

What about those hard-to-obtain guests for *Grace Matters*—those who cannot exactly be brought into our Chicago studio? Well, four such individuals join the program during the four weeks of Advent. On November 30, December 7, 14, and 21, four outstanding saints of the church converse with host Peter W. Marty. In imaginary conversations, full of spiritual depth and historical insight, Peter visits with Maximilian Kolbe, Hildegard of Bingen, Juliana of Norwich, and Benedict of Nursia.



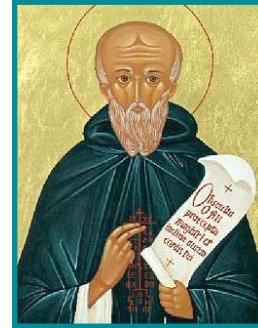
Maximilian Kolbe
1894 - 1941



Hildegard of Bingen
1098 - 1179



Juliana of Norwich
1342 - c.1416



Benedict of Nursia
c.480 - c.547

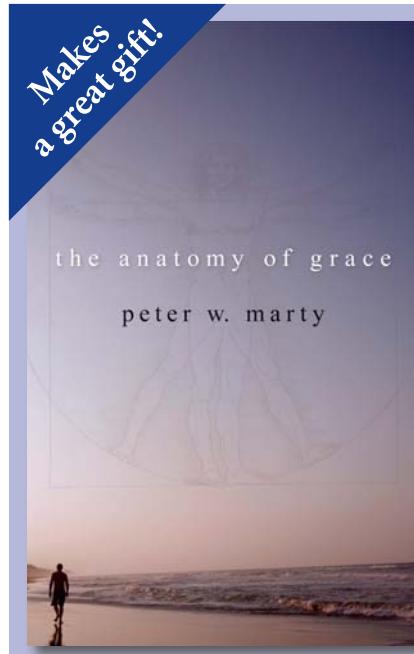
Peter W. Marty's first book, *The Anatomy of Grace*, is now available!

"Your ability to make complex truths seem like simple ideas is a modern day equivalent of making 'crooked roads straight' ... Thank you for recognizing that clear writing is as important as clear thinking."

A *Grace Matters* listener in Great Bend, Kansas
on reading *The Anatomy of Grace*

"'Grace is everywhere' is the final sentence of one of my favorite novels. But 'everywhere' is too bland for Peter Marty. He gives us fifty-two accurately focused verbal photographs of this everywhere present but often missed glory of God in generous action. Think of *The Anatomy of Grace* as an illustrated guidebook for gracewatchers."

Eugene H. Peterson
Professor Emeritus of Spiritual Theology
Regent College, Vancouver



Signed copies of *The Anatomy of Grace* are available only through *Grace Matters*. We are happy to offer this token of our gratitude for your gift of \$50 or more. You have several convenient options for ordering:

- Return the enclosed reply card with your check or credit card information
- Call us at 800/638-3522
- Go online to www.elca.org/gracematters

A Christmas Glossary

By Peter W. Marty

Bethlehem [BETH-li-hem]—A small, obscure town where a tiny baby's breath got all mixed up one night with the steamy vapor from some cow nostrils ... and a few shepherds smelled the sweetness of grace.

Glory to God [GLOHR-ee too god]—The exuberant first words of the soprano angel upon hearing that Joseph had succeeded as a midwife.

Straw [straw]—Organic bedding material, soft enough to support a newborn's head, yet sturdy enough to bear the weight of the world's sins.

Magi [may-jeye]—A band of brainy astrologers, with eyes as sharp as telescopes, who passed up on the local toy store to shop for the Christ Child at an expensive boutique.

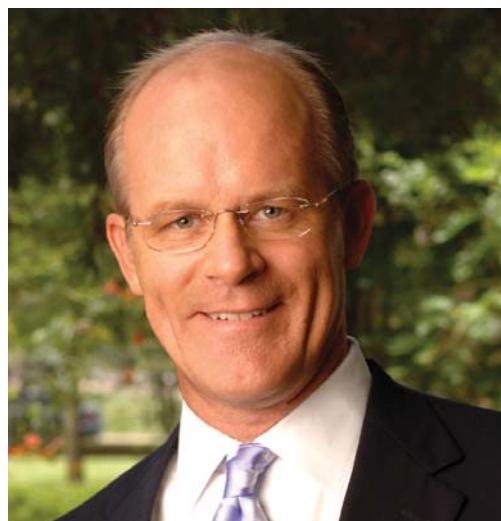


*We send the fullness of
Christmas joy and love to you, grateful for
all your support throughout 2008.*

*Judson Levy-Daily
Barbara Andrews
Peter W. Marty
Priscilla Hamb
Dawn Miller
Peter W. Marty*



Impractical Gifts By Peter W. Marty



When you receive a gift this Christmas from anyone who knows or cares about you, chances are good that you will ask any number of questions in the privacy of your mind. "How did she think of this?" "This is rather extravagant, don't you think?" "Boy, is this practical!" "My goodness, I can't imagine anything more impractical. Well, I guess it's the thought that counts."

What on earth would you do if someone gave you a partridge in a pear tree? And how would you wrap up the bird and the tree? Or what about a bag of myrrh? Or a mason jar full of frankincense? There must have been some sort of Toys "R" Us establishment that the magi could have shopped at had they been more considerate of the baby's age.

Some of the most impractical gifts can appear useless to a casual observer. Take the greatest Christmas gift of all – a baby born in a cow stall. This was not the most practical gift ever given out. Yet it was God's idea of the perfect gift. And lo and behold, it still is. Vulnerable love will never appear on any list of practical gifts, but it should appear on every list of essential gifts.

Speaking of impracticality, we could ask how a simple radio broadcast, or an Internet podcast, of a program called *Grace Matters* would ever add up to usefulness. But the question of practicality misses the point. *Grace Matters* is in the world to transform lives – one at a time – by grace. The grace of our message is the vulnerable love of Jesus Christ.

Christmas joy to you and yours,

PETER



Walt Wangerin, former speaker on *Lutheran Vespers* (1994 – 2004) stopped by the *Grace Matters* offices recently for a visit with host Peter W. Marty and the staff. You can keep up with Walt by visiting walterwangerinjr.org

Quarterly Gifts Received as of November 7, 2008

In Memory of:

LaVona Rodene
Wally Rodene
 Juanalee and Richard Alden
Dorothy Wolff
 Duane and Marie Benson
Sister-in-law
 Esther Dahlberg
Larry Bailey
 Rev. Myron and Florence Grams
Harley Eliason
Annabelle Larson
Angela Rhoads
 Rev. Leslie and Wanda Hernes
Rev. Robert Rieke
 LaVonne and Ervin Johnson
Ostern
 Genevieve Keranen
Alice Holtan
 Rev. Leon Holtan

In Honor of:

Beulah Luckman (sister)
 Evelyn and O. Gaylord Horwath
Marie Bjerke
Anna Thorness
 Marrida Myron
Keith Peterson
Dr. Robert C. Peterson
 Leland Pederson
Susan Kay Morgan
 Jane Schroeder
Jake Johnson and Allen Stoneberg
 Rev. Theodore and Carla Stoneberg
Rev. Conrad Thompson
 Mark and Marjore Thompson
Our parents
 Lyle and Alice Verhulst

***Our thanks to all who give gifts of love.
 Your support is a vital piece of the
 Grace Matters ministry.***

