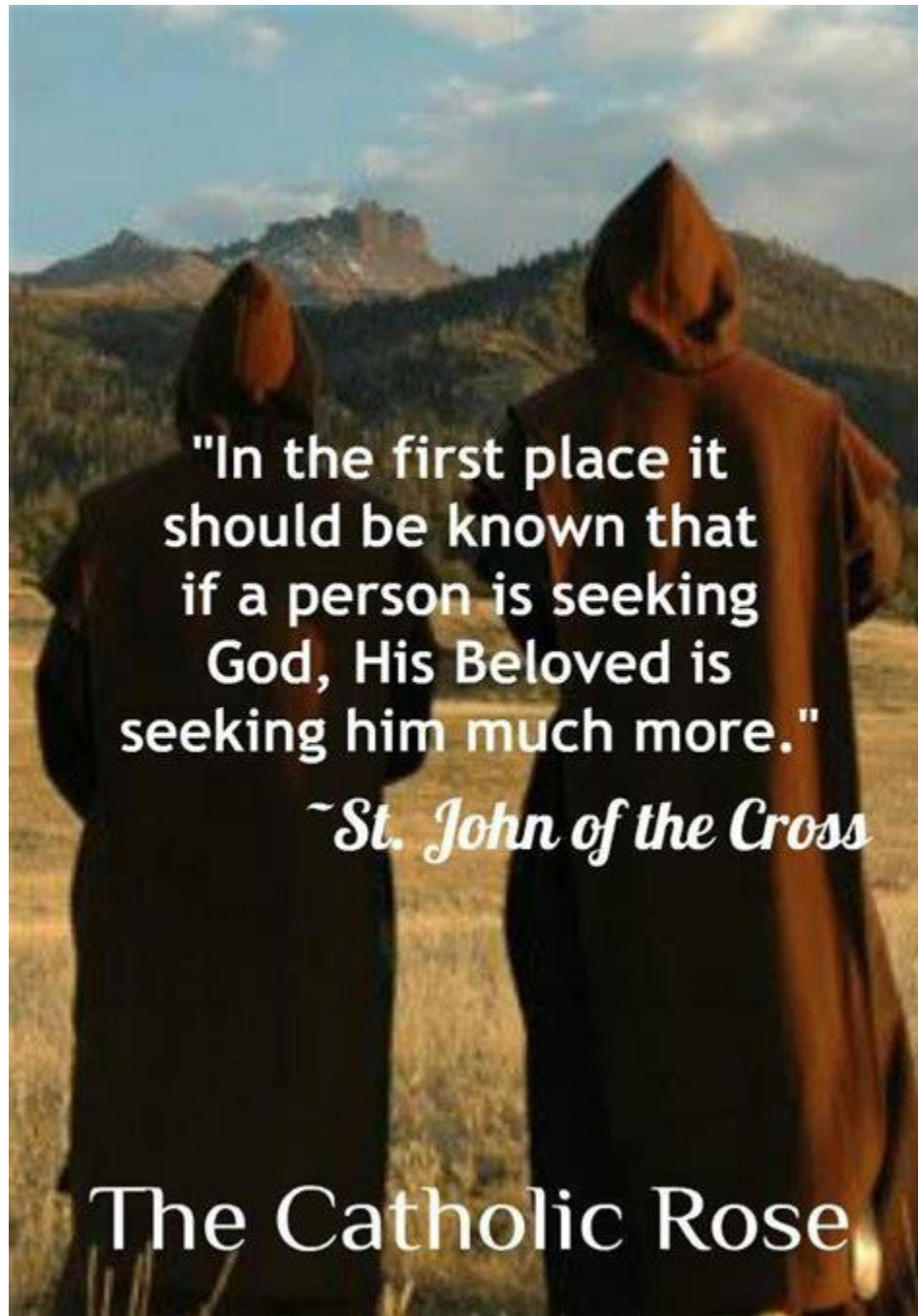


FROM FATHER JOHN: *"God loves you despite your unworthiness. It is His love, which will make you better, rather than your betterment, which will make him, love you. Often during the day say: God loves me, and He is on my side, by my side."* ~ The Venerable Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen.

Lord, on the day I called for help, you answered me!



"In the first place it should be known that if a person is seeking God, His Beloved is seeking him much more."

~ St. John of the Cross

The Catholic Rose

God our Father loves us and desires that we live lives of faith, hope and love; that we trust in His great love for us. God our Father seeks after us, wants us to be in a deep relationship with Him and wants us to open our hearts and minds to His presence in our lives.

Proof of God's love for each one of us can be seen in salvation history. God established multiple covenants for His people beginning with Adam. He established a new law for Adam; that he could not eat of the tree in the center of the garden. He gave to Noah the sign of the rainbow in the clouds. He then gave Abraham, chosen for his faith, the mark and seal of circumcision for his descendants. Moses was given the Passover lamb, the propitiation for His people. He then sent his prophets and judges to the ancient Israelites. Then He sent His greatest prophet to us, John the Baptist. And finally, He sent us His only begotten son, our Lord Jesus.

God chases after us. We see this in the gospel when our Lord Jesus says to us, ***“Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks, receives; and the one who seeks, finds; and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened.”*** (Matthew 7:7 – 8)

The bishop, Saint Asterius of Amasea, gave us another example of how God seeks after us in a homily based on the parable of the lost sheep.

“For there, obscurely, in the form of a parable, we see a shepherd who had a hundred sheep. When one of them was separated from the flock and lost its way, that shepherd did not remain with the sheep who kept together at pasture. No, he went off to look for the stray. He crossed many valleys and thickets, he climbed great and towering mountains, he spent much time and labor in wandering through solitary places until at last he found his sheep.

When he found it, he did not chastise it; he did not use rough blows to drive it back, but gently placed it on his own shoulders and carried it back to the flock. He took greater joy in this one sheep, lost and found, than in all the others.

Let us look more closely at the hidden meaning of this parable. The sheep is more than a sheep, the shepherd more than a shepherd. They are examples enshrining holy truths. They teach us that we should not look on men as lost or beyond hope; we should not abandon them when they are in danger or be slow to come to their help. When they turn away from the right path and wander, we must lead them back, and rejoice at their return, welcoming them back into the company of those who lead good and holy lives.”

I pray during this season of Lent is that all of us will open our hearts and minds to the Lord our God, accept His great love and allow Him to transform us into His image and likeness.

May God Bless you and all those who love the Lord.