



# The **PILGRIM**

Vol. 9 No. 12 *Pilgrims of Faith Marian Center (PFMC)* December 1998

**Our Lady's MESSAGE of 11/25/98 via Marija Pavlovic Lunetti and the *Franciscans* at Medjugorje**  
*Dear children! Today I call you to prepare yourselves for the coming of Jesus. In a special way, prepare your hearts. May holy Confession be the first act of conversion for you and then, dear children, decide for holiness. May your conversion and decision for holiness begin today and not tomorrow. Little children, I call you all to the way of salvation and I desire to show you the way to Heaven. That is why, little children, be mine and decide with me for holiness. Little children, accept prayer with seriousness and pray, pray, pray. Thank you for having responded to my call.*

A comment about **Father Slavko Barbaric's REFLECTION** not being available is on page 13

## A PRAYER

***My Lord Jesus, born of the Father's heart, You reveal Yourself to us as we pray in praise and thanksgiving.***

***As you enter the shelter of the cave of our hearts, hear our song of Joy at the wonder of Your coming.***

***All are humbled and brought to their knees at the sight of such an infant in that lowly manger - the God Man.***

***Yet Lord, there is an AWE that comes to each of us as we gaze upon You as the SPLENDOR OF LIGHT that outshines the sun.***

***Thank You for letting us relive again this Mystery of Life through Your Birth.***

***And, thank You for Your Mother who's soul "Magnifies the Lord".***

***Thank You for leading us to holiness.***

**AMEN**

**(Kathleen prays from the heart to guide each issue.)**

## **THE NATIVITY- A THIRD JOYFUL MYSTERY - A CHRISTMAS PRAYER FOR ALL WHO READ "THE PILGRIM." HAVE A HAPPY and HOLY CHRISTMAS**

O Sweet Mother Mary on this Holy Night you and *Saint Joseph* took refuge in a cave used as a stable - because - there was no room for you at the inn.

We have been to this little cave in **Bethlehem**, in the **Holy Land**. The path down into the darkness is a silent path of

**"The *PILGRIM*" Theme for December 1998 is "Our Lady, Mother of Baby Jesus." Page 3 contains the Table of Contents or "IN THIS ISSUE . . ." block.**

steps now. But we knew you were there. Our minds went back into time, and we could feel you as you groped your way in the darkness, searching for a flat plateau in which to rest. And here at the altar, we sang "Silent Night- Holy Night", just as the angels must have sung that first Christmas night. Oh, Holy, Holy, Holy one. We adore you who come to earth this night.

We can't imagine the light that filled that dark cave, but it must have been so bright, Mary. We cannot imagine the awe of the wise men or the shepherds, as they approached that tiny manger. We gazed upon the wood still there. Oh to touch it knowing that your Little Baby Boy, Jesus, laid there at one time.

We smell the incense, in that small cave now so venerated. We kissed the star where the manger was found. And our minds pondered the smell of straw that once was there. The oxen and sheep were the only heat in that small area. Now the heat of the candles and the pilgrims warmed us.

Pray for us Mother of Christ. Pray for each of us on this earth - good will to all men. Pray that the world may detach from things that have contempt of riches, and fill each of us this Christmas with love. May we join you, O Mary, and learn of His love and love Him back this year of 1999. May we yearn for and become aware of His presence each day in our lives. May He richly fill us, our families, and all whom we know and pray for. For today in this little cave in **Bethlehem**, our hearts rest in Our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, your Little Baby Boy. AMEN.

**Merry Christmas to all from all the *Pilgrims of Faith Marian Center (PFMC)* Volunteers. We pray for you daily. Please continue your prayer for us.**

**(by Kathleen Werner, Editor, with Keith Werner, Publisher, and all the other volunteers who graciously give of their time even during the holiday seasons.)**

## THE MIRACLE of the PETITIONS SENT to the **PFMC**

On the *November 1998* pilgrimage to the **Shrines of Italy** with **Father Sioli** as spiritual director, **Kathleen** carried all the petition/donation slips sent in to the **PFMC** and prayed in intercession at each shrine visited. Some of the shrines included, *Saint Anthony* in **Padua**, *Saint Mark* in **Venice**, *Our Lady of Loreto*, *Saint Philomena* in **Mugnano**, *Saint Francis* and *Saint Clare* in **Assisi**, and the *Saint Peter* at the **Vatican** in **Rome**.

On the last day, after mass was celebrated in **Rome**, **Kathleen** wrote the **Holy Father** a letter and hand carried it and all the petitions to the desk inside the portico of the **Vatican**. The **Swiss** guards looked at the package and listened to her desire to get them to the **Holy Father** for his prayer. She was sent inside to a large desk. When the guard there listened to her, he refused to take the package. He sent her up two flights of stairs inside the **Vatican** to a large office of the **Holy Father**. "This office handles such things," he said. **Kathleen** was in awe (and out of breath) as each step of the two flights was climbed.

The petitions/donation slips were accepted by the next guard who said they would be brought that day to the **Holy Father**. We thank God for this little "miracle of the petitions" and we pray that each one will be answered in abundance as a *Christmas* present to each of you who took the time to write these petitions/donation slips.

All petitions/donation slips received from you until the next pilgrimage will be kept and prayed for daily by the **PFMC** volunteers. They will then be placed in an envelope and taken on pilgrimage again. Please take the time to write your prayer petitions. Prayer does work!!!!

(**Kathleen**)

## IN MEMORY of OUR PILGRIM

On the *November 1998* pilgrimage to the **Shrines of Italy**, God called **Sebastian Caruso** Home. We only knew him briefly. He was born *March 7, 1926*, and lived in **Pittsburgh, PA**. **Dr. Caruso** had worked for the **EPA**, and though now retired, he spent his time helping as a head usher at *Saint Paul's Cathedral*. He had told **Kathleen** that he had "always wanted to go to **Italy**. It was my dream." After a very happy and blessed day in **Venice**, and a wonderful Holy Mass at the **Crypt of Saint Mark**, we returned to our hotel rooms and all said good night. **Sebastian** passed away that night. We extend our sympathy and prayers to his family. It was a privilege to have known this quiet but holy man.

(**Kathleen**)

## ORDER A BOOK for *CHRISTMAS*

In the world of materialism at *Christmas* time, we encourage all of our readers to order a religious book, or give a rosary, a tape or religious article for including with their *Christmas* gifts. Please review the information sheets on books and religious articles enclosed in this and past issues of "**The PILGRIM**." We're sure that you will find something that will be of interest or be special to a loved one, friend, or even a co-worker at the office. Call (609) 768-9228, then stop in at the **PFMC** and personally pick out a number of your *Christmas* gifts.

## TAPES AVAILABLE from the RETREAT with **DAVID HAGGERTY**

If you missed the retreat for engaged, married, divorced or single retreat with David Haggerty, you can order the audio tapes direct from Catholic Focus. Enclosed in this issue is an order form. Treat yourself to a truly life fulfilling experience. This retreat was filled with the spirituality and ideas to help improve and focus our lives more in the areas of Communication, Priorities, Intimacy and Prayer. If you order and receive them, you will enjoy spending some quiet moments listening to these tapes.

## NEW SPACE for the **PFMC** – HOUSE REFURBINSHMENT in PROGRESS

The 3 bedroom house on approximately 1.2 acres of land at **61 Cooper Road** in **Voorhees, NJ**, is in the process of refurbishment and spruce up. The septic and well permits have been filed for and should be working early this month of December. The electrical service upgrade as well as the plumbing hookups are also on track. The letter of credit for more than \$30,000 of guarantees that the work required in the site plan will be properly accomplished has been obtained. The high cost of bureaucracy is a fact of life. We must meet with Voorhees Township officials before we can begin to clear the site, dig and pour footings, etc.

We have been excited to see the windows and doors get a new and deserved coat of polyurethane on them. The carpets have been shampooed, and some of our reference books have found their way to the house.

The extra space that just the house provides has been a true blessing. We look forward to extra space for office equipment and for working space for the volunteers. Working from our home for over nine years now, we have virtually outgrown all the available space. This has been a very difficult endeavor to get to this point, but through prayer, sacrifice and hard work, as **Father Jim Sauchelli** put it, the new **PFMC** is founded on solid ground.

**We are asking for anyone who can help us to paint, put**

We recognize and accept that the final authority regarding the apparitions, locutions and related messages from *Our Lady* at, and to the recipients from, **Medjugorje, Bosnia-Herzegovina**, as well as all other private revelations, rests with the **Holy See of Rome**, to whose judgment we willingly submit. We vow total allegiance to our **One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church**, its **Magisterium (Cardinals, Bishops and Priests)** together with the **Holy Father, Pope John Paul II**.

in book shelves, clean and move to contact us as soon as possible. If you have a few hours, and you and your family can come over, please, we need you.

Would you consider donating any of the items listed in the following paragraph. It would be a great *Christmas* present to us all and we need all the help we can get to set up the new 3 bedroom house, which will have more space dedicated to the *PFMC* than was available in the old house. Anything given to the *PFMC* can be handled as tax deductible charitable donations under the 501(c)(3) status for the *PFMC* as a non-profit, tax exempt religious association.

We have need of a refrigerator, vacuum cleaner, washer and dryer, microwave oven, kitchen table and chairs, lamps for the living / common rooms and bedrooms as well as bedroom furniture for 3 rooms. We do have mattresses and box springs, but can use dressers and chests of drawers. We also need dishes, glasses, silverware, pots and pans and kitchen utensils, sheets, blankets and bedspreads for 2 queen beds and 1 twin bed (please new sheets). We will also need towels – bath size and hand towels. We also need a new fax machine, 2 tall book cases, new folding chairs (12 if possible), plastic stacking chairs (12) and 2 futon couches. Once the new building is up (we have it projected for *April 1999* completion), we will need further help.

Are you a carpenter? We have immediate need for someone to make legs for the top of an altar that was given to us. We hope to use the altar in the new center. We also have to build many feet of shelving once the certificate of occupancy (C.O.) for the new building is issued. Please call if you have some time to look the situation over, and can help us!

Until then, if you have any talents to type, light book keeping, filing and library work or would like to get involved with the monthly periodical "*The PILGRIM*," or books, or upcoming conferences and retreats, please call Kathleen, Dotty or Fay. We need your help. Please call us at (609) 768-9228.

**DON'T WAIT TILL the LAST MINUTE to SIGN UP for the FEBRUARY 1999 RETREAT CONFERENCE with FATHER ROBERT DEGRANDIS and DORTHEA DEGRANDIS SUDOL "I WILL BREAK YOUR HEART OF STONE, AND GIVE YOU A NEW HEART"**

Father Jim Sauchelli will be our EMCEE for the 1999 RETREAT CONFERENCE with the theme "I WILL BREAK YOUR HEART OF STONE AND GIVE YOU A NEW HEART." Father John McFadden will open with a blessing and prayer over the attendees and hotel.

The weekend will begin at 7 PM on Friday, February 26<sup>th</sup>, and will end about 6 PM on Sunday, February 28<sup>th</sup>, 1999. This weekend will be focused on "Healing." Father DeGrandis and Dorothea DeGrandis Sudol and our

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other speakers will delve into healing ministry: physical, emotional and spiritual healing through Holy Mass; healing through the Rosary; Intergenerational Healing and Healing of Memories; Healing through Deliverance and Spiritual Warfare; Healing through the Stations of the Cross; and Healing through Confession.

Monsignor Joseph James, who has a ministry in Healing through Confession will join us from *Our Lady of Mercy Center*, Slaton, Texas.

There will be daily Mass including an unforgettable holy healing Mass sung by Father Michael Semana Saturday late morning. You will enjoy the healing service and experience the laying on of hands after the Saturday concert sung by Father Michael Semana, and the musical group "*Voyage*" conducted by Dean Pulcini. On Sunday there will be a Baptism in the Holy Spirit. Priests will be available for Confession. You will not want to miss this weekend of Blessings!!!!

One of our speakers will be Linda Riva. Linda presently lives and works at the *Mothers' Home*, a maternity home in Darby, Pennsylvania, that provides shelter, counseling and programs to homeless pregnant women before and after their babies are born. In the past she coordinated

**Project Rachel** in the **Camden Diocese** where she helped individuals in the healing and reconciliation process after an abortion. You will be deeply moved on hearing her testimony.

Then from **Monday, March 1**, through **Wednesday March 3<sup>rd</sup>**, **Father Robert DeGrandis** will **extend** his time with us and conduct teachings and workshops on the **“GIFTS of the HOLY SPIRIT.”** Most who attended our **September, 1998 Seminar/Workshop** has raved about all the teachings and the effects of the workshops in their spiritual and prayer life. So, if you can extend until **Wednesday**, you will not be disappointed. **This extension will end about 4 PM Wednesday.**

Please refer to the enclosed flyer to register **EARLY** for this **1999 RETREAT CONFERENCE**. You can register by mailing in the form or by calling us **NOW** at 609-768-9228. **REMEMBER YOU CAN NOW CHARGE YOUR REGISTRATION. WE ARE LIMITED to about 700 REGISTRANTS.**

If you are interested in funding a young person for the Youth Track (\$25 per youth), please help someone. We have about 45 youth that need sponsors. The Youth Track will focus on **“Chastity, the Sacraments and Prayer.”** **We are limited to about 80 youth.**

If you would like to have a full hot lunch with the speakers on **Saturday, February 27<sup>th</sup>**, a \$25 donation is requested. This is a time to enjoy one of the speakers at your lunch table, and a personal chance to talk to each speaker. **We are limited to 100 attendees. This is a fund raising opportunity for the PFMC. We thank you for coming and enjoying this with us.**

You may make your hotel reservations (2 queen beds in a room or 1 king in a room) **NOW** by calling the **Four Points** by **Sheraton** at 1-800-257-8262. **Don't delay this registration. We ran out of rooms at our last conference, and we do not want you to miss this weekend and extension because of delaying your call. They will hold your room on a credit card and not charge the card until you check out from the 1999 RETREAT CONFERENCE.**

**Priests, deacons and nuns may register and attend at no registration charge. We welcome any priest to help us with confessions in private hotel rooms across from the Adoration Room during the retreat. It has always been an affirming and rewarding experience for any priest to hear confessions and con-celebrate Holy Mass at PFMC retreats. We ask that priests and deacons call us and tell us when they can be available. Even a few hours for Confessions on Saturday helps.**

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## **PILGRIMAGE PLANNING at PFMC**

### **MEDJUGORJE**

Normally using **Virgin Air** from Newark, NJ via London then **Croatia Air** via Zagreb and/or Split

**The PILGRIM**

**JANUARY 27-FEBRUARY 4, 1999 - \$1099. Father Bob Gorman, Pastor, Holy Spirit, Perth Amboy, NJ (732) 826-4859, would like to be the Spiritual Director for this pilgrimage but needs to have at least 10 pilgrims sign up to support his pilgrimage. Call 1-800-842-4842 if you are ready to be a pilgrim on this pilgrimage.**

**FEBRUARY 10-18, 1999 - \$1099**

**MARCH 24 – APRIL 1, 1999 - \$1299 (Over Palm Sunday)**

**MARCH 31 – APRIL 8, 1999 - \$1299 (Holy Thursday Arrival-Over Easter Sunday)**

**APRIL 5-17, 2000 - approximately \$1900.** Includes air fare, transfers, guide, housing in **Medjugorje** with breakfasts and suppers, full spiritual program with daily Mass and priest, hotels and tours in **Rome** with breakfasts and suppers. **Medjugorje 5 – 13<sup>th</sup> and Rome 13-17<sup>th</sup>.**

**FATIMA to include COIMBRA (Sister Lucy), SANTAREM (Eucharistic Miracle), ALCOBACA, OBIDOS, NAZARE and LISBON**

**APRIL 10 – 17, 1999 \$1425** person inc. taxes. (Arrives for the Feast of **Divine Mercy**)

**JOURNEYS of SAINT PAUL IN GREECE and TURKEY with VISITING SEVEN CHURCHES, 3 DAY GREEK ISLAND CRUISE and EPHEBUS**

**MAY 11 – 22, 1999 - approximately \$2800**

**10<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY of the PFMC**

**OCTOBER 3, 1999, Sunday, or OCTOBER 7, 1999, Feast of the Holy Rosary - Celebration or Pilgrimage - To Be Announced**

### **HOLY LAND**

**NOVEMBER 3 – 14, 1999 - approximately \$2000**

**OBERAMMERGAU PASSION PLAY, GERMANY and SWITZERLAND**

**MAY, 2000 - approximately \$2500**

### **ARE YOU INTERESTED????**

We are considering setting up a trip to visit **Mother Angelica** in 1999. Would you be interested in going? We need 48 for a bus or 30 to fly. We would get the best prices possible. **We'd like your WRITTEN input** with name, address, phone number, preferred bus / fly and days / dates. We will correspond directly with those who respond with estimates for final decision. Then we will advertise the final information to all.

Bus will be about 6 days, fly will be about 4 days. In both cases, we would be present at **EWTN** for **Tuesday** and **Wednesday** nights broadcasts with **Mother Angelica**.

We would also like to have response from those who would like to join us on a pilgrimage to see the **Passion Play** at **Oberammergau, Germany** in **May of 2000**.

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## PRAYER of PROTECTION against VIOLENCE and TERRORISM

**Loving father, in humble trust we draw Your attention to every act of violence and terrorism being planned for this city (state, country). Thank You for sending the Holy Spirit to expose and defeat weapons of destruction. We take authority in Jesus' Name over every planned act of violence and command it to wither and die. Father, forgive those who would seek to harm others and bring them into a healed relationship with Our Lord Jesus. Forgive me for any way I have allowed seeds of violence to be planted in my own heart. Thank You for protecting our city, (state and country). Thank You for alerting many intercessors to pray a shield of protection around our city (state and country) and around those individuals assigned to protect the people of our city (state and country). Holy Spirit, come. Release the peace of Christ into our city (state and country). Thank You, Lord. Amen.**

**"...be well versed in all that is good yet pure as to what is evil and God, the giver of peace, will crush Satan under your feet" (Rom. 16:19-20).**

(With permission <<http://www.linda-schubert.com>>, "MIRACLES of the HEART MINISTRIES" Linda Schubert, Fall 1998)

## A DREAM OF CHRISTMAS EVE

'Twas the night before Christmas, all quiet and nice;  
The house was glittering like a little Paradise.  
The children were asleep, tucked in their beds,  
With dreams of sugar plums and angels over their heads.  
Suddenly there was a strange clatter on the roof's icy-top,  
As Santa brought his reindeer to a stop.  
Quickly down the chimney he leaped with a bound,  
And Tip-toed in the house without a sound.  
While moving from left to right foot,  
Santa brushed from his suit the chimney soot.  
Then he took from his back the empty sack;  
And with a sigh, said: "My! Oh my!"  
Poor Santa didn't know what to do—  
For he had forgotten good Joey and Sue!  
As he began resting his head on the table,  
He looked up and saw the Stable!  
There was a big ox, and sheep that were small;  
And a donkey stuck his head inside the stall.  
While in the center was the most beautiful sight  
The little Baby Jesus, all glowing and bright!  
His Mother Mary and Joseph knelt in awe,  
Adoring the Divine Infant on His bed of straw.  
Shepherds in bright-eyed wonder gazed;  
While angels with heavenly music praised.  
Santa knelt, and asked what he should do;  
Because he had forgotten poor Joey and Sue.

Mother Mary turned, and looked over the stall,  
And asked Saint Joseph to get out his awl.  
Many other tools he took out too;  
Santa was amazed at what Saint Joseph began to do!  
Then Mary asked the angels to bow their heads;  
From them she took beautiful sewing threads.  
Touching their soft long colorful robes,  
Mother Mary began sewing some clothes.  
Santa's eyes popped, and he nearly got sick,  
Seeing each shepherd's crook turn to a peppermint stick!  
Looking at Saint Joseph, Santa almost went dumb,  
When he saw him finish making a drum!  
The ox bent low, asking Mary to take a horn from its head;  
And made with it one that would "Toot" toots instead.  
The donkey brayed that Mary pull some of his hair,  
To make paint brushes which give good wear.  
The labs crept close to Mary and offered their wool,  
For warm mittens and help get the stockings full.  
Santa was speechless at the whole sight;  
And his jolly red face smiled with delight!  
Angels gathered 'round him in his daze,  
And began to sing their Christmas Lays.  
The tears rolled down Santa's old face,  
As he tried to thank Mary for all the grace.  
He wanted to say "Thank you," to all in the Stable;  
But the more he tried, the less he was able!  
The rays from the star sent out a warm glow,  
As Santa knelt before Jesus and bowed low.  
After praying, he heart nearly burst with bliss;  
When Mother Mary gave Jesus for Santa to kiss!  
Heavenly songs 'round him, and bells did ring;  
All telling it was the birthday of Christ the King!  
Giving a last glance and the love of his heart,  
Santa unwillingly began to depart.  
He had to hurry and get on his way;  
Because night was turning fast into day.

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**TYPING, PROOFREADING, ASSEMBLY and MAILING:** Too many wonderful pilgrims and volunteers to mention them all by name.

As he climbed on his sleigh, patting the reindeer,  
Santa cried out:  
“God bless all, with a Mary-Christmas!! and a Holy New  
Year!!!

(with permission from “THE MARYFAITHFUL” dated  
November-December, 1990)

## THE FIRST CHRISTMAS CRIB

After his trip to the Holy Land and his visit to **Bethlehem**,  
*Saint Francis* of **Assisi** had a devotion to the feast of  
Christmas. HE often said of this day:

“If I knew the emperor, I would ask that all be ordered on  
this day to throw out corn to the birds, especially to our  
sisters the larks, and I would ask that everyone who has a  
beast in the stable to give it a specially good meal for love  
of the child Jesus, born in a manger. And this day the rich  
should feast all the poor.”

In the year 1223, *Saint Francis* himself celebrated  
Christmas in a way which the world had never seen before.  
In **Greccio**, he had a friend and well-wisher who had given  
him and his brothers a wood grown cliff above the city.  
*Francis* now had this man called to **Colombo**, and said to  
him:

“I want to celebrate to the holy Christmas night along with  
thee, and now listen how I have thought it out for my self.  
In the woods by the cloister thou wilt find a cave, and  
there thou mayest arranged a manger filled with hay. There  
must also be an ox and an ass, just as in **Bethlehem**. I want  
for once to celebrate seriously the coming of the Son of  
God upon Earth, and to see with my own eyes how poor  
and miserable He wishes to be for our sakes.”

## UNWANTED CHLD

There was a little toddling Boy, Who came unto His own.  
He thought they’d greet Him, open armed, but found  
Himself alone.

He wandered through the whole wide world With hopes to  
find a home. Where’r He went, ‘twas all the same: He  
was but an “unknown.”

The Courts of Justice closed their doors To this, their  
Little Lord. Nations, laws and Parliaments His Rule could  
ill afford.

The schools, TV and public press Would ne’er His  
Doctrine hold. Their god MAN his “rights” and whims—  
This Child must be told!

Families, too, and men and women, Children, students, all  
– So many have no room for Him Whose Birthplace was a  
stall.

The “updated church” is, like the rest, Embarrassed by this  
Child. He must be “rehabilitated” Or else, for sure, exiled.

Today ‘tis worse than **Bethlehem’s** Inn, Where He could  
find “no room.” The whole, vast world is closed to Him:  
“KEEP OUT! STAY OUT! NO ROOM!”

But wait, dear Lord. There is a place Where Thou canst  
find a home: ‘Tis in OUR HEARTS – Thy faithful ones—  
COME IN, and make Thy Throne!

(by Rev. L. S. Brey with permission from “THE  
MARYFAITHFUL” Vol. XXVI NO. 6, NOVEMBER-  
DECEMBER 1994)

## THANKSGIVING for CHRISTMAS

Whatever is this?” you may well be asking yourself. “We  
had Thanksgiving ALREADY, last month (and if in  
**Canada**, earlier yet). Does this editor want us, maybe in  
the name of Holy Poverty, to eat the leftovers from  
Thanksgiving as our Christmas dinner?” Well, not really.  
Although we have cooked many a turkey at Thanksgiving,  
frozen half—along with a casserole full of dressing—and  
reheated same on Christmas. When then there are no more  
than three in the household, that seems quite sensible. But  
it is NOT the thesis of this essay.

Here in **Powers Lake**, we often spell Christmas like this:  
“Christ-Mass.” You see, **Calvary** – or the Mass – was the  
reason for **Bethlehem**. This is why attending Masses, as  
many as possible, should be the heart of your Holyday.  
Dinner, presents and even caroling pale into insignificance  
beside the coming of our Beloved: to **Bethlehem**, to our  
altars and, yes, into our hearts.

“But what about Thanksgiving?” you ask. Our reply: Did  
you know that the **Greek** word for “thanksgiving” is  
“Eucharist”? From the venerable **Baltimore Catechism**  
we learned: “The Mass is a Sacrament and a Sacrifice...”  
And what was that Sacrament? Ah! Now you see the  
connection. And the connection is...MARY.

Our Redemption required that our Savior have FLESH,  
because as a Pure Spirit, He could neither suffer nor die.  
And He assumed that flesh in the womb of MARY. He  
would later be born in **Bethlehem**—of MARY. He would  
permit himself to be nourished and reared by MARY (with  
the help of Saint Joseph and countless Angels). And when  
the time arrived for Him to offer Himself to His Father,  
when He ascended **Calvary**, who was there, standing by  
Him to offer Himself to His Father, when He ascended  
**Calvary**, who Himself—her only Son, her sole Treasure,  
in a very real sense her Life Itself (Had He not said, “I am  
the Life”?) for US – poor miserable sinners that we are?  
MARY! While Calvary was, and to this day remains,  
JESUS CHRIST’S MASS, It is truly also Mary’s Sacrifice.  
she was *totally* united to Him in mind and heart –  
something almost as far beyond our grasp as the Mystery  
of the Most Blessed Trinity. Thus, we are told, she  
suffered in her own body everything HE did!

(Lest there be the slightest misunderstanding: Mary is  
NOT Divine – thus, Catholics do NOT worship her—and  
she most definitely was NOT A PRIEST. The latter is not  
the vocation of woman, as is evidenced nowhere more  
powerfully than at the Last Supper and on **Calvary**.)

So we see the Cross as the Reason for the Crib. Calvary is the Purpose of Bethlehem. "Bethlehem" means "house of bread." He longed not just to come to us – as though that were not stupendous enough! – but to REMAIN with us always. **"Behold, I am with you all days, even unto the consummation of the world."** (Mk. 28:20) And How did He accomplish this? At the Last Supper **"whilst they were eating, Jesus took bread; and the chalice, giving thanks, He gave it to them. And they all drank of it. And He said to them: 'This is the Blood of the New Testament, which shall be shed for many.'**" (Mk. 14:22-24) And He gave them the power to do This themselves (ordained them priests), saying, **"Do this in commemoration of Me."** (Lk. 22:19) Please note that He said: **"DO THIS."** Nowhere did He add, "Or something similar to this."

The words "New and Eternal Covenant" – found elsewhere in the Scriptures and also in the Consecration of the Tridentine Mass – signify that this was to be FOREVER. In the words of *Pope Saint Pius V*: "'In Perpetuity.'" Why the two separate Consecrations? To demonstrate clearly to us that His Body and His Blood were actually TO BE SEPARATED – for us! **What greater love than this?**

Every meal we eat, but especially our festal meals – the turkey or ham dinners of Thanksgiving and Christ-Mass being two examples – should call to our minds the Last Supper. Maybe we are not eating lamb; but we can and should always eat in honor of the Lamb! (among other things, that means praying grace before and after, as at every meal, and eating moderately. Gluttony does NOT honor Him!)

Jesus shed His Blood "for you and for many." Certainly what He underwent was sufficient to redeem "all men;" but men (people) have free will, and NOT ALL WOULD ACCEPT THAT REDEMPTION. Many would go to Hell in spite of It! Jesus knew this, and it must have been the source of His greatest pain.

You are one of the "many" if you are among those who from your heart "believe in Him and are Baptized," trust in Him, truly love Him; in other words, if you are a member of His Mystical Body. What greater privilege could you have, short of entering Heaven itself? And what greater motive for having...THANKSGIVING for CHRISTMAS.

**("THE MARYFAITHFUL" Vol. XXVI NO. 6 NOVEMBER-DECEMBER 1994, Used with permission.)**

## PRAYER of GRATITUDE for the GIFT of GENEROSITY

***Heavenly Father, I come to You with a grateful heart. Thank You for saving me, redeeming me, forgiving me, and lavishing merciful love upon me. Thank You for making me alive with Christ. Thank You for showing me the riches of Your grace, expressed in***

***Your kindness to me in Christ Jesus. Thank You for strengthening me in my inner being; for enabling me to know the width and length and height and depth and wonder of the love of Christ. By Your grace, forgiveness is as natural as breathing and generosity of heart is a way of life. Thank You for Your awesome power at work in me. Thank You for sending the Holy Spirit to empower me to live a generous, open-handed, loving, fruitful life in You. Father, I repent of the times I have been greedy. Thank You for the grace to forgive myself. Thank You for enabling me to be generous in giving, in work, in love, in prayer. Thank You for enabling me to speak words of hope and healing; to encourage; to lend a helping hand; to have the heart of an intercessor. Thank You for the largeness of heart that finds joy in helping another take first place. Thank You for the grace to respond peacefully to those who are not peaceful with me. Thank You for the grace to see myself with Your generous eyes: as treasured, precious, valuable, beloved and very worthwhile. To You be the glory, forever and ever.***

***Amen.***

**"A generous man (or woman) will prosper; he who refreshes others will himself be refreshed" (Pr. 11:25).**

(With permission, "MIRACLES OF THE HEART MINISTRIES" Linda Schubert, Fall, 1998)

## A TRAVELER'S GUIDE to HEAVEN

1. **Accommodation:** Arrangements for first-class accommodation have been made in advance. **"In My Father's house are many mansions...I go to prepare a place for you."** (Jn. 14:2)
2. **Passports:** Persons seeking entry will not be permitted past the gates without having proper credentials and having their names registered with the ruling authority. **"There shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth...but they which are written in the Lamb's Book of Life."** (Rev. 21:27)
3. **Departure Times:** The exact date of departure has not been announced. Travelers are advised to be prepared to leave at short notice. **"It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in His own power."** (Acts 1:7)
4. **Tickets:** Your ticket is a written pledge that guaranteed your journey. It shall be claimed and its promises kept firmly in hand. **"He that heareth My Word, and believeth on Him that sent Me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life."** (Jn. 5:24)

5. **Customs:** Only one declaration is required while going through customs. **“I declare unto you the gospel...that Christ dies for our sins...and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day.” (I Cor. 15:1,3,4)**
6. **Immigration:** All passengers are classified as immigrants, since they are taking up permanent residence in a new country. The quota is unlimited. **“They desire a better country, that is, an heavenly...for He hath prepared for them a city.” (Heb. 11:16)**
7. **Luggage:** No luggage whatsoever can be taken. **“We brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out.” (I Tim. 6:7)**
8. **Air Passage:** Travelers going directly by air are advised to watch for daily indications of imminent departure. **“We which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.” (I Thes. 4:17)**
9. **Vaccination and Inoculation:** Injections are not needed, as diseases are unknown at the destination. **“God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain.” (Rev. 21:4)**
10. **Currency:** Supplies of currency may be forwarded ahead to await the passenger’s arrival. Deposits should be as large as possible. **“Lay up for yourselves treasures in Heaven, where neither moth nor dust corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal.” (Matt. 6:20)**
11. **Clothing:** A complete and appropriate new wardrobe is provided for each traveler. **“He hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, He hath covered me with the robe of righteousness.” (Is. 61:10)**
12. **Time Changes:** Resetting of watches will not be necessary, nor will the watches. **“The city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof. There shall be no night there.” (Rev. 21:23,25)**
13. **Reservations:** Booking is open. Apply at once. **“Now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.” (II Cor. 6:2)**
14. **Coronation Ceremony:** The highlight of the journey is the welcoming reception and coronation which await each new arrival. **“There is laid up**

**for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love His appearing.” (II Tim. 4:8)**

(Courtesy Evangelical Tract Distributors, Edmonton, AB., Canada T5J2G9)

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### THE HEAVENS WERE MADE HONEY-SWEET

Indeed, under the reign of **Caesar Augustus**, The quiet silence of universal peace brought such serenity to an age previously so distressed that through his decree a census of the whole world could be taken.

The solicitude of divine providence brought it about that *Joseph*, the Virgin’s husband, took to the city of **Bethlehem** the maiden of royal lineage who was with child.

And when nine months had passed since his conception, the King of Peace like a spouse from his bridal chamber, Came forth from the virginal womb.

Although he was great and rich, He made himself small and poor for us. He chose to be born not in a house but in a lowly dwelling, To be wrapped in swaddling clothes, to be fed by virginal milk,

And to be lain in a manger between an ox and an ass.

Then “there shone for us a day of a new redemption, A restoration of past ages and the happiness of eternity. Then through the whole world the Heavens were made honey-sweet”

(by **Saint Bonaventure (1221-1274): “Melliflui facti sunt caeli” [Latin; excerpt from *Lignum Vitae*, I, 4])**

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### HIS DAY ALONE!

‘Twas the night before Christmas and all through the house, not a creature was stirring, not even my spouse. All the stockings were hung on the mantle with care, a hope that Christmas day soon would be there.

As I sat and reflected on recent days past, I hoped Our Lord’s birthday would be priority at last! With catalogs, shopping channels, malls and stores all a flurry; people in cars for that bargain did scurry.

Others did their shopping at home and dialed, avoiding the crowds, their tempers were mild. Credit card balances rose in a flash, credit card companies rejoiced, so few pay in cash.

Where in all this does Our Lord fit in, A poor humble babe in the town of Bethlehem? Stop all that shopping, put down that phone, focus on Jesus, it’s His day alone!

God gave us our Savior, let's rejoice in His day;  
stop all the diversions, let the Lord lead the way!  
Let us think of that night, of Joseph and Mary;  
no room at the inn, for them, how scary!

Off to a humble stable, the birthplace for our King;  
the angels in heaven did happily sing!  
The shepherds fell down afraid of their song,  
until they realized our Savior was born!

The humble shepherds came to the manger that night,  
marveling at the Messiah, Jesus our light.  
Please we must stop all the spending,  
the running, the buying,  
Don't be rude or crude, hold your temper, keep trying!

Focus on Jesus, it's His day after all.  
A time for the Lord, not for the mall.  
Put down those packages, paper and ribbon,  
It's Jesus' birthday, let us rejoice in Him.

*Let us be glad, and joyfully sing,  
Jesus is born our Savior and King!*

**(“HEARTS AFLAME”, by Mary Kneuer, Dec., 1997)**

## WHY YOU HAD TO DO IT

Once upon a time there was a man who didn't believe in Jesus. He was a kind and generous man, honest in all his dealings with others. But he didn't believe all the stuff about Jesus which churches teach. He was too honest to pretend he did. He told his wife, a faithful churchgoer, “*I am sorry, but I do not understand the claim that God became man. It makes no sense to me.*”

On Christmas Eve, his wife and children went to midnight Mass. After his family drove away, a thick snow began to fall. He went to the window and watched as the flurries grew more and more heavy. “*If we must have Christmas,*” he reflected, “*it's nice to have snow, to have a white Christmas.*”

He sat by the fireside and began to read his newspaper when he was startled by a “*thud*”. It was quickly followed by another and then another. Thinking someone was throwing snowballs at the window, he went to the front door to investigate and found a flock of birds huddled miserably in the snow. Caught in the storm, and in a desperate search for shelter, they had tried to fly through his window. The man knew that he couldn't let these poor creatures lie there and freeze but he didn't know how to help them.

Then he remembered the family barn. It would provide warm shelter! After quickly putting on his coat and boots, he trampled through the snow, opened the barn doors wide and turned on the lights. But the birds did not come. Thinking that food would bring them in, he hurried back to the house for bread crumbs which he sprinkled on the snow to make a trail into the barn. But the birds ignored the crumbs and continued to helplessly flop around in the

snow. He tried shooing them into the barn by walking around and waving his arms, but this only frightened them, and they scattered in every direction but that of the warm, well-lit barn. “*They find me a strange and terrifying creature,*” he said to himself, “*and I can't think of any way to let them know they can trust me. If only I could be a bird myself for just a few minutes, perhaps I could lead them to safety!*” Just then, the church bells began to ring. He stood silently for a while, listening to the ringing sounds of Christmas. He sank to his knees in the snow and closed his eyes as tears welled up within him. Then he whispered. “*Now I understand Jesus, now I see why You had to do it.*”

**Author Unknown**

**(“HEARTS AFLAME” Dec. 1997)**

## THIS MOST SPECIAL NIGHT

Soft is the sound of a donkey's hoofed-feet  
As slowly it's led down a Bethlehem street,  
For the burden it bears is a young, pregnant wife  
Who carries within her the glorious life  
Of a Child to be born this most special night,  
And a great star is casting its radiant light  
To brighten their way to a neighboring inn  
Where the voices of guests can be heard from within!

But the innkeeper says he must turn them away,  
Suggesting a stable as a place they can stay,  
So Mary and Joseph wait there in the gloom  
“Til Jesus is born in this cold, rustic room...  
And laid in a manger, surrounded by sheep  
Who are puzzled, no doubt, by the company they keep;  
And it seems such a poor, inappropriate thing-  
This manger that cradles a newly-born King!

Yet tonight the whole earth becomes His birthplace,  
For the billowing seas foam to pillows of lace;  
The valleys and meadows His cradle enfold  
And the hillsides form coverlets, emerald and gold!  
The murmuring streams sing His sweet lullabies  
And His robes are white clouds and the blue velvet skies;  
While the angels rejoice in the heavens above  
As the Father smiles down on His Son with love!

**(by John Bonser)**

## HELP NEEDED:

Volunteer or part-time person with compensation for travel need to set up and maintain a **PFMC Web Site**. Many ideas available but no one seems to have time to maintain the web pages. Decision on methods of hosting and Internet Service Provider (ISP) still to be finalized.

Volunteer or part-time person with compensation for travel needed to set up and maintain **ACCESS** data base(s) for all **PFMC** records starting with mailing list and moving through inventory and pilgrimages.

Call **Keith** at (609) 722-5047, **Monday thru Friday, 8 AM to 5 PM, or (609) 768-9228, evenings and weekends.**

## THE MYSTERY of CHRISTMAS

Christmas Day presents to us the most beautiful of all Christian mysteries—the Birth of the Savior of mankind in the lowly form on an infant. Under the Veil of Flesh, in the form of an Innocent Babe, we are permitted to contemplate and adore the Divinity. As we gaze upon the Divine Babe, sentiments of love and tenderness fill our hearts. We have reasons to fear the Just Judge of mankind, of Whose Advent we have been mindful during the weeks of preparation for Christmas; but we hasten with confidence to the Divine Child, Who—in His Coming as Savior—dispels all fear and invites us to adoration.

**The great Mystery of the Incarnation—and the Manifestation of the Love of God Which It reveals—should be the Object of mediation every day. Let us, at least—during the Holy Season of Christmastide—offer grateful prayers of adoration and praise OT God for the gift of His Only-Begotten Son. The following sentiments give expression to the thoughts of love which should fill our hearts as we contemplate in spirit the Babe of Bethlehem. Let us meditate on them and then repeat, like the refrain of a litany, the invitatory verse:**

***“Come! Let us adore the Babe of Bethlehem!”***

This day is exhibited a Mystery of Love; this day the angels are astonished; this day unhappy man is redeemed from the tyranny of hell.—***Come! Let us adore the Babe of Bethlehem!***

**Today the law and the prophets are fulfilled; today the “Desire of the everlasting hills” has come down; today the havens are broken through and the “Expectations of Nations: has descended.—Come! Let us adore the Babe of Bethlehem!**

Today the heavens have dropped down dew, and the clouds have rained the Just; today the earth has opened and budded forth a Savior.—***Come! Let us adore the Babe of Bethlehem!***

**Today the iniquity of the earth is destroyed; today the Savior of the world reigns over His people. —Come! Let us adore the Babe of Bethlehem!**

Today True Peace has descended from heaven; today the entire extent of the heavens is overflowing with honey. —***Come! Let us adore the Babe of Bethlehem!***

**Today is the brilliant day of New Redemption; the day of ancient reparation; the day of eternal bliss. —Come! Let us adore the Babe of Bethlehem!**

Today the Foundation of riches is covered with rags; today Omnipotence assumes the form of a Helpless Infant; today the Creator of heaven and earth cannot find a resting place among men. —***Come! Let us adore the Babe of Bethlehem!***

**Today He comes into the world that was made by Him and it knows Him not; today He comes unto His own,**

**and they receive Him not. —Come! Let us adore the Babe of Bethlehem!**

**Today He comes into the world that was made by Him and it knows Him not; today He comes unto His own, and they receive Him not. —Come! Let us adore the Babe of Bethlehem!**

Today Jesus Christ, the Son of the Living God, is born of the Virgin Mary, in the stable of Bethlehem. —***Come! Let us adore the Babe of Bethlehem!***

**He has come down from His Royal Throne while all things were in deep silence and the night was in the midst of its course. —Come! Let us adore the Babe of Bethlehem!**

His advent is announced by a heavenly army; His praise is hymned by an angelic choir. —***Come! Let us adore the Babe of Bethlehem!***

**The lowly of the earth are invited to His Birth; the shepherds of Bethlehem are summoned to the joyful scene. —Come! Let us adore the Babe of Bethlehem!**

“Let us pass over to Bethlehem” with them, and enter the humble cave; let us explore the mysteries of this sanctified grotto. —***Come! Let us adore the Babe of Bethlehem!***

**Let us satiate our eyes with the sight of the Lovely Babe; let us admire in secret the poverty with which He is surrounded. —Come! Let us adore the Babe of Bethlehem!**

Let us sing “Great is the Lord and worthy of praise,” little is the Lord and exceedingly worthy of love. —***Come! Let us adore the Babe of Bethlehem!***

**Behold the Little Babe wrapped in swaddling clothes and laid in a manger; behold the wretchedness with which He is surrounded. —Come! Let us adore the Babe of Bethlehem!**

Behold His Innocent Flesh exposed to the rigors of cold; behold His Limbs shivering, while the Smile of heaven is playing about His Lips. —***Come! Let us adore the Babe of Bethlehem!***

**Behold the Little Hands which formed the universe, which are one day to be cruelly pierced and which now stretch out in supplication to heaven for our sins. —Come! Let us adore the Babe of Bethlehem!**

Behold the Little Feet that are to walk about doing good and that are finally to be lacerated with the cruel nails and hammer. —***Come! Let us adore the Babe of Bethlehem!***

**Behold the Countenance, on which the angels desire to look, now upturned to heaven in silent entreaty for our transgressions. —Come! Let us adore the Babe of Bethlehem!**

See those Beauteous Eyes, resplendent with light from above, now suffused with tears of sorrow for our crimes, now radiant with the light of redeeming us. —***Come! Let us adore the Babe of Bethlehem!***

See the Pulsations of that Little Heart ever panting for our happiness; and remember that, for Love of us, it is to be pierced with the cruel lance. —*Come! Let us adore the Babe of Bethlehem!*

Think that—under all these Humble Forms—Infinite Majesty, Almighty Power, Immaculate Sanctity and Eternal Wisdom are veiled. —*Come! Let us adore the Babe of Bethlehem!*

See the Virgin-Mother bending over the Lovely Babe and contemplating with chaste eyes all the Fullness of the Godhead. —*Come! Let us adore the Babe of Bethlehem!*

See how she laments the poverty and misery that surrounds Him, her Son, and yet bows in submission to the Decrees of heaven; how she adores Him with profoundest homage as her Lord and her God and welcomes Him with joy as the Believer of her fellow creatures. —*Come! Let us adore the Babe of Bethlehem!*

See with what delight she hold Him up for the adoration of the shepherds, and how she treasures in her heart the Mysteries which she beholds. —*Come! Let us adore the Babe of Bethlehem!*

She the joy of the humble carpenter, His foster-father, how he is ravished with amazement, how he kisses the Precious Tear-drops from the Infant's Eyes, he reverently compasses the Little Limbs and then retires to a short distance to survey and adore Him in silent wonder. —*Come! Let us adore the Babe of Bethlehem!*

See the shepherds of Israel prostrated before Him and welcoming to earth their Expected Messiah. —*Come! Let us adore the Babe of Bethlehem!*

Let us join the Shepherds, and the Angels, and Saint Joseph, and the Virgin Mary. Let us throw ourselves at the Feet of the Infant and say:

*O Sweet, Adorable and Lovely Little Babe of Bethlehem.*

We kiss Thee! We glorify Thee!  
We salute Thee! We detest our sins!  
We adore Thee! We bewail our crimes!  
We love Thee! We weep for our ingratitude!  
We thank Thee! We promise to amend!  
We praise Thee! We are grieved for Thy sufferings.  
We bless Thee! We mourn for Thy humiliation!

*Oh, come! Let us adore the little Babe of Bethlehem!*

Our Jesus! Our Savior! Our Redeemer! Our Creator! The Judge of the world!

(with permission from "THE MARYFAITHFUL"-  
"RALLY-12/79" dated January-February, 1989)

## A CHRISTMAS PRAYER

***O God our loving Father, help us rightly to remember the birth of Jesus, that we may share in the glad song of the angels, the gladness of the shepherds and the worship of the Wise Men.***

***Close the door of hate and open the door of love all over the world.***

***Deliver us from evils by the blessing that Christ brings, and teach us to be merry with clear hearts.***

***May the Christmas morning make us happy to be thy children and the Christmas evening bring us to our beds with grateful thoughts, forgiving, and forgiven, for Jesus' sake. Amen.***

(with permission from "THE MARYFAITHFUL" dated  
January-February, 1989, by Roberts Louis Stevenson)

## THE HOLY ANGELS

There are nine choirs of angels. Scripture tells us, for certain, that there are angels, archangels, virtues, powers, principalities, dominions, thrones, cherubims, and seraphims.

The existence of angels and archangels is confirmed on almost every page of sacred Scripture. The books of the prophets make frequent reference to cherubims and seraphims. *Saint Paul*, writing to the ***Ephesians***, mentions four other choirs when he says, "**above all principalities and powers, and virtues and dominions**" (***Eph. 1:21***). Writing to the ***Colossians*** he again states, "**be they thrones or dominions or principalities or powers**" (***Col. 1:16***). Thus the thrones together with the four choirs about which he spoke to the Ephesians—principalities, powers, virtues, and dominions—make five choirs, specifically referred to by the Apostle. If these are added to the angels and archangels, cherubims and seraphims, we see that there are nine choirs of angels...

The name angel refers to a function and not to a nature. Thus, although the holy spirits of the heavenly homeland are all spiritual, not all of them can be called angels. Only those who have made announcements or pronouncements may be called angels (which means messenger). So the *Psalms* says, "**He makes the spirits into His angels**" (***Ps. 104:4***), as if clearly stating that God, when He so wishes, makes angels (messengers) of those celestial spirits which are always with Him.

### PLEASE READ THIS NOTICE and RESPOND - STAY ON the MAILING LIST -

We do need to hear from you in writing at least once a year in order to keep you on our mailing list. So, **if you haven't written us a note asking to stay on the list, please do so this month.**

The real value of "***The PILGRIM***" is appreciated in the hearts of you the readers. "***The PILGRIM***" serves to provide you with overviews to plant seeds in your life to fulfill all the above needs. If you know someone who would enjoy the "***The PILGRIM***", please ask them to contact us at the address printed in the box on page 5 or near the mailing label on the last page.

## Angels and Archangels

Those who make announcements of lesser importance are simply called angels. Those who have more important messages are called archangels. Mary is not sent just any ordinary angel, but the archangel, **Gabriel**. It was fitting that for this ministry, which was to announce the very best of news, one of the more exalted angels should be sent. It is for this reason that the archangels have individual names. Through their contact with men, then, their great power is made known to us...

**Michael** means, “who is like God?”, **Gabriel**, “the strength of God”; **Raphael**, “the medicine of God.” Whenever something needs to be done which requires awesome power, **Saint Michael** is sent. Thus it can be seen, in deed and in name, that no one can do what God can. For example, the old enemy in his pride aspired to be like God, saying, **“I will ascend to heaven above the stars of God, I will set my throne on high; I will sit on the mount of assembly in the far north; I will ascend above the heights of the clouds, I will make myself like the Most High.” (Is. 14:13-14)**. At the end of the world he will be left to act with his own powers, so that he may suffer definitive torture. He will have to fight against **Saint Michael the Archangel**, as **Saint John** relates: **“Michael and his angels fought against the dragon (Rev. 12:7)”**. Thus he, who was proud and tried to be like God, would learn from his defeat by **Saint Michael** that no one can haughtily elevate himself, attempting to be like God.

**Gabriel** is sent to Mary. He is called the strength of God, because he is to announce Him who deigned to appear humble so as to fight the infernal powers. Of him the **Psalms** says: **“Lift up your heads, O princes! And be lifted up, O gates to eternity! That the King of glory may come in” (Ps. 24:7)**. And also, **“Who is the King of glory? The Lord of hosts, he is the King of glory!” (Ps. 24:10)**. Thus the Lord of armies, strong in battle, who came to wage war against the spiritual powers, ought in turn to be announced as the strength of God.

**Raphael**, as we have already said, signifies the medicine of God. When acting as a doctor, he touched **Tobias’s** eyes and lifted the darkness from them. So it is fitting that he be called the medicine of God.

### The Angelic Choirs

Now that we have amused ourselves interpreting the names of the angels, it remains for us to review briefly the significance of the angelic ministries.

**Virtues** are those spirits through whom miracles and prodigies are most often worked. **Powers** are those who, within their own order, have received a greater power to be able to subdue the enemy’s powers, so that these are contained and do not tempt as much as they could. The **Principalities** are those who direct the other good spirits, ordering them to do what they ought. They are the ones

who preside over the others and are responsible for fulfilling the divine commands.

**Dominions** are those who are above even the principalities, because presiding implies being at the front or at the head, but dominating means having the others as subject. Thus the angelic militias, who are outstanding because of their extraordinary power, insofar as they have others subject to their obedience, are called dominions.

**Thrones** are those over whom the all-powerful God presides regarding the fulfillment of His desires. In our language, a throne is a kind of seat. Those who have received the name throne are those so filled with divine grace that God is seated in them, and through them decrees His desires.

The **Cherubims** are also called fullness of knowledge. These lofty armies of angels are called cherubims because the closer they contemplate the clarity of God, the greater they are replete with the most perfect knowledge. Thus, insofar as it is possible for created beings, they know everything proportional to the clarity with which they see the Creator, in keeping with their dignity.

Finally, **Seraphims** are those armies of angels who by their particular closeness to the Creator burn with an incomparable love. Seraphims are ardent and aflame. They are so close to God that between them and God there is no other spirit. They glow stronger the closer they are to seeing Him. Their love is certainly aflame, for the more subtly they see the clarity of God, the more are they inflamed with His love.

**Saint Gregory the Great (Pope Gregory I)** occupied the chair of **Peter** from 590-604. *He is considered one of the great masters of western classical spirituality. A man gifted with intelligence and a missionary zeal, he is generally considered the last of the Latin Fathers of the Church.*

*Saint Gregory was the first monk to become Pope. He is credited with the creation of the forms of musical worship that came to be called the Gregorian Chant and contributed prayers to the Gregorian Sacramentary. Despite ill health, he was a voluminous writer. His Liber Regulae Pastoralis (Pastoral Rule) throughout the Middle Ages was regarded as second in importance only to the inspired books of the Bible.*

*There are also 40 of Saint Gregory’s homilies on the Gospels that have been preserved. The excerpt reproduced here is taken from Homiliae in Evangelia (Homilies on the Gospels) 34, 7-10, as reproduced in Claire Russell, ed., Glimpses of the Church Fathers (New York: Scepter, 1994).*

*Pope Gregory was the first Pontiff to call himself Servus Servorum Dei (Servant of the Servants of God), and was canonized by popular acclaim after his death. With Pope Saint Leo I (440-61), he is one of the only two Popes to be called “the Great.” The universal Church celebrates the feast day of Saint Gregory the Great on September 3.*

(by **Saint Gregory the Great** with permission from “**LAY WITNESS**” dated September, 1996)

## REFLECTION on the MESSAGE of 11/25/98

Due to inexplicable delays, Father Slavko Barbaric's Reflection or Commentary on the message of 11/25/98 did not get posted in Medjugorje prior to NOON on 12/1/98. We decided to proceed to printing without it.

## MEDJUGORJE UPDATES

### Priest from India Gives Retreat

Some of the **Croatian** people have been very blessed by the recent visit of a priest from **Kerala, India**, who preached a retreat to them. This priest has a very special gift of healing. When he prays for people who suffer in either their body or their soul, he doesn't ask them questions about their problem, but only quotes a verse from a word of God inspired by the Holy Spirit. This word profoundly touches the heart of the person and accomplishes what God wants to do in them. The very root of the wound is healed because the Word of God is alive and active. The Gospa was surely happy! She tells us so often the importance of reading the Bible!

### Vocations Through Priest's Prayer

In 1994, when **Fr. Bernard** returned from his first trip to **Medjugorje**, he told his Bishop: "In **Medjugorje**, it was the first time in my life that I felt so proud to be a priest." A priest from the States, **Fr. Bernard** tells us, "In the past, my Bishop before has always advised caution about the apparitions. He never actually expressed belief in them. But one day he heard that I was going to **Medjugorje**, and he asked me to pray for vocations there. I knew it worked every time. Whenever a priest from our Diocese would go there we would always get at least one vocation. In **Medjugorje**, I helped with the pilgrims during my four months sabbatical in 1998. When my Bishop greeted me upon my return, his first words were, 'I'm going to have to send you right back!' During that period this diocese received 10 vocations to the priesthood."

Our Lady has said, "It's hard nowadays for a priest to remain faithful. Priests do not need your judgments, they need your prayer and your love. Help them!"

**("THE MEDJUGORJE STAR" by Sister Emmanuel Mallard, Oct. 1998**

## PRESS BULLETIN #101, October 07, 1998.

### MEDITATION

#### FAITH OF OUR FATHERS

As Sacred Scripture testifies to us, the Jews began step by step to understand what God was telling them and what he was expecting from them. Sometimes also they knew how to err and take the wrong path, but thanks to the prophets and the constant word of God they once again came back to the right path. Thus they perseveringly collected their own experience with God like bees collect honey. The

result was that through them God spoke out to the whole world.

Today God has begun to speak to each one of us and wants us to be witnesses in this world. In a special way he is speaking in the parish of Medjugorje and wants his word spread to the whole world. Each person that undertakes this will be his co-worker, a friend on whom God will rely.

The times are serious. Were they not, Our Lady would not have continuously spoken to us for such a long time. Our common rejection of the faith of our fathers has thereby made them serious. As a community we have turned on the wrong path. We need prophets again to return us to the right path. Meditating on the messages that the Queen of Peace transmits to us, we can observe that she is reckoning that indeed we ourselves are those prophets. Only, is that sufficiently clear to us? If it is, let's not be afraid of our mission. Let's remember what our fathers believed in. Let's embrace their fidelity and bravely go forward. It isn't important how someone might laugh in our face. The victory is ours.

**Fr. Miljenko Stojic**

## NEWS

### NUMBER OF COMMUNIONS AND CONCELEBRANTS

During September in the shrine of the Queen of Peace in Medjugorje 95,000 Holy Communions were distributed and there were 3080 concelebrations at holy masses by priests from home and abroad, that is, 103 priests daily.

**Published by: INFORMATIVNI CENTAR MIR - Svetiste Kraljice mira (Information Center MIR - Shrine of the Queen of Peace), 88266 Medjugorje, BiH,**

## PRESS BULLETIN #102, October 21, 1998.

### MEDITATION

#### I AM WITH YOU

Our Holy Father Pope John Paul II again came among the Catholics of Croatia. It was his second pastoral visit in four years. The visit caused surprise to many. To others, indeed, it brought great rejoicing. Great words were expected. Many waited in suspense at what he would say. But what was awaited in suspense, in fact never took place. John Paul II did not resort to great and new words. What he said essentially is the word of Jesus: "You shall be my witnesses. . ." He thereby made use of the testimony of Cardinal Stepinac who gave his testimony for Jesus in a very meaningful period. What was most noticeable in the Pope's visit was his presence. Simply his presence. Like when you visit a sick person. You can not heal him, but you can be with him. Like when you come to someone mourning. You cannot comprehend the depth of his sorrow, you cannot take away the pain. But, it means a lot to be with him. Like when you come to an unhappy

person. You cannot totally relieve his sadness. but you can be with him.

That is also something like with Our Lady's apparitions. Sometimes with suspense we await what might be new in the messages. But, Our Lady does not make use of great words, of anything unheard of and unknown. That's how it was in her last message. Her presence, even though she is no longer appearing to the visionary Jakov everyday, remains her greatest message. By that she renews what is the corner stone of Christian growth and authenticity - conversion of heart.

Fr. Ivan Landeka

## NEWS

### SECOND PASTORAL VISIT OF THE HOLY FATHER TO CROATIA

The beginning of the month of October is marked in all of Croatia, as well as in Medjugorje, by the visit of Our Holy Father Pope John Paul II to Croatia. The Pope came to Croatia October 2nd and finished his visit October 4, 1998. The first day he met with young people in front of the Zagreb cathedral. The next day at Marija Bistrica he proclaimed the Cardinal Archbishop of Zagreb, Aloysius Stepinac, to be a Blessed. On the following day October 4th in Split, he presided at the Eucharistic celebration to mark the 1700th anniversary of that city which is considered the cradle of Christianity in these regions. Certainly, the central event was the proclamation of Cardinal Aloysius Stepinac as Blessed. Because of his fidelity to God and the Catholic Church he was unjustly condemned in a rigged communist court trial. He was imprisoned in the jails of the former Yugoslavia, was poisoned and in that way by martyrdom gave testimony of his fidelity to God and the Pope. Of how great importance the Pope's visit is to the Croatian people can be seen by the fact that in the course of two days about a million people form the population of this small country (4.5 million) met with the Holy Father. From Medjugorje about 3000 pilgrims went to meet the Pope in Split and interestingly half of that number were Medjugorje pilgrims from all continents who joined their pilgrimage to Medjugorje with meeting the Pope in Split. About their impressions everyone said the same thing: "Magnificent."

This is the second visit of the Pope to Croatia in four years. The first time was in September 1994 while Croatia was still bleeding with the wounds of war and suffering the terrible consequences of aggression. That first visit of the Pope was above all an invitation to the Croatian community of believers to gather strength to forgive the enemy and extend a hand of reconciliation, while this second visit was a sign of support to the Croatian people to persevere in the creation of peace and good. Let us recall on this occasion what Our Lady said in her message of August 25, 1994, that is, right before the arrival of the Pope to Croatia:

*"Dear children! Today I am united with you in prayer in a special way, praying for the gift of the presence of my most beloved son in your home country. Pray, little children, for the health of my most beloved son, who suffers, and whom I have chosen for these times. I pray and intercede before my Son, Jesus, so that the dream that your fathers had may be fulfilled. Pray, little children, in a special way, because Satan is strong and wants to destroy hope in your heart. I bless you. Thank you for having responded to my call."*

### FEAST OF SAINT FRANCIS OF ASSISI

The feast of St. Francis was celebrated October 4th in the whole Catholic world, but that feast day is especially celebrated in Franciscan communities. So it was also in Medjugorje. On October 3rd, the day of the passing away of St. Francis, a solemn evening mass was celebrated at which a group of ten young people from the parish of Medjugorje were received into FRAMA (Franciscan Youth) and twenty young people who were already members of FRAMA made their first promises. The church was decorated in a special way with flowers and candles for that occasion but the special adornment were the young people who loved St. Francis the most of all creatures. The Franciscan friars and sisters with the members of FRAMA processed with singing through the church yard and returned before the altar where the ritual of the Transitus of St. Francis was observed.

### ABORIGINALS AND INDIANS IN MEDJUGORJE

People of all colors and tongues visit Medjugorje. But, sometimes even in that diversity some groups stand out because of their very special unusualness. So it was also in the first half of October when a group of native Australian Aboriginals, and a group of native Indians from a Canadian reservation visited Medjugorje. Although this is not the first time that Indians from Canada have come on pilgrimage to Medjugorje, still every time they come it is for us something new and something special. During the course of their two week stay they especially made our children happy. In front of the parish church of Medjugorje, in their traditional costumes, they enthused the assembled children and pilgrims with their characteristic songs and dance. A lot of children then also had their dreams come true: this time they were so close to those who till then they had only seen in movies.

### MEDJUGORJE INSPIRES...

Some pilgrims from Kazakhstan who came on pilgrimage to Medjugorje, inspired by what they experienced under the cross on Krizevac, built a cross in Ozernoj in the district of Kodszetaskaj. The cross is identical to the one on the Medjugorje mountain, and the Polish Cardinal Glemp blessed it in the presence of Jan Pawel Lenge, the Bishop of Kazakhstan.

Also in Panama at the other end of the world, Medjugorje has left a strong trace: a church has been built identical to the parish church of Medjugorje. The church is located near the airport and since Panama is of interest to tourists, many come to visit that church because it reminds them of Medjugorje. Adoration of the Most Blessed Sacrament of the Altar is regularly held in that church and the evening prayer program just like in Medjugorje. The church was blessed at the end of May 1997 and consecrated to the Mother of God.

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## **PRESS BULLETIN #103, November 04, 1998.**

### **NEWS**

#### **THE NUMBER OF COMMUNIONS AND CONCELEBRANTS**

During the month of October 150,000 holy communions were distributed in the Shrine of the Queen of Peace in Medjugorje and 3369 priests from Croatia and from abroad celebrated holy Mass, that is 109 daily.

#### **TWO BISHOPS VISITED MEDJUGORJE**

In October, two bishops visited Medjugorje, one from Brazil and the other from Poland. The latter is Msgr. Albin Malysiak, who is 81 years old but - as he says about himself - he still works like he did 15 years ago. Of particular interest is the fact that he worked together with Pope John Paul II for more than 20 years. He talks about these years as follows:

"Also after having been elected Pope, we remained friends and meet as often as possible. For example, I will meet the Pope the beginning of November of this year and then again in March of next year. I worked with him for ten years as parish priest and professor in theology and ten more years as Assistant Bishop. Working together with him was always a great joy for me. He is a great person, honest and sincere. He always had great sympathy for others. He was a Professor at the Faculty in Lublin. He taught social ethics and had a particular concern for the poor and abandoned. I always remained his close collaborator. We both suffered under Communism, which brought us even closer."

Although his visit to Medjugorje was a private one, Msgr. Malysiak gave us his impressions:

"I will enjoy very much coming here, once the Church has recognized Medjugorje, as we are all awaiting the official decision of the Vatican. I, personally, believe that the visionaries have genuine apparitions. I have met some of them. This morning, I also saw Vicka. She is a happy person and radiates peace. I am convinced that this is a place of apparitions but, most of all, this is a great place of prayer. And this has impressed me particularly. I also climbed up Mount Krizevac. There, I met many people

who truly pray devoutly in front of the cross. I counted about 70 people who sat on stones around the cross and prayed quietly. It was about noon and it was very hot, but the heat did not bother them. The stillness and spirit of prayer inspired me and I will return home with the image of those praying.

I admire the Franciscans who work here, who pray with the pilgrims and are at all times available for talks and confessions. I wonder from where they take the strength for this. In church one feels the prayer of the people. Praying the "Our Father" together was a unique experience for me; to hear all the different languages as they pray as in one voice and one could make out the Polish language particularly clear. I am especially pleased about the fact that so many priests accompany the pilgrims.

Back in Poland, I will tell everyone about Medjugorje. I will tell them about the devoutness and the faith of the people, whom I met here. I will talk about this when I meet people and in my sermons. However, Medjugorje is being talked about much in Poland. This is also why I came here.

Finally, I would like to say that I have been touched by the work of the Franciscans in Medjugorje. As far as the Marian devotion is concerned, I am pleased that the people here are loyal to the Church teachings and the proclamations of the Pope. The love for the Mother of God, which is experienced by the people here, helps those who come here to grow in their faith. We all must try to accept and live the messages of Our Lady. Peace in the world is at stake and that is why we have made a decision to love one another and then this love will bring about peace. Here, the call for prayer is given particular importance but also especially the answer to this call. Everything one finds in the messages corresponds with the teachings of the Church. The call to live the faith and to live according to the Sacraments is particularly strong. I hope that this message will spread throughout the world and that more and more people will be coming here and accept the messages, while we are waiting for the Vatican to recognize Medjugorje. I bless you all and wish you peace."

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## **PRESS BULLETIN #104, November 18, 1998.**

### **MEDITATION**

#### **THE DAY OF THE LORD**

In May of this year the Apostolic Letter of Pope John Paul II about the celebration of Sunday "Dies Domini" - the Day of the Lord, was published. In five chapters, the Pope explains the history and the meaning, as well as the religious and social significance of celebrating Sunday. The Church and a large part of present-day trade and industry are at two different starting points. In order to

raise the employment rate and consumption, commerce would like to abolish Sunday as a day on which one does not work. On the other side, the Church defends Sunday tirelessly as being the day of the Lord, on which one should not work. And both sides substantiate their viewpoints with the wish that they want to make life more comfortable for people. Soon discussions will take place on this topic and those who have already written-off Sundays will defend their thesis with all means.

For the Christian, Sunday is not only a day on which to rest. The eucharistic community and society in general, as well as resting, give Sundays an irreplaceable meaning. Recently, a woman said the following about this fact, which is often hidden, "If Sunday is abolished as the day of rest, what will become of my family life? Maybe I will have a free day on Monday, my husband on Tuesday and my children on Wednesday or Thursday. When will we have our family gatherings or find time for one another? When will social and cultural functions and church meetings take place when there won't be one free day for everyone?"

Christians no longer make up a majority in society so what can they do against this? They can surely do one thing! How far they renew their practice and culture of living a Christian Sunday, that is how far they will defend the day of the Lord. Therefore, the call of Our Lady and Her insistence that we celebrate Holy Mass regularly defend Sunday, a divine and human achievement of our time.

Father Ivan Landeka

## NEWS

### VISIT OF AN AMERICAN BISHOP

Msgr. Kenneth Steiner, Auxiliary Bishop of Portland, Oregon, and parish priest of St. Mary's Corvallis, came to Medjugorje for a private visit from November 7 to 12, 1998. This was his first visit and we will relate his impressions in more detail in our next edition of the Press Bulletin. On the last day of his visit, he celebrated Holy Mass for the English-speaking pilgrims. Among other things, he said the following in his homily:

"I came here with a very heavy heart, full of stones. These stones I left on Apparition Hill and on Mt. Krievac. Now I return home with a soft heart."

### NEW GUIDES

After having attended a seminar in August, the young men and women who want to work in the parish of Medjugorje as pilgrim guides, had to pass their exam on November 12th. About 40 young people had taken part in the seminar of whom 25 came for the examination; 3 passed the exam. The participants were tested on their knowledge of the Holy Scriptures, Catechism, the messages of Our Lady, as well as their know-how of the tourist industry, history, geography and culture of this area.

## VIENNA AND MOSTAR CONNECTED VIA AIRLINE

Since October of this year, Vienna, the capital of Austria, and Mostar are connected via Tyrolean Airlines, an Austrian airline. The flights are on Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays and leave Vienna at 1:25 p.m. for Mostar and the return flights take place on the same day, leaving Mostar at 3:20 p.m. for Vienna.

This is surely very interesting for Austrian pilgrims who want to come to Medjugorje. All necessary information can be obtained either directly from the airline or at the travel agency Globtour in Medjugorje.

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**You can receive the latest issue of the Press Bulletin at any time on your own fax machine in the tone mode by dialing the Robofax in our Information Center at +387 88 65 15 55.**

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## THE PFMC OPERATES on GOD'S DIVINE PROVIDENCE

Since 1991, when the **PFMC** was incorporated as a non-profit and tax-exempt religious organization, there have been many times when we came within a few cents left in our checkbook once we paid our phone bill, printing, paper costs, book bills, etc.. **None of our staff are paid in any way.** They are **all volunteers** in *Mary's* army of evangelization, prayer, and healing.

We have examined our goals and objectives in establishing the **PFMC** as a non-profit, religious association, and we have been astounded at how *Our Lady* has blessed us with VISION and direction in fulfilling these goals and objectives

In 1996, the **PFMC** submitted its combined *five* year report to the **Internal Revenue Service (IRS)** for the five years of probationary operations under the paragraph 501(c)(3) tax exempt status. The **IRS has now granted the PFMC permanent 501(c)(3) tax-exempt status.** This is unique in the annals of the **IRS.** We have a tri-fold purpose for our organization, i.e. periodical publication based on donations, pilgrimages based on donations AS WELL AS books and religious articles paid for by donations. We have operated as a non-profit organization conducting operations in these three areas for over *seven* years AND under the approval and review of the **IRS** for over *seven* years.

Each month we put an envelope and a prayer request/donation slip in "**The PILGRIM.**" We leave the rest up to the Lord. The **PFMC**, and its full operation including the printing and mailing of "**The PILGRIM,**" depends upon YOU and Divine Providence..

Many of you have helped us through Divine Providence: in putting on our annual retreat conference and frequent days of recollection; cover printing and mailing of **"The PILGRIM"** to now nearly 2,500 addresses per month 10 times per year; helping the poor with food and clothing including humanitarian pilgrimages; planning and coordinating 3-4 pilgrimages per year, (always taking as many of our priests with us on Divine Providence as is possible); and supporting many other activities within the **PFMC** area, including bringing in guest speakers.

At the end of 1998, the **PFMC** staff met with our discernment team and again consecrated our work in the **PFMC** to the Immaculate Heart of **Mary** and the Sacred Heart of Jesus. We ask that you look at this year as being very important in spreading the messages of **Our Lady**, and in supporting the One Holy Catholic Church, and Our Holy Father, **Pope John Paul II**.

If you can help us by **TITHING at least \$2 per month** to the **PFMC**, it would take much from our financial concerns each month. This might mean giving up a bag of potato chips or a candy bar, or even two cups of coffee per month. But it will help us so very much. Would you remember us this Christmas with a special tax-deductible donation?

Your donation slips and prayer intentions are placed beneath the crucifix in the **PFMC** prayer room and prayed for every day. We will take them with us on our next pilgrimage. We will place them in thanksgiving on the altars for Holy Mass and leave them at our final mass. If we are in Rome, Kathleen takes them to the office of the Holy Father and leaves them for Our Holy Father's prayers.

We must all make a strong effort to continue to fund the operations of the **PFMC** at levels above what we have for the past *seven* years. Office, printing and postage costs continue to grow yearly with **NO ONE** taking any salary or pay from this ministry. It is a **TOTAL VOLUNTEER** ministry. So as a sponsorship program, **YOU**, and **ALL** reader members, must look deep into your heart and help us to continue with the beautiful work of the Lord.

We will **NOT** change the mode of operations. In order to do this, we must follow our goals and objectives as well as the by-laws of the corporation.

Pilgrim readers (members) **must communicate** with us at least **once a year** in order to remain members and receive the monthly periodical **"The PILGRIM."** Donations alone keep **"The PILGRIM"** alive. We may have to continue to reduce its size and possibly its periodicity of publication, i.e. bi-monthly or quarterly, if the donations do **NOT** keep up with publication and mailing costs. We are currently surveying all of the correspondence for **1998** and annotating the labels of **"The PILGRIM"** to show the date of last communication and any contribution or donation at that time. This may **NOT** be complete for this *December* issue but should be complete for the *January*

*1999* issue. Check your label if you are curious what our records show.

Please write us a note indicating that you are getting **"The PILGRIM"** and whether you are enjoying it. Such a note can be placed on the donation slip enclosed

If you can contribute your time to Our Lady by typing or especially coming into the **PFMC** a few hours a week or a month, your hands will be kept busy and your hearts fulfilled in joy of working for Jesus and **Mary**.

If you can contribute by joining our intercessory prayer group, and coming here, or before the Blessed Sacrament, or even in your own prayer time, please let us know. We have so many prayer requests coming in, and we try to pray for them by name daily.

We know that difficult times are here, and will be increasing. The messages of so many apparition sites, especially those of **LaSalette, Lourdes, Fatima, Akita** and **Medjugorje** are vivid to us. The Church is undergoing great trials. **Our Lady** comes to comfort her children and guide her Church in **LIGHT** and **LIFE** through her Son, Jesus, present in the Eucharist at Holy Mass and Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament. We ask you to help us to continue our work of support.

We pledge to you to work hard in discernment of **TRUTH** and **LOVE**, in obedience to the **One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church** led by **Pope John Paul II**.

**Please, will YOU make a commitment to help us - to help Our Lady - through prayer and financial support?**

### **LETTERS to the PFMC**

Dear Keith and Kathleen:

"Thank you" is one of those wonderful phrases people use to express a special gratitude.

But there's often a lot more to it than those two words can say.

When it comes from the heart, from deep inside the nicest feelings and the most special thoughts, "Thank you" means so much.

It means thank you for taking the time to show that you care. It means "you really made my day," and sometimes it means you really make all the days so much better.

It means you make me feel so nice, and I wish I could do the same for you...just by letting you know how much you mean to me.

"Thank you" means you didn't have to...but I'm grateful that you did.

"Thank you" means that you've done something special that I'll never forget.

Chris Gallatin

### **I Hope You Know How Much I Appreciate You!**

Thank you for all your behind the scene effort to make this conference so very special and successful. I deeply

appreciate the opportunity I was given to attend. May God Bless you abundantly,

**Teenie Jeannie**

Dear Kathleen and Keith:

Thank you for the beautiful retreat you hosted with Fr. DeGrandis and Monsignor James. So many healings and graces came about because of your beautiful faith and obedience to God.

God Bless you and your family! I'm looking forward to the retreat in February '99.

**Love,  
Theresa Sinclair**

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## **ADOPTION IS BIBLICAL, BEAUTIFUL and BUSY**

Growing up as an adopted child, I was often told by my parents that I was "twice loved" – once by the mother who carried me and gave me life, and again by my adopted Mom and Dad.

I believed them. Being raised in a good northeast *Minneapolis* household with strong Catholic and ethnic/Italian roots, neither I nor my two adopted brothers—nor any other kid I hung around with—ever knew there was such a thing as an "unwanted child." Nuisance, yes. But unwanted? Never!

Today I am the mother of many—nearly half of whom came to us not through conception but adoption. And what a blessing it has meant to all of us. We are a family in every sense. Even in a household of varied skin colors and cultures, it's hard to remember we are not "blood-related."

Adoption, even with a multi-racial flair, becomes status quo and "hohum" after awhile. I can still remember the chuckles at the Sunday breakfast table when our newly adopted son, Charlie, blurted out, "Gosh, did you guys ever notice that all the Makowskis look alike?" Charlie apparently thought all families were mixed-race!

Another time five-year-old Kari, a "tummy" kid, asked, "Tell me about my adoption" and we broke the news: "Honey, you came from Mom and Dad." Not nearly as glamorous!

Or the day we moved to our newer and larger home located down the street from our church and grade school, and our daughter, Tina, ran home to announce, "Hey, good news! We're not the only ones on the block with a big family. They people down the street have eight kids. But guess what? Not one of them is adopted?"

Poor dears!

My mother always told me that adoption was "part of God's plan" and, as I grew in maturity and faith, I came to know that it was the courage and grace of my birth mother's action in making an adoption decision, and the cooperation of my adoptive parents, that really fulfilled His plan. The rest is up to me.

I also believe that the children placed in our hearts and homes, whether by adoption or birth, are only ours temporarily. It then becomes our primary goal to help them know their Heavenly Father and to aim them upward toward heaven. Easier said than done, I might add!

In my biased view, adoption should be promoted, portrayed, and praised for the life-saving and loving act that it is.

Most pro-life counselors who see women in crisis pregnancy situations are saddened by the anti-adoption mindset that controls decision making. Many say, "I have two choices: Keep it or abortion. I could never give up my own flesh and blood."

When did America change its attitude toward adoption? With over 1.6 million abortions occurring each year—and over a half of them repeats—we know that each time adoption is rejected and abortion chosen, a baby is killed. Worse yet, according to the National Council for Adoption (NCF), "two million couples are awaiting to adopt" – that's 40 couples for every available baby, including infants of all races and those with special needs.

Last year, PRO-LIFE MINNESOTA, a statewide educational organization which offers information and alternatives through TV, billboard, and news messages, carried the message: "2,000,000 couples are waiting to adopt." The results of this campaign were both surprising and heartwarming:

\*Pro-life crisis pregnancy counselors urged PRO-LIFE MINNESOTA to "keep the ads coming," to quote one clinic director who reported an upsurge of clients seeking adoption counseling.

\*Many who called the PRO-LIFE MINNESOTA 1-800 hotline asked about adoption. As one young man said, "Where can we go to arrange an adoption with one of these couples? We had scheduled an abortion, but the ad made us stop and think." They felt heartened and encouraged to know about the waiting couples and the agencies that are ready to help.

\*Most abortions are made in haste because of panic, fear, and pressure. As one woman said, "I never thought of adoption until I saw your ad."

In effect, this means many women are not "choosing abortion," but rather resorting to it.

It takes more than billboards and TV messages to counteract a negative mindset or misinformation regarding adoption. But this educational outreach proved to be more than informative. Babies' lives were saved!

According to a recent survey by the National Women's Coalition for Life, as reported by the NCF, pregnancy counselors report that one of the primary reasons that their clients choose abortion over adoption is because "adoption appears too difficult (practically or emotionally)."

Added to that are the counselors who admit their own discomfort in discussing adoption propaganda or just misinformation. Remember, too, abortion is relatively quick, final, and "over" by comparison.

NCFA states that “women who could benefit from adoption are being denied the opportunity to discuss it fully, or, in many cases, simply are not offered full and adequate information about adoption.”

Contributing to the frailty of adoption are the lawyers and judges who overturn legally binding contracts, convincing the American public that adoption is risky, debatable, and may not be *forever*. The results are heartrending stories such as the Baby Jessica DeBoer, Baby Richard, and other cases, which involve the return of legally adopted children because of a “changed mind” or discovery of a birth parent.

Christians know that adoption is biblical. Scripture reminds us continually that we are all adopted children of God. **“God sent His Son, born of a woman...to redeem us...to enable us to be His adopted children” (Gal. 4:4-5).**

In fact, we are *children of destiny*. God has a mission and a purpose for each of us. Therefore, we must never allow negative talk regarding adoption. It denigrates God’s plan. Worse, it can actually result in a pregnant and frightened woman’s choosing abortion.

*Moses* is perhaps one of the most outstanding biblical examples of adoption. It was his birth mother, acting for fear of his life and trusting God’s providence, who placed him in a basket in the river. And it was *Pharaoh’s* daughter, after discovering the abandoned child afloat on the water, who took him in as her own son (**Ex. 2:1-10**). It was in this adoptive environment that *Moses* learned the leadership skills necessary to lead the *Israelites* from slavery in *Egypt* to freedom.

What can we do to counteract the anti-adoption mindset? As Christians, by our word and witness, we can promote the goodness of adoption:

\*A note of encouragement or an “I’m praying for you” hug offers support and strength to those contemplating an adoption decision.

\*Always talk positively about adoption as the loving and unselfish act that it is. Your children, family, and friends are listening.

\*Write your elected state legislators and Congressmen to urge support of adoption policies that offer pregnant women a *real* choice. Also, lobby for a tax break for couples who adopt, making it affordable for middle or lower income families.

\*Pray daily for pregnant and undecided mothers, and for their vulnerable children who want only the opportunity to be born.

**Psalm 139** reminds us: **“Truly you have formed my inmost being; you knit me in my mother’s womb. I give you thanks that I am fearfully, wonderfully made; wonderful are your works. My soul also you knew full well.”**

Those of us who know personally the blessings of adoption, cherish those words. We also hope others will

join us in portraying the goodness of adoption and its message of life and love.

(with permission from “LAY WITNESS” dated September, 1996, by Mary Ann Kuharski)

**Mary Ann Kuharski is a freelance writer, homemaker and mother of 13, six of whom came by adoption and are of mixed races, some with special needs. She is the author of Raising Catholic Children and Parenting With Prayer (Our Sunday Visitor Press).**

## WHAT DOES THE CATECHISM SAY?

477. "At the same time the Church has always acknowledged that in the body of Jesus 'we see our God made visible and so are caught up in love of the God we cannot see.' [Roman Missal, Preface of CHRISTMAS I.] The individual characteristics of Christ's body express the divine person of God's Son. He has made the features of his human body his own, to the point that they can be venerated when portrayed in a holy image, for the believer 'who venerates the icon is venerating in it the person of the one depicted'. [Council of Nicaea II: DS 601.]"

512. "Concerning Christ's life the Creed speaks only about the mysteries of the Incarnation (conception and birth) and Paschal mystery (passion, crucifixion, death, burial, descent into hell, resurrection and ascension). It says nothing explicitly about the mysteries of Jesus' hidden or public life, but the articles of faith concerning his Incarnation and Passover do shed light on the whole of his earthly life. **‘All that Jesus did and taught, from the beginning until the day when he was taken up to heaven’** [Acts 1:1-2.] is to be seen in the light of the mysteries of CHRISTMAS and Easter."

526. "To become a child in relation to God is the condition for entering the kingdom. [Cf. **Mt 18:3-4**] For this, we must humble ourselves and become little. Even more: to become **'children of God'** we must be **'born from above'** or **'born of God'**. [Jn 3 7 ; Jn 1:13 ; Jn 1:12 ; cf. **Mt 23:12** .] Only when Christ is formed in us will the mystery of CHRISTMAS be fulfilled in us. [Cf. **Gal 4:19**] CHRISTMAS is the mystery of this 'marvelous exchange': O marvelous exchange! Man's Creator has become man, born of the Virgin. We have been made sharers in the divinity of Christ who humbled himself to share our humanity. [LH, 1 January, Antiphon I of Evening Prayer.]"

1171. "In the liturgical year the various aspects of the one Paschal mystery unfold. This is also the case with the

### KATHERINE WERNER GETTING MARRIED!

Katherine Werner, our youngest child and only daughter, is marrying **Ralph Bagnato** at **Saint Peter Church** on **Route 537** in **Merchantville, NJ** at **2:30 PM, Saturday, December 26, 1998**. They also regret that their invitation list for their reception has a limit but have asked us to invite everyone to attend the Holy Mass at which they will share the Sacrament of Matrimony.

cycle of feasts surrounding the mystery of the incarnation (Annunciation, CHRISTMAS, Epiphany). They commemorate the beginning of our salvation and communicate to us the first fruits of the Paschal mystery. "

2378 "A child is not something *owed* to one, but is a *gift*. The "supreme gift of marriage" is a human person. A child may not be considered a piece of property, an idea to which an alleged "right to a child" would lead. In this area, only the child possesses genuine rights: the right "to be the fruit of the specific act of the conjugal love of his parents," and "the right to be respected as a person from the moment of his conception" [Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, *Donum Vitae*, II. 8)."

2379 "The Gospel shows that physical sterility is not an absolute evil. Spouses who still suffer from infertility after exhausting legitimate medical procedures should unite themselves with the Lord's Cross, the source of all spiritual fecundity. They can give expression to their generosity by adopting abandoned children or performing demanding services for others."

(from "CATECHISM of the CATHOLIC CHURCH" NOS. 477, 512, 526, 1171, 2378-79)

## BETHLEHEM SPEAKS TO OUR DAY

The cave was crude and bare, with night winds swept,  
The inn was full, and rang with joy and mirth  
That night the angels came, while shepherds slept,  
To tell God's Kingdom come, the Savior's birth.  
"His own received Him not." Today men plan  
A world that knows not Godhood, One in Three;  
They seek a kingdom glorifying Man,  
A City Secular, Humanity!  
The Prince of Darkness smiles in this, his hour,  
His altars thronged with those who bend the knee  
To pride and hatred, greed and lust and power,  
To serve the Numen New, Humanity!  
In other times he used the pagan's aid  
On open foes of Christ he would rely;  
But now, in Christian camp, he makes his raid,  
Among the Lord's anointed finds ally.  
The Monster comes, by pride and fury driven,  
To mar the world God planned ere time began;  
He echoes that dread cry, once heard in Heaven:  
"I will not serve!" On earth no God but Man!  
"Away God's Kingdom! Hail, O earth restored!  
By man's sole wit! Your immortality?  
In race immortal, Yea! And your reward?  
In mankind's plaudits, all felicity!"  
Dear Infant, save us from this loveless creed,  
This worship of a world, lost to rest,  
That leaves our hearts still starving in their need  
Of food, as infants torn from mother's breast.  
Let others be mature. For me, the trust  
And candor of a simple child. Give hope  
And wisdom, peace and solace to the just,  
And to Your vicar, John Paul. God bless the Pope!

(by Fr. John McFadden with permission from "THE MARTFAITHFUL" dated November-December, 1990)

## THE CHRISTMAS EVENT

The story of Christ's birth in the stable of **Bethlehem** is one that is known all over the Western world. And the story of Our Lady's role is one that is equally well-known. For if a child is to be born, his story cannot be told without reference to his mother.

*Saint Luke*, in his gospel, gives the setting for the story of the birth of Christ: **"It happened that a decree went out at this time from the emperor Augustus, enjoining that the whole world should be registered...All must go and give in their names, each in his own city; and Joseph, being of David's clan and family, came up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee, to David's city in Judea, the city called Bethlehem, to give in his name there. With him was his espoused wife Mary, who was then in her pregnancy..."**

The gospels rarely depict the inner feelings, the emotions, the thinking of the characters that they portray. *Saint Luke* says nothing about the suffering and anguish of an entire population be uprooted, forced to go from their homes to their "own city" in order to register for purposes of world-wide taxation. There must have been unbelievable confusion and endless crowding on the roads. *Our Lady* and *Saint Joseph* shared in these hardships, for they too were uprooted from their home in *Nazareth* and forced to travel to their "own city" of *Bethlehem*.

**"And it was while they were still there,"** continues *Saint Luke*, "that the time came for her delivery. She brought forth a son, her first-born, whom she wrapped in his swaddling clothes, and laid in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn."

Countless poets, painters, writers and musicians have tried to convey what must have been the feelings of Christ's mother and foster-father while the events surrounding the birth of the Redeemer were taking place. And no doubt they will continue to do so until the end of time, for they sense, as do we all, that the birth of Christ has incalculable importance for the human race.

But *Saint Luke*, the only gospel writer to narrate the actual birth of Christ, concerns himself only with the basic facts: **"She brought forth a son, her first-born, whom she wrapped in swaddling clothes, and laid in a manger..."**

One can hardly imagine our Blessed Lady *not* reflecting back to the events of the Annunciation at a time like this. The angel Gabriel had told her of the greatness of her child; **"...men will know him for the Son of the Most High; the Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, and he shall reign over the house of Jacob eternally; his kingdom shall never have an end...this hold offspring of thine shall be known for the Son**

**of God.”** But here in a stable in **Bethlehem** there is no trace at all of power and majesty. There is none of the awesome thunder and lightning that the **Jewish** people had always associated with the presence of God among us. It is as if God were giving Our Lady the first taste of what it means to be the Mother of Sorrows.

The angels were not, as we sometime like to imagine, hovering over the crib of the Christ-child in **Bethlehem**. Had there been we can be sure that Saint Luke would have mentioned them. Instead, they were out in the fields where the shepherds were keeping night watch over their flocks.

**“And all at once,”** *Saint Luke* tells us, **“an angel of the Lord came and stood by them, and the glory of the Lord shone about them, so that they were overcome with fear...And a multitude of the heavenly army appeared to them at the angel’s side, giving praise to God and saying, Glory to God in the high heaven, and peace on earth to men that are God’s friends.”**

When the angels left them, the shepherds said to one another: **“Come, let us make our way to Bethlehem and see for ourselves this happening which God has made known to us.”** They found Mary and *Joseph*, with the child lying in the manger. They recounted to Mary and *Joseph* the events that had occurred: how the angel had appeared to them and told them: **“This day, in the city of David, a savior has been born for you, the Lord Christ himself.”**

The gospel tells us that all who heard this story were full of amazement. **“But Mary treasured up all these sayings, and reflected on them in her heart.”** *Saint Luke* does not tell us what these reflections were, but we can be sure that Our Lady took the coming of the angels to be a sign from God, a sign that would reassure her that her son was indeed the Messiah, the Son of God.

In a sense, she did not need this added reassurance. She had already shown that her faith in God was complete and total, with no wavering at all. Still, she was a daughter of **Israel**, a **Jewish** girl brought up in the **Scriptures**. She knew of the great prophecies about the coming Messiah, and she also knew that her people had always associated the coming of God with magnificent and terrifying manifestations of power and glory, as He did on Mount **Sinai** when He spoke to *Moses*.

So, among other reflections there at the crib, she undoubtedly thanked God for this extra sign that the Lord was indeed with her.

The gospel also makes no mention of how long the Holy Family stayed in the stable, or for that matter, how long they stayed in **Bethlehem** itself. We do know that eight days after the birth of Christ, He was circumcised in accordance with the law of *Moses*, probably by Saint

Joseph himself, since at the time it was customary for the father to perform this rite. It was at this ceremony that a boy-child was given a name: **“He was called Jesus, the name which the angel had given Him before he was conceived in the womb.”**

Forty days after His birth, Christ was in Jerusalem for the ceremony of His presentation in the temple and for the ritual purification of His Mother. There was a sacrifice that they had to offer to God: a pair of turtle-doves or two young pigeons. It was in the temple that they met *Simeon* and *Anna*, the prophetess. Both recognized the Child to be the promised Messiah. *Simeon* said to Mary: **“Behold, this child is destined to bring about the fall of many and the rise of many in Israel; to be a sign which men will refuse to acknowledge...as for thy own soul, it shall have a sword to pierce it.”**

We must remember that God revealed His plan of salvation only little by little. He did not tell the human race everything that was going to happen, or how that plan was to work out. And of course this included our Blessed Lady as well. The angel *Gabriel* had given her few details about *how* her Son was to redeem the human race. She knew and believed that her Son was the Messiah, the incarnate Son of God. But, at this point in her life, she knew nothing about how the redemption was to come about.

So the events leading to **Bethlehem**, the birth of Christ in the stable, the coming of the shepherds, and above all the prediction of *Simeon* would have left her with a great number of things to “ponder in her heart.” By this time she was able to see that the Messiah did not intend to come as a great king and conqueror, to hold earthly power, to set Himself up in the place of the emperor **Augustus**.

And she had no idea of what was yet to come. She only knew that her faith in God and His promises was something she had to nourish and make grow. She was, with the grace of God, preparing herself to stand at the foot of the Cross.

(by James McMillan, S.M.M. with permission from “THE MARYFAITHFUL” November-December, 1990)

## THE DIVINE BIRTH

If oblivion, neglect, and even contempt was all that His own brought to the arrival of Jesus, instead look at Mary. Let us enter that grotto and observe with holy curiosity all that taking place there. Enlightened by the Holy Spirit, Mary has come to know that the moment of the birth of Her divine Son is already at hand and tired though She is by the long wearisome journey, yet She has not desire to rest.

Now, more than ever, She draws Herself into most fervent prayer. Her ardent desires and sighs do irresistible violence to the Heart of God. He lets Himself be conquered by Mary’s prayer, and when She reaches the

peak of ecstasy, the Holy Spirit in a miraculous manner acts and Mary opening Her eyes, finds lying on Her mantle, as white as a snowflake, more beautiful than the angels, the Son of God, Her Son. Mary, Virgin before His birth, is also Virgin without blemish in His birth. Just as a sunbeam goes through a crystal without breaking or staining it, so also was the Son of Mary born.

Draw closer confidently and watch that scene. Jesus is about to receive the first adoration and with it the first caresses of a mother. Mary addresses Her God, living there, really and physically present. But as a Mother, She is entitled to lift that Little Child and imprint on His delicate cheeks the first kiss. With what ardent love She would kiss Him. What a warm embrace, what tender caresses!

Jesus does not feel the poverty of that stable, nor does He feel the cold of the night because the first thing His eyes have seen on opening was the face of His Mother. Have you ever witnessed the charming smile of a little child when it rested its eyes on something pleasant, then try to picture the smile of Jesus on seeing His Mother, so pure, so beautiful, so tender. A Mother and Son do not grow tired of looking at each other. That glance of Mary is joy and consolation for Jesus at the glance of Jesus is an increase of grace and sanctity for Mary.

With what respect and devotion and at the same time with what tenderness and delicacy did Mary wrap the little body of Her Son in the clean though poor swaddling clothes! With what profound sorrow did She place Him on the straw in the manger. God so closely embraced poverty that He had neither house nor hut to dwell in. How great, then, is the value of poverty, since the Son of God seems to have associated Himself with it. Ask Mary the grace to know that value of this virtue in order to love and practice it.

(with permission from "THE MARYFAITHFUL" dated November-December, 1990)

## AYSAH'S LOVE STORY

### Blessed Are The Humble

Poor patient Aysah donkey mistreated from the start  
So many scars were on her back and on her loving heart.  
Not matter what was done to her she'd simply turn away  
Remembering an act of love that she had known one day.  
That's how she was surviving now once more she was for sale,  
Exhausted little Aysah was fastened to a rail.  
Hunger and thirst consumed her. Her tether caused more pain,  
Then someone gave her water and I followed it with grain.  
She turned her head and saw him ,The man who long ago  
Had saved her from a beating, But then he had to go.  
Part of her heart went with him, and Aysah never forgot  
On every road, in every town, His was the face she sought.  
Now here he was beside her, Paying her price was he.  
She heard his name was Joseph, His trade was carpentry.

His pregnant wife called Mary, was beautiful and kind.  
They started on a journey, and Aysah walked behind or  
carried Mary, great with child, Those moments her delight.  
No donkey walked with greater care, Far into the night.  
The rhythm of her tiny hooves, The baby's lullaby, ears  
attuned to every sound, She heard the Virgin sigh.  
The gentle hand of Joseph was there to show the way, And  
now the turn to Bethlehem, She hastened to obey.

**That's why a small gray donkey  
Is part of Christmas, too.  
She was there when Christ was born  
And Life began anew.  
She used her breath to warm Him,  
Her joy was plain to see.  
And when she felt His tiny hand,  
Aysah knew ecstasy.  
The Babe was given many gifts,  
Like frankincense and gold,  
He kept but one, a donkey's heart,  
'Twas His to have and hold.**

### EPILOGUE

Loved by the Holy Family, Aysah lived on for years  
She saw the joy of Simeon, Shared trials, hurts, and fears.  
Safely to Egypt she bore Him, Pursued by evil men,  
And when it was safe to do so, She brought Him back  
again.

**When dying Christ was with her, His love remained we  
see. For the ass He rode in triumph Was Aysah's  
progeny.  
That's why a lovely legend Confirms what many say.  
On Christmas Eve at midnight all donkeys kneel and  
bray.  
For God blessed every one of them, Touched them all  
with glory  
When Aysah served the Son of God—And they recall  
the story.**

(by Ruth Taylor with permission from "THE MARYFAITHFUL" dated January-February, 1989)

## ARISE, O JERUSALEM

Arise, be enlightened, O **Jerusalem**, for your light is  
come...

And the Gentiles shall walk in your light, and the kings in  
the brightness of your rising.

Lift up your eyes round about, and see: all these are  
gathered together, they are come to you.

Your sons shall come from afar, and your daughters shall  
rise up at your side.

Then shall you see, and abound, and your heart shall  
wonder and be enlarged, when the multitude of the sea  
shall be converted to you, the strength of the Gentiles shall  
come to you...

All they from Saba shall come, bringing gold and  
frankincense, and showing forth praise to the Lord.

(with permission from "THE MARYFAITHFUL" dated  
January-February, 1989)

## **THE PILGRIMS of FAITH MARIAN CENTER (PFMC)**

We are not a **store**. We operate like a **church pamphlet rack** where you **make selections** and **offer a donation** based on **value** posted or received. See article on pages 16 and 17 concerning the operations of the **PFMC**.

The **PFMC** is now permanently approved as an **Internal Revenue Service (IRS)** Code Section 501(c)(3) non-profit, tax exempt religious association which can accept tax deductible contributions or donations in relation to its three main organizational functions. One of those is offering books and religious articles for donations like a church pamphlet rack.

Please patronize your local Catholic Book Store as well as the **PFMC**.

### **DONATIONS by CHARGE CARD AVAILABLE**

We accept **DISCOVER/PRIVATE ISSUE, MASTER CARD** and **VISA** for all donations to the **PFMC**. This includes for books and religious articles, pilgrimages, retreats and for **"The PILGRIM"** or the building fund.

This availability does not come without its cost to us. Every charge card use costs us about 3% of the total charged. Since we had to invest heavily in new equipment and must pay fees beyond the per charge cost to us, there will be **3% PROCESSING FEE, non-refundable if credit is necessary**, added to each charge card bill that is processed.

### **ORDER FORM**

With this month's issue of **"The PILGRIM"** is included a **12/98 AUDIO AND VIDEO CASSETTE TAPE, BOOK AND RELIGIOUS ARTICLE ORDER FORM** which can be used to support orders from the **PFMC**.

If you wish to order something from the **PFMC**, simply mark the items you need on either or both forms and mail your order to the **PFMC** with your donation check or correctly complete charge card information and signature.

### **COMPLETE ADDRESS — USE RETURN ADDRESS LABEL or STAMP!!!**

**ALWAYS fully complete any order forms or give us full address with any letter order.** Consider using one of the many mailing labels each of us receives in our mail so that we can see your address clearly printed and often with the ZIP+4 which is supposed to speed the mail delivery.

We appreciate the communication so that we can correct our mailing labels and list. ORDER and SPONSOR **"The PILGRIM"** for your favorite religious or priest.

### **BLESSED OIL**

**Kathleen** has bottles of blessed oil from **Medjugorje** blessed at Holy Mass in **Saint James** and then carried to **Vicka's** house to be present in the room during an apparition. Volunteers transfer the oil to small bottles for you or your prayer group to use as a sacramental. We also

have blessed oil from the Little House of Our Lady in **Loreto, Italy**.

Read the articles in the *November* and *December 1994* issues as well as the **Bible** readings for the **Holy Week Christ Mass** about Blessed Oil and Oil of Gladness.

**Oil from Medjugorje and Our Lady of Loreto is a sacramental and should be handled as such. It is NOT the same as the oils blessed by the Bishop for official church ceremonies or during administration of the sacraments by a priest.**

We request a \$5 donation per small bottle, this covers \$4 for the bottle, packaging and special handling plus \$1 mailing or postage expense.

### **RETREATS and PILGRIMAGES**

The other two areas where the **PFMC** may operate on tax deductible contributions or donations are **RETREATS** and **PILGRIMAGES**. The major **RETREAT** for the **PFMC** occurs in *February* annually and is called a **RETREAT CONFERENCE** because it features a variety of speakers with one or more of them featured to present the main **RETREAT CONFERENCE** theme. Articles on the **1999 RETREAT CONFERENCE** appear on pages 3 and 4, below and on page 24. The **PILGRIMAGE** planning for *1999* and beyond is highlighted on page 4 with a request for input as to the desired of readers regarding specific types of **PILGRIMAGES** to be planned by the **PFMC**.

### **BULLETIN NOTICES**

We need **YOUR HELP**, with your **Parish Bulletin Coordinator**. Would you be so kind as to take the following **BULLETIN NOTICES** to your **Pastor** and / or **Parish Bulletin Coordinator** and ask them to publish these notices for your interest and because you an active parishioner has asked.

**Thank you.**

#### **PFMC 1999 RETREAT CONFERENCE (RC)**

The teaming of **Dorothea DeGrandis Sudol** with her brother, **Father Robert DeGrandis**, will enter the areas of healing through the **PFMC 1999 RETREAT CONFERENCE (RC)**, **FRIDAY thru SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 26, 27 and 28, 1999**. This will be the first weekend in **Lent**. The **PFMC 1999 RC** will again be held at the **Four Points Inn by Sheraton** in **Cherry Hill, NJ**.

The **FEBRUARY 1999 RC** will have an extension for those who can stay over **MONDAY, TUESDAY** and **WEDNESDAY, MARCH 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup>**. **Father Robert DeGrandis, SSJ** will make himself available for an intense and deeper teaching on the Gifts of the Holy Spirit.

Call **Kathleen** or **Dottie** at (609) 768-9228 for an information sheet with more details and a reservation form for the **PFMC 1999 RETREAT CONFERENCE and the THREE DAY EXTENSION**.

## CALENDARS:

In *December*, the Church celebrates the Solemnities of **IMMACULATE CONCEPTION (8)** and **CHRISTMAS (25)**, the Feasts of *Our Lady of Guadalupe (12)*, *Saints Stephen (26)*, *Holy Family (27)*, and *Holy Innocents (28)* and Memorials of *Saints Francis Xavier (3)*, *John of Damascus (4)*, *Ambrose (7)*, *Damasus I (11)*, *John of the Cross (14)*, *Peter Canisius (21)*, *John of Kanty (23)*, *Thomas Becket (29)* and *Pope Sylvester I (31)* and *Blessed Juan Diego (9)*.

In *January*, the Church celebrates the Solemnities of *Mary, Mother of God (1)*, *Epiphany of the Lord (3)(6)*, the Feasts of *Baptism of the Lord (10)* and *The Conversion of Paul (25)*, and Memorials of *Saints Basil the Great (2)*, *Gregory Nazianzen (2)*, *John Neumann (5)*, *Raymond of Penyafort (7)*, *Hilary (13)*, *Fabian (20)*, *Sebastian (20)*, *Agnes (21)*, *Vincent (22)*, *Angela Merici (27)* and *Thomas Aquinas (28)* as well as *Blessed Andre Bessette (6)*. Most Church calendars recognize *Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr's Birthday (16)* (observed) (18).

## AROUND THE PFMC AREA

### CHILDREN'S PRAYER GROUP

*Wednesday, 9 December 1998 at 5:30 PM: Father Glenn Hartman* will lead the children in a Rosary and followed by pizza at the **DiBrino** home in **Moorestown, NJ**. Call (609) 273-5897 for more information.

### PFMC 1999 RETREAT CONFERENCE (RC)

The teaming of **Dorothea DeGrandis Sudol** with her brother, **Father Robert DeGrandis**, will be the highlight of the **PFMC 1999 RC, FRIDAY thru SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 26, 27 and 28, 1999.**

The **FEBRUARY 1999 PFMC RC** will have an extension for those who can stay over **MONDAY, TUESDAY** and

### The PILGRIM

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### **Pilgrims of Faith Marian Center (PFMC)**

**A Religious Association, Inc.** - NON-PROFIT and  
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**Keith and Kathleen Werner,**  
Co-Directors, 129 Deerfield Avenue,  
Atco (Evesham), NJ 08004-2716  
(609) 768-9228 FAX: (609) 768-9428



### **PRIORITY DATED RELIGIOUS MATERIAL**

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### **PLEASE DO NOT THROW THIS AWAY!!**

*If you do not desire to read "The PILGRIM," please give it to your Marian prayer group or return it to sender. If address has changed, please send a change of address card.*

*If there is no time to read it all right now, please put it with other reading material in a place where you can read at least an article per day until the next issue arrives.*

*We operate on divine providence and the kind donations of those who can afford to support us.*

**PRIESTS!** Please note that **HOMILY** ideas have come from priests reading articles in "The PILGRIM!"



**WEDNESDAY, MARCH 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup>.** **Father Robert DeGrandis, SSJ** will make himself available for an intense and deeper teaching on the Healing Gifts of the Holy Spirit.

Please see article on pages 3 and 4 as well as the enclosed information sheet for more details along with a reservation form for the **PFMC 1999 RC**. Call 609-768-9228 for additional information.

Call the **Four Points Inn by Sheraton** at 1-800-257-8262, *Monday thru Friday, 9 AM to 5 PM* to make your ROOM reservations. We'd like to reserve the entire hotel for this **1999 RC** and must do it by the end of *January 1999*. Reserve now, pay when you check-out.

## MARIAN PILGRIMAGE PRESENTATIONS

**Keith and Kathleen** are always willing to schedule presentations to prayer group, **Altar Rosary Society, Legion of Mary** or other parish group meetings. The experiences and continuation of ministry for **Our Lady** in this time of graces and manifestation of Our Lord's Mercy are shared through videotape, witness and/or slide presentations followed by a question and answer session.

There is no charge. Free will offerings are accepted especially for books, tapes and religious articles which are made available at the presentation sites just like they are at the **PFMC** which operates like a church book rack.

## INTERNET

Surf for the **PFMC** presence on the Internet at either <http://geocities.com/Heartlands/Woods/6240> or <http://www.PFMCkmw.org> with both sites still very much under construction.

Thank you for your patients and kind words about our efforts with "The **PILGRIM**" and the Internet.