radiates from every pore of her body. It's lifts her, it carries her, and – if you're lucky enough to get to know Ginny – it will rub off on you as well.

But we're getting way ahead of ourselves, so let's go back to the beginning.

Ginny was born on the Cape in 1936. Her father was a World War I veteran, and although he managed to survive the fighting he contracted the Spanish Flu when he returned from Europe and nearly joined the 20 million people who died in the last great pandemic.

Ginny has spent practically her entire life in Chatham, and if you've lived in Chatham for 86 years you've seen a few things.

- Like the heavy green "black-out" drapes on the windows in the grade school during World War II, closed tight to prevent German bombers flying overhead from seeing the lights in the windows below. And the screaming of the air sirens that that went off without warning, driving everyone under their desks.
- Like the rescue of 31 men trapped off the coast of Chatham in the hulk of the tanker Pendleton, which was the basis for the book and movie "The Finest Hours." "We all went down to the pier. I remember the owner of The Puritan Shop carrying boxes of clothes down to the dock to give to the men when they got off the rescue boat. And we all felt bad when we learned that the ship's cook died and didn't make it back to land."
- Like the four different priests who have served at Holy Redeemer.
  - Father Buckley – "He was a happy-go-lucky man, and he was always kidding me. He'd say, 'Are you staying out of trouble,' and I'd tell him 'Father, it's hard but I'm trying.'"
  - Father Gallant – "He was a hard person to get to know but he gave great homilies."

- Father Scales – “He was a sweet man, and good with kids. He knew all my children’s names, and the grandchildren too.”
- Father Sullivan – “He works so hard, and he takes his responsibilities so seriously.”

Ginny was married to her husband Edward for 59 years, and together they raised six children. Edward had many health problems in his final years, but just before he died he grabbed a magic marker and a napkin and wrote Ginny a love letter: First you were my friend / Then you were my wife / Then you were my life / You were a good woman / And I love you very much.

Ginny is easy to spot him church every Sunday because she sits with three generations of her family, sandwiched between her son Richard (who frequently helps pass the collection basket) and her older brother Wayne (who is 98 and lives with Ginny because of his poor health). Ginny herself usually takes up the offertory gifts at mass.



Which brings us back to Ginny’s faith, the rudder that sets her on an unwavering course.

We are all believers, even though there are aspects of our religion that are sometimes hard to get our head around, whether it’s Purgatory, or Limbo or The Holy Trinity. In response to a question about those topics a Catechism teacher once lumped all such perplexing aspects of Catholicism together under the mantle of “divine mysteries,” and indicated that they would be explained to you in full as soon as you reached heaven. End of discussion.

Such side-stepping is not necessary for Ginny; there is a clarity and a depth to her faith that allows her to simply focus on what’s most important: God’s love for her, and the belief that with God all things are possible. There is a wonderful scene in the movie “City Slickers” where a young man named Mitch (played by Billy Crystal) has lost his bearings and finds himself alone in the desert with a gruff and menacing cowboy named Curly (played by Jack Palance), who actually has the answer that will set him right.

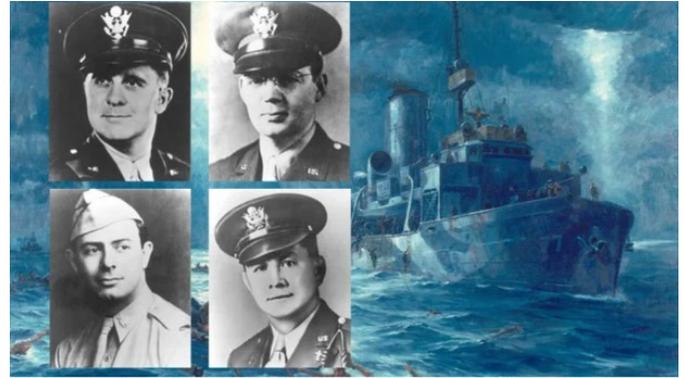
Curly: Do you know what the secret of life is?  
 Mitch: No.  
 Curly hold up his index finger. “This is the secret of life.”  
 Mitch: Your finger?  
 Curly: One thing. Just one thing. You stick to that and the rest don’t mean anything.  
 Mitch: But what’s the one thing?  
 Curly: That’s what you have to find out.



That’s what the rest of us have to find out as well. But not Ginny: she already know what the one thing is.

## ...Conclusion

On January 23, 1943, the American troop ship SS *Dorchester* set sail from New York harbor for Greenland with more than 900 soldiers on board, part of the force that would retake Europe on D-Day. Also on board the *Dorchester* were four newly commissioned military chaplains, The chaplains all held the rank of first lieutenant. They included Methodist Minister Reverend George L. Fox, rabbi Alexander D. Goode, Catholic priest Father John P. Washington, and Reformed Church in America minister Reverend Clark V. Poling. The four had met at the Army Chaplains School at Harvard University, where they became friends as they prepared for assignments in the European theater.



Shortly after midnight on the morning of February 3, an officer aboard a German submarine spotted the *Dorchester*. After identifying and targeting the ship, he gave the order to fire his torpedoes. The hit was decisive, striking the ship below the water line. Panic and chaos quickly set in. Men were screaming, others crying or frantically trying to get lifeboats off the ship. Through the pandemonium the four chaplains spread out among the soldiers, calming the frightened, tending the wounded and guiding the disoriented toward safety. As soldiers found their way to the deck of the ship they were confronted by the frigid winds blowing down from the Arctic. Petty Officer John J. Mahoney, reeling from the cold, headed back towards his cabin. "Where are you going?" a voice of calm in the sea of distressed asked. "To get my gloves," Mahoney replied. "Here, take these," said Rabbi Goode as he handed a pair of gloves to the young officer. "I can't take your gloves," Mahoney replied. "Never mind," the Rabbi responded. "I have two pairs." It was only long after that Mahoney realized that the chaplain would have no use for his second pair of gloves.

Once topside, the chaplains opened a storage locker and began distributing life jackets. It was then that Engineer Grady Clark witnessed an astonishing sight. When there were no more life jackets in the storage room, the chaplains simultaneously removed theirs and gave them to four frightened young men. One survivor would later say, "It was the finest thing I have seen or hope to see this side of heaven."

As the ship went down, survivors in nearby rafts could see the four chaplains, arms linked and braced against the slanting deck. Their voices could also be heard offering prayers and singing hymns.



The Distinguished Service Cross and Purple Heart were awarded posthumously to the four chaplains. Congress sought to award them the Medal of Honor as well but was blocked by the stringent requirements that required heroism performed under fire. So a posthumous Special Medal for Heroism -- The Four Chaplains' Medal -- was authorized by Congress and awarded by President Kennedy on January 18, 1961.

The medal was never given before and will never be given again.