

Catholic Faith Corner

Understanding, Teaching, and Living the Faith

Sea of Galilee at Sunrise



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Twelve Insights into the Life of Jesus

by KATHLEEN GLAVICH, SND on [NOVEMBER 28, 2012](#)
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My latest writing project about Jesus requires quite a bit of research, which has taught me a number of things about him and life in first-century Israel. Here are “twelve” of them that you might find interesting too.

1. In Aramaic, the Savior’s name was Yeshua or Yehoshua, a form of Joshua. It was a common name translated into Greek and then from the Greek into English to give us Jesus. Calling him Jesus is like someone calling me Katerina instead of Kathleen. I don’t think he minds. Mary was probably Miryam or Maryam.
2. When the Gospels say that Jesus went from one town to another, they don’t provide the mileage. From Capernaum where he ministered to Jerusalem where he went for Jewish feasts was a journey of 120 miles. Someone calculated that during his public ministry Jesus walked a total of more than 3,000 miles.
3. The people of Galilee, and Jesus was one of them, had an accent that the Judeans poked fun of. Because the temple was in Judea, the Judeans were more observant of the law and looked down their noses at the Galileans, whose province was called Galilee of the Gentiles.
4. The Sea of Galilee was not like Lake Erie on whose shores I grew up. We can’t see Canada on the other side of Lake Erie, but the Sea of Galilee is so small that the land



Mary Kathleen Glavich, SND

I'm a Sister of Notre Dame, of Chardon, Ohio, the author of eighty-plus books on religious education and spirituality, including a novel, "The Fisherman's Wife: The Gospel According to St. Peter's Spouse." I enjoy giving talks and retreats and was a pastoral associate at St. Dominic Church. I also edit and self-publish books for others.

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on the other side is visible.

5. Many of the foods on our tables like potatoes and turkey were not available in Israel. Orange carrots hadn't evolved yet! And people in Israel ate just twice a day. And of course, since Jesus was Jewish, he never tasted bacon, ham, or pork roast. That's a pity.

6. Some things we might associate with Jesus because he was Jewish did not come about until later, for example, yarmulkes (skullcaps), official rabbis, sabbath candle lighting by the woman, the eighteen benedictions.

7. Someone who was ritually unclean had to bathe in mikvahs, large pools of water, before going into the temple. You became unclean by touching or being touched by a leper, a woman having her period, a corpse or a grave. Jesus had contact with all of these.

8. There were several would-be Messiahs. One was Judas, also a Galilean, who led an uprising protesting Roman taxes about the time Jesus was born. Judas perished. In retaliation Rome destroyed Sepphoris, the hub of the revolution, which was not far from Nazareth. Herod had it rebuilt and made the capital. Possibly Jesus and Joseph, being carpenters/construction workers, helped rebuild that town.

9. When Jesus invited the thirsty to come to him and drink and when he called himself the light of the world, he was in the temple in Jerusalem for the festival of Tabernacles. This celebration involved water and fire. Four four-branched, golden candelabra 75 feet tall stood in the temple courtyard. When they were lit, the blaze was visible for miles. Men with torches danced around the candles. Each day of the feast the priest carried water from the Pool of Siloam in a gold pitcher and poured it so it ran to the base of the altar in the temple courtyard. Apparently Jesus drew on his surroundings for his metaphors.

10. For Roman crucifixions the criminals were stripped as part of their humiliation. Artists provide Jesus with a loincloth out of a sense of decency. Some people theorize that out of consideration for the Jews, Jesus was not naked on the cross, but no one knows.

11. We do not know what Jesus looked like because the Jewish people believed that making images was against the first commandment. Maybe he had auburn hair like his ancestor King David. Maybe it was curly. He could have had a beard or no beard like his Greek and Roman contemporaries. St. Paul warns men not to have long hair, so Jesus may have worn his hair short. The most common early depictions of him are



About Sister Kathleen Glavich, SND

Jesus ordered us to make disciples of all nations and teach them. Mary Kathleen, a Sister of Notre Dame from Chardon, Ohio, responds to this call through writing, speaking, giving retreats, and teaching. Her motto, adopted from Eddie Doherty's gravesite, is "All my words for the Word!"

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as a young shepherd boy. Our pictures of Jesus today are based on the image of him that supposedly appeared miraculously on a cloth known as the image of Edessa. It is similar to the face on the Shroud of Turin.

12. Can you complete this list with an insight you've had?

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Sr. Juliemarie McDonald, SND November 30, 2012 at 11:29 am



Thank you for the insights. I have two. The book Heaven is For Real and the book about Aikene, the young artist. She drew a picture of Jesus, that the little boy in "Heaven is For Real" said, "That's Him!" He recognized only this picture as the portrait of Jesus. And this little tidbit that the little boy shared with his parents- Jesus was riding on a horse!

REPLY

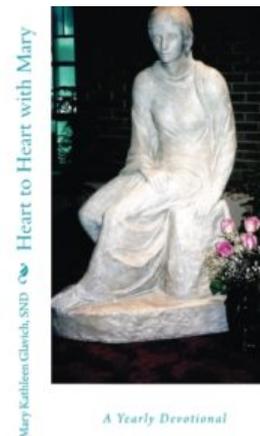
Kathleen Glavich, SND December 5, 2012 at 7:39 am



Interesting. Sounds like the King of King and Lord of Lords in the Book of Revelation who rides the white horse.

REPLY

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Newest Book

In "Heart to Heart with Mary: A Yearly Devotional" Our Blessed Mother speaks to us every day of the year and a suggestion is provided for a response. It is similar to the popular book "Jesus Calling" and can be found on Amazon or purchased from me.

Featured Book

Totally Catholic! A Catechism for Kids and Their Parents and Teachers

Do you wish you had a simple, child-friendly summary of what Catholics believe? This book took first place in the Association of Catholic Publishers awards 2014 in the category of Children's Books. It can be purchased from Pauline Books and Media or from me. (\$14.95)

A Heavenly Book

Do you believe in angels? Most people do. The Catholic Companion to Angels offers heavenly facts about these majestic creatures, confirming that you can turn to them for help. Uniquely, The Angels comes with three covers (statue, stained-glass, or painting). Choose the one you like best.

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Available from ACTA Publications and me.
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My First Novel!

The Fisherman's Wife is the story of St. Peter's spouse, the long-suffering but delightful woman who puts up with Peter and his obsession with the itinerant preacher named Jesus. Through her we meet Peter, Jesus, and other biblical characters. In Capernaum she witnesses Jesus' healings and hears his words. The book is based on the Gospels, legends, and what is known about first-century Jewish women. The rest is sheer imagination. Order directly from me FOR AN AUTOGRAPHED COPY at kglavich@ndec.org.

A Bit of Humor

A Slow Student During indoor recess, the third and fourth graders were playing school. Taking part in the game, the teacher, Sister Janet, sat at a child's desk. Adam, who was playing the teacher, came up to her and asked, "And just how many years have you been kept back?" (from "Why Is Jesus in the Microwave?")

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The Sisters of Notre Dame of Chardon, Ohio, belong to an international congregation of more than two thousand apostolic women religious. We are one in mind and one in heart for the transformation of the world in Christ.



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