



The **PILGRIM**

Vol. 11 No. 4 *Pilgrims of Faith Marian Center (PFMC)*

April 2000

Our Lady's MESSAGE of 3/25/2000 via Marija Pavlovic Lunetti and the Franciscans at MEDJUGORJE

Dear Children! Pray and make good use of this time because this is a time of grace. I am with you and I intercede for each of you before God, for your heart to open to God and God's love. Little children, pray without ceasing, until prayer becomes a joy for you. Thank you for having responded to my call.

Father Slavko Barbaric's REFLECTION begins on page 21

A PRAYER

Lord All that you allow to happen to us is to be gift in some way. Often we are tired, saddened, in pain or grieving at the loss of a loved one.

Lord bless all those who suffer in the world and ease the pain through your infinite Mercy. We are so helpless without you. We are such little children always needing Your and Your Mothers guidance.

We thank You Lord, for all you suffered for each one of us. We could hardly begin to understand the pain. And Lord we are sorry for all our sins and offenses against others, against You. AMEN!

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

PHONES

During the move to **Epiphany House** and at night as well as on weekends, the phones (856) 768-9228 and (856) 753-9252 will ring over to new unlisted phone lines at **129 Deerfield Avenue**. This causes some extra rings before a human can answer or an answering machine picks up. Please be patient and wait at least 5 or 6 rings. All FAX messages to (856) 768-9428 go to **Epiphany House**. If you have sent an important FAX, please call as well.

19th ANNIVERSARY PILGRIMAGE to MEDJUGORJE, ROME and ASSISI

The airline is asking for names for the above pilgrimage. Because of the large numbers of people leaving for **Europe** for the Jubilee Year, hotels and airlines are booked solid. We will need to release unnamed airline seats, and rooms.

Please if you are thinking of a pilgrimage this year, and a renewal of your commitment to Our Lady and Our Lord with special Jubilee Blessings look over the following pilgrimages and call us immediately.

"The PILGRIM" for April 2000 is dedicated to **"Our Lady, Queen of Peace."** The **Table of Contents** or **"IN THIS ISSUE . . ."** block is on page 3.

We have 30 seats booked for this pilgrimage to **MEDJUGORJE, Rome and Assisi**. It is exceptionally well priced at \$2499. **Father Michael Culkin** will be our Spiritual Director. **Terry Bright, OCDS (Discalced Carmelite)** will be the Coordinator. It is important for you to know that we have written confirmation of the air seats and the housing. Many other advertised pilgrimages are booking for the Anniversary and the Jubilee, but do not yet have confirmed seats. **Please** if you are looking at another pilgrimage, protect yourself and ask for written confirmation.

This beautiful pilgrimage departs from **Newark, NJ**, on **June 20, 2000**, and returns on **June 30, 2000**. We have confirmed air seats to and from **Croatia via Rome**. We have housing near **Saint James Church** in **MEDJUGORJE** and in a lovely Catholic religious house in **Rome**.

Flying **Alitalia**, you will arrive in **Rome** on the morning of **June 21, 2000**. Later in the day you will fly on **Croatian Air** to **Split, Croatia** and then have a 3 hour motor coach ride to **MEDJUGORJE** where you will be housed in the homes of the villagers. You will attend **English** and **Croatian** Holy Masses and fully participate in the events of the **19th Anniversary** since the first apparition. An **English** speaking guide will take you to **Apparition (Podbrdo) Hill, Cross Mountain (Krizevac)**, to visit the visionaries and to help provide you with a full and rich time in **MEDJUGORJE**.

On **June 26th** you will depart from **Split** on **Croatian Air** to **Rome** where you will be housed at a Catholic Religious House called **"Mondo Migliore"**. You will have a fully escorted 4 days in **Rome** and 1 day in **Assisi**. There is a ½ day guided tour of the **Vatican Museum including** entrance fee; a Papal Audience (subject to his holiness availability); ½ day tour of **Christian Rome** with an opportunity for the Jubilee Blessing by passing through the special doors of the four major Basilicas; **and** a visit to the Catacombs **including** the entrance fee.

Included in the \$2499 requested donation is round trip air from Newark to Split via Rome and return, taxes, MEDJUGORJE housing for 5 nights and 4 nights Religious House in Rome, full day escorted excursion to Assisi, English speaking tour escort in MEDJUGORJE and Rome, motor coach transfers to and from the airport, all breakfasts and suppers throughout.

A deposit of \$350 is required now (\$250 is non refundable). Please complete the registration coupon at the bottom of page 13. Mail your coupon with deposit to Pilgrims of Faith Marian Center (PFMC), 61 Cooper Road, Voorhees, NJ 08043-4693 Call Terry Bright for information at 717-569-6330 or Kathleen at 856-768-9228.

PILGRIMAGE to MEDJUGORJE for YOUTH MONTH then ROME and PADRE PIO

Michael McColgan will be leading a group to MEDJUGORJE departing Newark on August 15th 2000.

Pilgrims will be in MEDJUGORJE until August 20th 2000.

Returning to Italy pilgrims will go directly for 2 nights to San Giovanni Rotondo on the Gargano where Blessed Padre Pio is buried and then on to Rome for 4 nights.

This pilgrimage includes round trip air fare from Newark to Split, Croatia and return August 26th 2000 via Rome with Holy Mass and religious program daily. Tour of the major basilicas in Rome, Vatican and Sistine Chapel, with an opportunity to receive the Jubilee Blessing by passing through 4 Holy Doors. Transfers under escort at all times with guides to all major sites, all breakfasts and suppers, family homes in MEDJUGORJE. Listen to the visionaries and attend all activities in this Sanctuary. Package price is \$2655 including all taxes. Travel insurance is available and highly encouraged. We will give you all the assistance necessary. Tips and beverages not included. Please complete the registration coupon at the bottom of page 14. Mail your coupon with deposit to PFMC. Call Kathleen or Dotty at 856-768-9228.

MEDJUGORJE, ROME for the CANONIZATION of CATHERINE DREXEL, and ASSISI during the JUBILEE PAPAL VISIT

Following a 4 day visit in MEDJUGORJE, pilgrims will return to Rome to tour the major sites and the 4 Holy Doors. Then pilgrims will have seats for the Cannonization of Blessed Catherine Drexel on October 1,

2000 and then visit Assisi for 4 days during the Papal visit there. This pilgrimage includes round trip air from Newark departing September 24, 2000 to Split, Croatia and return October 6, 2000 via Rome, all transfers, housing and hotel, breakfasts and suppers, tour of Rome and MEDJUGORJE, see the visionaries, private homes or the residents in MEDJUGORJE with English speaking guide. Insurance encouraged and available. Escort and guides throughout. Package price is \$2550 including all taxes tips and beverages and laundry not included. Spiritual Director is Father Joy Chacko of Holy Name Parish in Delran, NJ assisted by Pat Kinneman. Please complete the registration coupon at the bottom of page 15. Mail your coupon with deposit to PFMC. Call Kathleen or Dotty at 856-768-9228.

BIBLE STUDY at the NEW PFMC

We started hosting a Bible Study Group in the Great Room of the PFMC on Monday, March 27th. The classes will run every 2nd and 4th Monday of the month and will start at 7:30 PM. Classes last for approximately 1 1/2 hour and are hosted by Peter J. Dawson.

All priests and nuns are welcome to attend. There is no fee for this program, but donations will be accepted for electricity, heating and maintenance of the new building.

We are honored that Mr. Dawson has approached us to share his scripture study at Epiphany House of the PFMC. He is a lector and Bible study moderator in his parish, Saint Gregory in Magnolia, NJ. He has written a manual on an aspect of Bible study called "typology", which focuses in on the symbols in the Bible. It is a core principle to good Bible study. He has written for Catholic Answer magazine as well as Biblical Archaeology Review.

He has long been a member of an amateur archaeology association known as The Epigraphic Society, a world-wide organization dedicated to the study of ancient inscriptions and ruins comprising evidence of contacts across the oceans in ancient times.

Peter goes out of his way in his Bible study ministry to confirm the legitimacy of the Roman Catholic hierarchy. The teachings will be interactive and very objective. He would like to share with you teachings that will bring the Bible and the Church alive.

PETITIONS and SUPPORT for the PFMC

All slips received with intentions on them are placed in a basket in our prayer room where they are prayed for daily. THEY ARE THEN TAKEN TO THE

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.

SHRINES WITH US WHEN WE GO ON PILGRIMAGE. This year they will be taken to Rome and left for our Holy Father to pray for. So you are remembered in your needs by the many prayers of all who volunteer at the **PFMC** as well as those who pilgrimage with us

The **PFMC** is a **LAY CATHOLIC MINISTRY** that is **totally** dependent upon financial donations.

Every person working in the **PFMC** is a **volunteer** for Our Lady's work of converting souls to her Son, Jesus.

We hate to beg, but the work for so many souls is important. A **monthly** effort to support issues of "**The PILGRIM**," the completion of the addition to **Epiphany House** for the headquarters of the **PFMC** and our work in the **PFMC** is greatly appreciated.

Enclosed is a donation slip and envelope for you to use. We operate the **PFMC** and all of our programs **on donation only**. We ask you to remember us in a special way as you pay your bills. Please place the slip and envelope with your bills or in your checkbook..

You are the hands of Jesus and Our Lady. Your help is important. We want to thank all of you who have been faithfully supporting the **PFMC**. Your donations have meant that we have been able to touch so many people through "**The PILGRIM**," through retreats and conferences. We are grateful for every donation that helps us cover the printing and mailing of "**The PILGRIM**," the heat, water, insurance, and setting up of programs. We are excited with how Our Lady is guiding us for the year of **2000**. **We cannot do it without you.**

WE DO NEED VOLUNTEERS - If you are interested in doing some typing, light bookkeeping, answering phones, working with books, working on conferences and retreats or "**The PILGRIM**," please call us at 856-768-9228 and give us your phone number and name. **We need regular help and help once a month – whatever you can give.**

Thank you and God bless you,

Kathleen and Staff

LANDSCAPE / GARDEN WORKERS NEEDED

We have a beautiful donated statue of **Our Lady of Lourdes** waiting to be situated in a Marian Grotto we plan to erect. If you are a helper of **Saint Francis**, and could help us plan, garden and landscape the **PFMC Epiphany House** yard for **Our Lady**, she would be quite happy and so would we. We need to complete the heavy equipment work and reset the major pieces of landscaping before laying the irrigation pipes.

AIRLINE DEADLINES for PILGRIMAGES

PLEASE DO NOT WAIT TO MAKE UP YOUR MIND ON A PILGRIMAGE. If you want to go, send in your registration coupon with deposit at least 60 days before the

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pilgrimage departs.

All of the airlines have become **very strict** with their deadlines for names when holding group accommodations. The requirement of 60 days notice for holding a seat with a name is absolutely required. If we do not have sufficient registrations and deposits we must make the financial commitment or our seat availability is adjusted. It is at that time that we are often left with not enough seats or having to cancel. If there is an emergency, everything will be done to obtain as much of a refund as possible. Don't miss a pilgrimage opportunity just because you are unsure. Call us and send in your reservation coupon with deposit as soon as possible.

PURGATORY NOW

The patient man has a wholesome purgatory in this world, who, enduring the wrong of another, is more concerned with the sin committed than with the injury done to him. He will pray willingly for his enemies and from his heart forgive those who offend him; he is quick to ask others for forgiveness; he is more easily moved to compassion than to anger; and putting restraint upon himself, he resists sin and brings his body under subjection.

It is better to get rid of sin now, doing away with your bad habits, than to wait to have them purged hereafter. We truly deceive ourselves by our unrestrained self-love.

(“Imitation of Christ” from, “LAY WITNESS” November, 1997, Vol. 18, No. 9, with permission)

THE CRUCIFIX-THE BOOK OF LIFE

Saint Thomas said he learned more from the Crucifix than from all the books of theology he ever read. Small wonder!

If you would like to know God, look at the Crucifix!

If you would like to love God, look at the Crucifix!

If you want to serve God, look at the Crucifix!

If you hope for eternal happiness, look at the Crucifix!

If you wonder what you are worth, look at the Crucifix!

If you wonder how much God loves you, look at the Crucifix!

If you wonder how much He wants you in Heaven, look at the Crucifix!

If you wonder how He tries to prevent your (falling into) the yawning jaws of Hell, look at the Crucifix!

If you wonder how much He will help you to save your immortal soul, look at the Crucifix!

If you wonder how much you should forgive others, look at the Crucifix!

If you wonder how much you should do for the salvation of souls, look at the Crucifix!

If you wonder how much your Faith demands of you in humility, poverty, charity, meekness, and every virtue, look at the Crucifix!

If you want to know what unselfishness and generosity are, look at the Crucifix!

If you wonder how far your own unselfishness should go to bring others to Christ, look at the Crucifix!

If you want to understand the need for self-denial and mortification, look at the Crucifix!

If you wish to live well, look at the Crucifix!

If you wish to die well, look at the Crucifix!

(“THE MARYFAITHFUL”, Catholic Quote, Valparaiso, NE, Sept./Oct. 1995)

TO BE PERFECTED

“Be perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect “ (Mt. 5:48).

There is the adage “practice makes perfect.” We know through experience that to achieve perfection we must work at it. A child may spend countless hours at a piano, year after year, to become an accomplished pianist. A young boy may have a dream to be a professional basketball player, and will shoot countless baskets in the heat of summer and cold of winter to achieve his dream.

Similarly, many saints devoted their lives to God, in an

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imitation of Christ and for love of Him, to approach spiritual perfection by the grace of God.

Although we can never be perfect, if we imitate Christ, seek to do God’s will, follow His moral law, and love Him with all our being, we can gain a place in the eternal perfection of heaven. and we will more perfectly come to know, love, and serve God in this life in the process.

We become holy by working towards holiness (cf. **Lev. 19:2; 1 Jn. 2:29, 3:7**). We can do the things we know please God, and by constant holy practices we can become more Christlike. But such holy practices cannot become just a matter of habit or empty show. They should not be done for worldly motives, or even for heavenly rewards as though we work our way to heaven. **“Beware of practicing your piety before men in order to be seen by them; for then you will have no reward from your Father who is in heaven.” (Mt. 6:1).**

A man spent some time with **Mother Teresa** and observed her (and her **Missionaries of Charity**) caring for the most wretched human beings. The man told her, “Sister, I would not do that for a million dollars.” **Mother Teresa** answered, “And neither would I,” Not for a million dollars, nor for any reward, but for the love of God. **Mother Teresa** saw goodness in every person she served. Whether rich or poor, handsome or homely, black or white, intelligent or simple, she was Jesus. This holy woman also said that God will not ask if we were successful in life, but only that we tried to do His will.

We’re sometimes tempted to tell ourselves that nothing more can be done about a fault, or think that a person living in sin will not listen to us, or grow weary fighting injustice. For example, we might say that we will just pray for an end to abortion, but we don’t really need to picket at an abortion center or to counsel someone who says he is pro-choice or to write letters to the newspaper or to government officials. We might even tend to look at those who do these things as radicals or even “divisive.” Yet, our faith must always be expressed in charitable--and sometimes bold--action.

I believe the cause of the inclination to avoid putting faith in practice is often stated guidance, “Your example (alone) will sow others to Christ.” Indeed, the example of holy men and women is certainly a powerful witness. Yet, to resort to a vague sense of example can be an excuse for not stepping out in faith. What is often stated as “not being my business” or “not being my place”, is often an avoidance of confrontation or inconvenience. Many of us do not want to “take up or cross” and follow Our Lord.

Faith must be put into practice. **“[I]f any one has the world’s goods and sees his brother in need, yet closes his heart against him, how does God’s love abide in him? Little children, let**

us not love in word or speech but in deed and in truth” (1 Jn. 3:17-18; cf. Jas. 2:4-17, 24-26).

There are priests who can preach as well as **Archbishop Fulton Sheen**. However, unless words are put into practice they have fallen on deaf ears. There are parishes that seem to buzz with all types of busy-ness, but within their communities the citizens still defend abortion, overlook sexual promiscuity and contraception, and allow the decrease of dissent from God’s moral law and His one, true Church to progress. To preach that abortions is evil is needed, but associated works are also required. That’s why **Saint Augustine** advised us to pray as if everything depended on God, and work as if all depends on us.

All of God’s lowlier creatures glorify Him just by their existence. But human beings, who are made in God’s image, glorify God by *doing* His will and becoming Christlike. But the more a person distances himself from the imitation of Christ, the more difficult it becomes to find Him, and the more difficult it becomes to pray and do holy works. Devout and holy practices seem ridiculous to a person who does not look to Christ and put God first in his life.

Still another temptation is to let constant activity consume one’s life, even if it’s directed towards good. To begin to neglect prayer and spiritual development because much work is needed—to save unborn children, help the poor, or whatever charitable act is being pursued—is to lose sight of why we do good. Liberal theology and liberalism are examples of misdirected efforts to achieve perfection on earth as an end in itself (cf. **Mt. 13:22**). These efforts neglect the truth that heavenly bliss will only be achieved in eternity and through Christ.

We cannot become too busy to pray, to attend Holy Mass and spend time before the blessed Sacrament, to receive grace through Penance, to study and defend the faith, and to proclaim the message of Christ in various ways. If these are forgotten, religion is reduced to social activism and eventually to practice atheism.

Saint Alphonsus Liguori said that those who pray much have much chance to get to heaven, those who pray little have little chance; and those who do not pray have no chance to get to heaven. Like the person who finds it easy to exercise because he has developed a routine and looks forward to it, we must pray and form a pattern of prayer if we wish to progress in the spiritual life. However, if we become accustomed to inactivity and laziness by neglecting prayer, eventually even the idea of prayer becomes lost. As prayer is lost so is contact with God—along with His moral law, His truth, and faith.

We will come to know God through prayer. How can we know and love God if we do not spend time with Him? How can a husband and wife know and love each other if they do not spend time together? How can we know God’s

will if we do not look to Him? And if we do not know, love, and serve God in this life, how can we reach the perfect life to come? At death and judgment, how can we possibly approach God and state our desire to be in His presence in heaven for eternity, if we have not tried to spend time with Him on earth?

We must pray. We must ask Our Lord as well as Mary and the saints to help us, and we must imitate them. More than all other creatures, the saints most closely followed Jesus’ command, “Be perfect.” The Immaculate Virgin is God’s most perfect creature, having never sinned and being “full of grace.” Next to her divine Son she is the best example of Christian perfection.

Jesus Himself gave mankind an example of prayer. When rising Lazarus, Jesus offered a prayer of thanksgiving (**Jn. 11:41**). Before His passion and death, Jesus prayed for His disciples (**Jn. 17**), and then in the Garden He prayed for strength (**Mt. 26:36-44**). At the beginning of His public life, He prayed in the desert (**Mt. 4**).

Jesus wants us to know the power of prayer (**Mt. 7:7**), to have confidence in prayer (**Mt. 17:19-21, Mk. 9:14-29**), to be persistent in prayer (**Lk. 11:5-8**), to pray alone (**Mt. 6:6; Lk. 5:16; 6:12, 14:23**), to pray with others (**Mt. 18:19-20**), and to pray as He taught us (**Mt. 6:9**). At the Last Supper, He offered the greatest prayer—the Holy Eucharist which would be offered for all time in all places (cf. **Mal. 1:1**).

How do we become perfected and holy? How do we keep God’s commandments? By the grace of God—through the sacraments, good works, faith in God, and prayer. Grace opens eyes; it helps us see the light of Christ and to accept and do His will.

Saint Peter said, “[W]e have come to believe” (**Jn. 6:60**). At Baptism we receive the gift of faith, but we must

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continually develop this virtue to increase our faith in Christ. We know that even those who are baptized can lose their faith.

“Come, then, let us bow down and worship, bending the knee before the Lord, our maker. For He is our god and we are His people, the flock that He shepherds.”

“O that today you would hearken to His voice! Harden not your hearts” (Ps. 95:6-8)

(By John Schauster who writes from Saint Jacob, IL, “LAY WITNESS” November, 1997, Vol. 18, No. 9, with permission)

BLESS OUR PRIESTS

***Eternal Father, bless our priests,
For through them blessings come to all.
Their hands bring us Thy loving gifts.
Their words Thy holy laws recall.***

***With Mary (and) Joseph may they walk
Help them each day be like Thy Son,
So we may learn to walk His way,
And reach our goal when life is done.***

***Our goal is heaven, happy home
where we will be one family,
To praise and thank forevermore
Our God of love, one Trinity.***

Amen.

Pray often for priests. Ask Mary to guard them as sons. Ask Joseph guide them in identifying with Jesus, to provide them with a true model and manhood, leading them to His Sacred Heart. For unity in the family, in the Church, among nations, say daily; ***“That all may be one, Saint Joseph, Our protector, pray for us.”***

(from “THE MARYFAITHFUL” May-June, 1988, Vol. XX, No. 3, with permission)

COPING with LOUSY HOMILIES

What don't Catholics know about the faith today? What can be done about it? The discussion of these questions has been going on for some time now, and thanks to the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* and efforts to implement it, answers many eventually be forthcoming. What follows is meant to be a contribution to that effort.

Recently, a Catholic lawyer told me this story.

A young man--a Catholic--came to work at his firm as an intern, and the two of them became friendly. In conversation one day, the young man happened to mention that he hadn't been to Confession since he was confirmed.

“Why not?” the lawyer inquired gently.

The young man was genuinely surprised. “You mean to say--I should?”

It turns out that literally no one ever had told him that Catholics, once confirmed, ought to continue receiving the sacrament of Penance. He'd gotten the impression that Confirmation marked the end of *that*. Nobody suggested it didn't.

When the lawyer got that straightened out, the young man, being a well-disposed individual, promptly went to Confession. Not only that--a short time later, he took several twenty-something Catholic friends with him to a communal Penance service.

“And I bet none of *them* had been to Confession for ten years either,” the lawyer said, concluding his tale.

Stories like this one--they're plentiful these days--are anecdotal evidence that the much-deplored religious illiteracy of young American Catholics is all too real. For that sorry circumstance there is more than enough blame to go around--Catholic schools, religious education programs, the writers and publishers of many catechetical texts, and of course neglectful parents.

But another culprit also must shoulder its share of responsibility for what's happened: I mean the homily. If homilies had been helping to transmit the faith in the last thirty years, the failures of schools, religious education, and the rest might not have been so harmful. As it is, homilies have been part of the problem.

Lately it has dawned on me that many homilies are not about anything in particular. They have no content. Consider this scrap of dialogue, which I venture to say is frequently exchanged between contemporary Catholics.

“What was the sermon about today?”

“Love.”

(General laughter.)

To be sure, love is the preeminent Christian virtue and the central theme of Christian life. But love, in order to be meaningful, must have some content--it must be expressed in some way that either is or is not appropriate. And content is precisely what is absent from many homilies about love.

As it also is lacking, heaven knows, from sermons that come across as stream-of-consciousness ramblings. What are such homilies about? Who could possibly tell?

The priests who preach homilies without content are by no means unintelligent men. So what accounts for their behavior? I found a partial explanation a while back in a newspaper story about, of all things, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). The item in the *Washington Post* concerned intra-denominational resistance to a new Presbyterian policy that excluded homosexuals and unmarried heterosexuals from ordained leadership positions if they do not lead chaste lives.

The opposition of some Presbyterians to this policy is a problem Presbyterians must solve for themselves (but its existence speaks volumes about the current state of mainline Protestantism). What caught my attention in

particular, though, was this quote by a dissenting pastor of a church on Washington, D.C.:

It's tough enough (for) a downtown urban church to attract people, in particular young adults... but this action has done damage to the name of Presbyterian to the point where our process of evangelization and outreach has been impeded.

This concern for "evangelization and outreach" is commendable. But the underlying message is simply this: Where pastoral considerations seems to dictate sacrificing doctrine--sacrifice it.

This attitude hardly is confined to the Presbyterian church. Many Catholic homilists appear to share it. If not, why don't they preach about urgent moral problems like abortions, contraception, divorce, and homosexuality? Why are there so few affirmations of Papal authority from Catholic pulpits? Why so many content-less homilies on "love"?

Three reasons, by no means mutually exclusive, occur to me:

Many homilists do not agree with the Church's teaching on such substantive matters, so they avoid them.

They are afraid of offending listeners and doing pastoral harm.

They are afraid of offending listeners and suffering reprisals in the collection basket.

Where the first reason is operative, there is not a great deal to be done--at least, not directly. Prayer for these disaffected members of the clergy might help, but it is difficult to say what else--if anything--will. It's probably just as well that they steer clear of serious subject matter in their sermons and stick to the safe, and bland, and the vague.

Where reasons two and three--pastoral harm and money--are operative, it's another story. A woman recently shared with me this incident that occurred in her suburban parish.

A visiting priest--a Jesuit--preached a rousing homily in defense of Catholic moral doctrine, including a strong affirmation of the teaching on birth control as it is set forth in *Humane Vitae*.

"What happened?" I asked.

"The congregation applauded", she said. And she added reflectively, "I think people are starved for the teaching of the Church."

I am not so naive as to imagine that applause will greet every forthright, doctrinally orthodox homily. In some cases the response may be dismay, even anger. That's the point we have reached.

I also concede that arguments against this kind of substantive preaching carry some weight. These days, any mixed Catholic congregation is likely to include people--married and unmarried--who are contracepting, people who've known the pain of divorce, people whose family

members or friends have had abortions, people whose children or colleagues are openly gay. In such circumstances, the risk of giving offense is real.

But there are much greater risks in keeping silent. Think of the young man who hadn't been to Confession since he was Confirmed--no one told him he ought to go. He was lucky: Somebody finally straightened him out. Others may not be so fortunate.

If Catholics never hear from the pulpit that abortions, homosexual acts, contraception, and divorce are wrong--how are they supposed to know, considering that the secular culture keeps telling them the opposite? If the need for sacramental Confession, the truth of the Real Presence, the authority of the Pope, and other doctrines are not preached--how will Catholics learn about them? From **Oprah**? **Dan Rather**? **Disney**? The content of the faith is compelling, but it is not self-communicating.

Failure to preach about such matters--charitably and with sensitivity, but also clearly and without equivocation--does far more pastoral damage than preaching about them ever could do. This is much too high a price to pay, even to keep collections up.

But it would be misleading to end on a negative note. There are, after all, some real signs of hope--as well as some positive, constructive things that can be done about the situation.

One sign of hope, as I noted at the start, is the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*. It provides the necessary basis for a catechetical revival and, here and there at least, such a revival may already be getting underway. There is much encouragement in the fact that the committee of the **National Conference of Catholic Bishops** charged with implementation of the *Catechism* in the **United States** appears to be working hard to bring this about.

Another hopeful sign is the goodly number of priests, young and old, who have been preaching solid, orthodox homilies full of good doctrine right along and who go on doing so. If there were such a thing as an "In Season and Out of Season Award" in this life, these men would richly deserve it.

Nor does all the responsibility rest with priests. True, lay people do not preach homilies, But well-formed, well-motivated laity educated in the faith can and should give daily witness in word and deed--as, for example, my attorney friend did. This is the right and the duty of the laity.

And finally each and every Catholic can pray--for homilists, catechists, and the overdue renewal of religious education that the Church so urgently needs. Whether they know it or not, many Catholics today really are starved for Catholic doctrine. Let us all pray for preaching and teaching that satisfy this hunger in their--our--hearts.

(By Russell Shaw from "LAY WITNESS" November, 1997, Vol. 18, No. 9, with permission)

IN STEP WITH THE CHURCH: THE *SISTERS MINOR OF MARY IMMACULATE (S.M.M.I.)*

“Out of the mouths of infants and nurslings you have brought forth praise” (Mt. 21:16).

Sister Therese Marie Kovacs, S.M.M.I., had gone to the local grocery store to replenish her congregation’s food supply. But that day her primary mission as a consecrated religious was to bear witness to a little Protestant girl.

“Look, Mommy! there goes the Church!” exclaimed the little girl, as **Sister Therese Marie** passed by in her order’s distinctive light blue habit, with miraculous medal, rosary, and white **Franciscan** cord. **Sister Therese Marie**, a member of the **Sisters Minor of Mary Immaculate (S.M.M.I.)**, took the opportunity to visit with the girl and her mother and give them a miraculous medal.

“Sister, I don’t know where she got that idea,” the surprised mother said. “We’re not even Catholics.”

Like **Saint Maximilian Kolbe**, a **Franciscan** priest who envisioned and inspired their founding, the **Sisters Minor of Mary Immaculate** strive to proclaim their Catholic Faith at all times, and their religious dress plays a crucial part.

“The habit is a visible witness for the world,” says **Sister Therese Marie**, who oversees the congregation’s recruitment and formation of vocations in the **United States**. “It tells the person that you are totally committed to Christ and the church. Even if they’re not Christian, they know you’re connected to Christ and the Church.”

FULFILLING KOLBE’S PRAYER

Mother Marie Elisabetta Patrizi, S.M.M.I. founded the **Sisters Minor** in 1983 in the **Diocese of Rome**, inspired by a man known of this total commitment to Christ, His Blessed Mother, and His Church--**Saint Maximilian Kolbe**--a man whom **Pope John Paul II** has called “the patron saint of our difficult century.”

In 1917, then-Father **Kolbe** founded the **Militia of the Immaculata (MI)**, a global movement open to all Catholics that works for the evangelization and sanctification of all peoples through the mediation of Mary.

In his writings, the **Polish** saint martyred by the Nazis envisioned a religious institute for women like the **Sisters Minor**, which would be affiliated with and further the work of the **MI**.

As **Father Kolbe** had hoped, the **Sisters Minor** begun by **Mother Maria Elisabetta** are totally consecrated to God through the **Immaculata**. their desire is to serve as Mary’s instruments to build the kingdom of God, sanctifying the world by bringing people closer to Jesus through a consecrated relationship with His Blessed Mother.

“Holiness is perfect conformity to the will of God: Every day, everything,” says **Sister Therese Marie**. “To attain heaven and carry on the work of the merciful Christ, we need to be following the perfect discipleship of our Blessed Mother. We have to be instruments in her hands.”

“If you want to follow and serve God and dedicate your whole existence to Jesus, look at Mary,” says **Mother Patrizi**, echoing the words of **Saint Francis of Assisi**.

Then a laywoman, **Patrizi** attended **Kolbe’s** canonization in 1982 and asked **Father James McCurry, O.F.M Conv.**, a prominent Mariologist and promoter of **Kolbe’s** spirituality, to pray for an unspecified special intention.

Two years later, after celebrating Mass for a group of pilgrims in **Krakow, Poland**, **Father McCurry** discovered the special intention for which he had been praying daily.

“In the sacristy, I heard someone in **English** calling out my name, a women’s voice,” says **Father McCurry**, who has done Marian programs for the **Eternal Word Television Network (EWTN)** and is the creator of the **Kolbe** archives at **Saint Hyacinth College and Seminary** in **Granby, Massachusetts**. “Lo and behold, it was **Mother Marie Elisabetta**, now dressed as a sister, not as a laywoman. Say said, “This is the special intention you’ve been praying for.”

That intention has borne great fruit. The **Sisters Minor** have become an official congregation with almost 70 members in *five* countries, including the **Philippines, Poland, Italy, and Turkey**, where the sisters oversee the place in **Ephesus** believed to be the blessed Mother’s home, which draw many pilgrims and tourists. The **Sisters Minor** have an active contemplative life, combining six hours of daily prayer--including daily Eucharist adoration--with apostolic work that includes teaching catechism classes, giving retreats, advancing the faith through the media, and visiting the sick.

Stamford, Connecticut is the home of the **American** headquarters of the **Sisters Minor**, and the congregation also has houses in **Massachusetts, North Dakota, and New Jersey**.

“We feel it’s very important for us to be in America,” said **Mother Patrizi**. “We feel that the values of prayer, the value of the way of religious life, the value of Catholicism are needed.”

“God is pleased, as is Mary, and Saint Maximilian is proud to call them his daughters,” says **Father McCurry**, who celebrated the congregation’s first US Mass upon their **North American** foundation in 1989. “Their growth is no accident. It’s an act of divine providence”.

TOTAL CONSECRATION to JESUS through MARY
Jesus’ gift to the world was His consecrated Sonship to the Father, says **Father McCurry**, and “through Him, with

Him, and in Him” He calls all to be consecrated sons and daughters of His Father (cf. **2 Pet. 1:4; Rom. 8:14-17**). Mary became our spiritual mother on Calvary, and since then she has had the task of uniting her earthly children with her firstborn Child. Marian consecration, as promoted by *Saint Maximilian*, enables the faithful to live their baptismal vows by giving themselves to Jesus through Mary.

“The goal of the new evangelization (of **Pope John Paul II**) is simply consecration,” says **Father McCurry**, who has served as the national director of the MI. “That we have to be consecrated to Mary, and through her to Jesus, and through Him to the Father. There is no new congregation in the Church today that better testifies to this mystery of consecration than the **Sisters Minor** of Mary Immaculate.”

The blessed Mother played a crucial role **Mother Maria Elisabetta**’s own vocation. Her parents separated when she was six, a tragedy that provoked young **Patrizi** to consecrate herself totally to Mary, asking her “to be my mother.” Her lifelong suffering from auto-immune disease, in which excessive amounts of antibodies wage war on her own body, has also drawn **Mother Maria Elisabetta** closer to Mary’s Son.

“We do not go out of our way and choose suffering,” says **Mother Maria Elisabetta**, “but when God sends it or allows it, we want to read the message and we choose it” for the benefit of souls. “The world thinks (suffering) is a hatred on the part of God,” says Mother. “Instead, it’s the complete opposite. He is choosing you to be a close partner in the most important work: the salvific work of His Son.”

ANSWERING the CALL to HOLINESS

In 1963, **Mother Maria Elisabetta** said that God was calling her to become a woman religious, but she worked as a laywoman until the early 1980’s, working at The Center for the Study of the Holy Shroud in Rome and doing translation work for the Missionary Sister of Charity. During that time, **Mother Teresa** looked deeply into **Patrizi**’s eyes and asked her to join her religious order.

While complimenting **Mother Teresa** and her congregation’s accomplishments, **Patrizi** explained that her vocation was not in serving “the poorest of the poor” but in evangelizing to prevent that condition.

“If we helped people find the truth, which for me in Jesus Christ, and live that way, your problem would be greatly solved,” **Patrizi** told **Mother Teresa**, reflecting *Kolbe*’s concern for fighting error in the church and world.

The congregation’s “preventive” work includes its rapidly growing “Family of Mary Immaculate,” a movement which has grown from two to 30 families in its first year. a good number of fervent young families in their 20’s and 30’s have joined the movement and, like the *Sisters Minor*, they

lived out total consecration to Jesus through Mary.

“They have a great hunger for--real thirst--for truth, solidity, and stable teaching and fellowship,” says **Sister Therese Marie**, “and they’re happy that they can come to a group like our.”

Such fidelity to Christ, His Mother, and His Church has and continues to attract many women to the *Sisters Minor*, who hope to expand their apostolic efforts in the third millennium.

“To me, the Holy Father is Christ on earth,” said **Sister Marie Dolores Ballotta**, a **New Jersey** native, explaining why she joined the *Sisters Minor*. “In giving my life of God, I wanted to be in a community that was going to have God speaking to me. And if you don’t have the Holy Father, you don’t have the Church.”

(By **Thomas J. Nash** from “LAY WITNESS” October, 1997, Vol. 18, No. 8, with permission)

KATHLEEN HOWARD – FINAL VOWS in S.M.M.I on 4/24/2000 at Saint Mary Church, Bordentown, NJ.

Kathleen Howard, daughter of **Bill** and **Linda Howard**, and pilgrim with the *Pilgrims of Faith Marian Center (PFMC)* to **MEDJUGORJE** will take her final vows in the *Sisters Minor of Mary Immaculate (S.M.M.I)* on *Monday, 4/24/2000, at 10 AM, in Saint Mary Church, Bordentown, NJ*. This is an honor for her to be able to come to her home parish for these vows. It allows her father, **Bill**, who has been confined to a wheel chair since a devastating automobile crash from the rear which left him a paraplegic.

We have known **Bill** and **Linda** and the children since their pilgrimages to **MEDJUGORJE**. We join them in their Joy and Happiness and prayers for **Kathleen**.

(Editor and Publisher)

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.

There is no “subscription” fee but we do ask for free will donations to support “**The PILGRIM**.”

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.

FEBRUARY CONFERENCE - A TIME OF CONVERSION

The *February RETREAT CONFERENCE* was a tremendous success. Many hearts were deeply converted. According to several of the 19 attending priests, it was "one of the most powerful retreats the ***Pilgrims of Faith Marian Center (PFMC)*** has held."

Numerous Confessions were heard. Priests were available far into the night and began again in the mornings. We deeply thank the many priests who came and helped.

We have many letters and notes coming in and will share them with you further on in this newsletter.

We appreciate hearing from any of our readers who would like to share their experiences at the retreats or the ***PFMC***.

A THANK YOU

I would like to thank every one of the **RETREAT CONFERENCE** attendees who were praying so hard for me. I was diagnosed after a traumatic injury to the covering of the sciatic nerve on *February 14th*. After the fall, the pain developed over a three day period, and got to a point that by **RETREAT CONFERENCE** time I was in agony. It has left me with limited movement of my left leg as well as some still isolated pain in my leg and back. I pray God never allows anyone to ever have this kind of pain or to go through this kind of helplessness!

After three operating room visits for spinal injections and now lots of physical therapy as well as possibly one more spinal injections in the next three years of healing, I am on the mend. I need your continued prayers of healing. I, in turn, have been offering all my pain for your intentions and needs as well as any special cries for healing.

(Kathleen)

GOD the HEALER

God heals the unbeliever because of His great Mercy. He heals the believers because of His covenant with them.

THE GRAND OPENING A BEAUTIFUL GIFT TO OUR MOTHER MARY

On the *25th of March*, the new building attached to **Epiphany House** was blessed and consecrated to the Sacred Heart of Jesus and the Immaculate Heart of Mary. The ceremony included Holy Mass and blessing by **Father Jim Sauchelli**. The grounds were thoroughly blessed from one corner to the other. **Father Hartman** gave a beautiful sermon on the Evangelical work of lay people in the Church. The **Philippine Community of Saint Peter Celestine Parish** in **Cherry Hill** led in music and song, along with the total consecration recited by all.

About 85 attended, and there was celebration following,

along with and tours of the entire complex. Over the next month more desks, computers etc. will be moved in, and we hope to be fully working as soon as phone lines and computer lines are in place.

We are very much in need of volunteers to staff the facility and help in the office. If you can answer a telephone, or wrap a book, or help with or lead a prayer group, please call **Kathleen**. The Youth Group is seeking assistants, and we are looking for a part time accountant to help out. We also need help monthly with the monthly periodical "***The PILGRIM***." Please call **Kathleen** - even if you have just a few hours a week or month.

Keith and **Kathleen** personally wish to thank the staff that helped with the **RETREAT CONFERENCE**, and especially those who helped to clean, scrub and prepare the new addition to **Epiphany House** for the Open House.

The feelings of the entire volunteer staff go far beyond gratitude and great love. It was the family of Church as one working together. There was a lot of JOY among everyone who helped, and that conveyed to those who attended. Thank you all again and again.

YOUR FINANCIAL HELP

Because the ***Pilgrims of Faith Marian Center (PFMC)*** is non profit, we depend upon your monthly donations to help to pay the bills, such as electricity, phone, heat etc.

We are all volunteers, and none of us receive a salary.

All our work is done in consecration to ***Our Lady, Queen of Peace***, and as her children, we just give where she needs and guides us.

Please, in these monthly periodicals there is an envelope for your donation. Also there is a slip which we ask you to return with updates on addresses and your personal intentions, which are kept and prayed for daily. Then, when a pilgrimage comes, they are packaged up and taken with us and after being prayed for during each mass they are left at a holy place. **Kathleen** tries to leave the envelope with the Holy Father whenever she goes to **Rome**.

Thank you greatly for remembering to send us a little something monthly.

A VOLUNTEER DIES

We wish to lift up the soul of **Ron Keck** who died *March 30th*. **Ron** has volunteered here for the last 3 years. He volunteered right up to the Open House preparations.

Ron had heart bypass surgery and the **PFMC** volunteers gave him lots of love, and a chance to do a little extra for **Our Lady**. He loved to come to the **PFMC**, and we loved having him. He always had a cheerful smile, and was a joy to have around.

We pray for those of his family and especially his wife, who are in sorrow and missing him.

Please notify us whenever one of our loved ones is ill so that we can pray for them. Keep us informed of those who pass on.

REFLECTIONS of ETERNITY: IN A POET'S WORDS and in the LIGHT of EASTER

Death, Be Not Proud

Death, be not proud, though some have called thee
Mighty and dreadful, for thou art not so;
For those whom thou think'st thou dost overthrow
Die not, poor Death; nor yet canst thou kill me.
From rest and sleep, which but thy pictures be,
Much pleasure; then from thee much more must flow;
And soonest our best men with thee do go—
Rest of their bones, and souls' delivery!
Thou'rt slave to fate, chance, kings and desperate men,
And dost with poison, war, and sickness dwell;
And poppy or charms can make us sleep as well
And better than thy stroke. Why swell'st thou then?
One short sleep past, we wake eternally,
And death shall be no more: Death thou shalt die.

(by John Donne taken from "The golden book of Catholic Poetry" edited by Alfred Noyes J. Lippincott Company, New York, 1946)

MY DIVIDED CHURCH

Our Pope is coming to our land.
To greet his faithful, loyal band.
To listen to those who have complaints
Against sacred doctrine, revered by Saints.
Theologians, though self appointed
Reform the Church and God's anointed.
Bishops, priests intent on change
Instruct the faithful "truth can range".
Eternal verities no longer rate.
No lasting value can we state.
In a pluralistic society we must conform
With what in practice is the norm.
All truth is relative is the contention
With shocking change, I'm loathe to mention.
Contraception, abortions, masturbation
Sodomy too, reign in our Nation.
Goldsmith has best described the fate
Of those who's ills beset the state.
"Vice is a monster of such hideous mien
That to be hated needs but to be seen
But seen too oft, familiar with its face
Our religious instead of constant warning
Against the evils still aborning

Grant Dignity Masses to those who believe
Homosexuals have rights they must achieve.

Our Pope who comes as Peter chosen
To guide his church in peril frozen,
Must make decisions most horrendous
Yet watch that none of them offend us.
Discussions reign about his visit.
Is his coming needed? Just why is it?
Dissenters request he make no speech
But come to listen, not to teach.
They do not want to hear him scold
nor repeat what has been said of old.
Some say he must not come at all
for if he does, harm may befall.
What if he says a Church divided
Where truth, tradition are benighted
Should go the way of all contenders?
Drop Catholic from reforms they plot
For surely Catholics they are not.
For our Father we must pray
God grant him wisdom for the fray.
Like Solomon who faced division
Pope John Paul II must make decision
With courage, strength withstand derision
Knowing Christ has promised He will stay
With the Church He founded, till Judgment day.

(by Mrs. Eleanor F. Edmiston, San Diego, CA. from "THE MARYFAITHFUL" May-June, 1988, Vol. XX, No. 3, with permission)

THE BOOK of JUDITH: A WONDERFUL EXAMPLE of USE of TYPES or SYMBOLS in the Bible

"Types" are symbols for various aspects of the salvation process found in the **Bible**. **Bible** types, or symbols, are not a recent discovery. The Church has known about the presence of types, or symbols, in inspired Scripture since the time of Christ. Paul's epistles even refer to types, or symbols, found in the Jewish books even before they were organized into the **Old Testament** portion of the **Bible**. The recently-published **Catechism of the Catholic Church** recognizes the existence and importance of **Bible** types, or symbols, at Paragraphs 128, 129 and 130.

Only about five dozen different types are employed in the **Bible**, but they can be found at many thousands of different places in the **Bible** text. The truly astonishing thing about **Bible** types, or symbols, is that, though the books of the **Bible** were written by many different people from several strikingly different **Hebrew, Jewish** and **proto-Christian** cultures speaking several different languages and dialects over a period of more than 1,000 years, the types, or symbols, employed in the various books of the **Bible** always symbolize the same thing. One who

studies **Bible** types, or symbols, comes to realize that, truly, types are the special language of the Holy Spirit in the inspired books of the **Bible**, because only the Holy Spirit could arrange to have so many different books from such diverse circumstances employ the same system of symbols.

Because of this, the presence of types, or symbols, in a book of the **Bible**, which have the same symbolic meaning as the same types found elsewhere in the **Bible** tends to verify that the decision to include a particular book in the **Bible** was correct.

This is especially important in the case of the **Old Testament Book of Judith**.

The popes of the Early Church insisted that **the Book of Judith** is inspired and should therefore be included in the **Old Testament**. Nonetheless, even the leaders of rabbinical Judaism in Palestine, only a century-or-so after the death of Christ, declared the **Book of Judith** to be uninspired and so barred the book from the Jewish **Bible**. The Protestant reformers of the 16th century followed suit and likewise began to bar the **Book of Judith** from the various versions of the Protestant **Bible** which have come down to us. Even *Jerome*, the great translator of the Roman Catholic **Bible**, was reluctant to include **Judith** in his translation of the **Old Testament**, because he did not believe **Judith** to be inspired.

Who, therefore, was correct? The popes, who against the current of history insisted that the **Book of Judith** be regarded as inspired and so included in the Roman Catholic **Bible**? Or, those who insisted that the **Book of Judith** is uninspired, including the leaders of rabbinical Judaism, who seem better qualified than anybody to make such a judgment?

Not surprising to those who have faith in the special inspiration of the Magisterium, or teaching authority, of the Roman Catholic Church, the **Book of Judith** contains wonderful examples of use of **Bible** types, or symbols, consistent with the rest of the inspired **Bible**. The use of types is so striking and compelling that one can not doubt that the decision of the popes to include the **Book of Judith** in the **Bible** was correct.

In the **Book of Judith**, a vast **Assyrian** army, under the leadership of **Nebuchadnezzar's General Holofernes**, attacks God's Jewish people in Judea. The Jews flatly refuse to submit, and so are besieged by the **Assyrian** army. **Judith**, a beautiful widow among the Jews, volunteers to go down into the **Assyrian camp** to try to help her people. **Judith** and her maid go into the **Assyrian** camp, where **Holofernes** is deeply smitten by **Judith's** great beauty. **Holofernes** resolves to try to seduce **Judith** after he becomes drunk with wine in the course of a celebration in his camp. Afterwards, they went off to their

beds, for they were all tired from the prolonged banquet. **Judith** was left alone in the tent with **Holofernes**, who lay prostrate on his bed, for he was sodden with wine. She had ordered her maid to stand outside the bedroom and wait, as on other days, for her to come out; she said she would be going out for her prayer. To **Bagoas** she said this also. When all had departed, and no one, small or great, was left in the bedroom, **Judith** stood by **Holofernes'** bed and said within herself, "Oh Lord, God of all might, in this hour look graciously on my under-taking for the exaltation of Jerusalem; now is the time for aiding your heritage and for carrying out your design to shatter the enemies who have risen against us."

She went to the bedpost near the head of **Holofernes** and, taking his sword from it, drew close to the bed, grasped the hair of his head, and said, "Strengthen me this day, O God of Israel!" Then with all of her might she struck him twice in the neck and cut off his head. She rolled his body off the bed and took the canopy from its supports. Soon afterward, she came out and handed the head of **Holofernes** to her maid, who put it into her food pouch. **Judith 13: 1-10**.

At dawn the next day, the **Assyrians** discover the headless body of their general and, completely overcome with fear, they begin to panic and scatter. Encouraged by this sudden turn of events, the Jews take up arms and pursue and annihilate the **Assyrian army**.

Careful review of the **Bible** types, or symbols, found in the portion of the **Book of Judith** set forth above discloses the extent to which the inspired text of the **Book of Judith** is a wonderful and inspired picture of the process of salvation.

In the **Bible**, a "woman" is the type, or symbol, of God's people in need of salvation. The "**Song of Songs**" in the **Old Testament**, where the bride symbolizes God's people, and the bridegroom Christ our savior, is the best example of use of this type.

The number "two" is the **Biblical type**, or symbol, for the Church. Thus, the animals entering **Noah's** ark "two by two" before the flood at **Genesis 7:8-9** is a picture of God's Church. When Jesus calls his Apostles to follow Him, it is in twos, signaling the creation of His Church. (See **Matthew 4:18-22**). When Jesus dispatches His Apostles to preach "two by two," that is a picture foreshadowing evangelization by the Church. (See **Mark 6:7**).

"**Sleep**" is the **Biblical type**, or symbol, for a lack of faith. *Paul* confirms this at **Romans 11:7-10**. When the Apostles sleep while Jesus agonizes in the Garden of Gethsemane, we are being warned that though the Church is God's preferred conduit to salvation, it will not be "Heaven on Earth" -- the occasional faithlessness and sin of our spiritual leaders is being foreshadowed. (See **Matthew**

26:40, 43 and 45.)

“Sword” is the Biblical type, or symbol, for the word of God. Paul says as much at Ephesians 6:17. So, it is not an accident that we see a sword coming out of Jesus’ mouth at Revelation 1:16.

“Hair” is the Biblical type, or symbol, for godliness, or for the power of God. So, it is not a coincidence that Judges 16:20 says that the Lord had left Samson once Samson’s hair had been cut by Delilah.

As a consequence, when the Book of Judith has two women, Judith and her maid, going down into the camp of the Assyrians, that is a picture of the people of God (the “women”), in His Church (“two” women), taking on the enemy of God’s people.

When we see Holofernes lying in a drunken sleep upon his bed, that is a picture telling us that sinful faithlessness (“sleeping” Holofernes) is the enemy of God’s people.

When Judith, the representative of God’s people, grasps Holofernes’ head by the hair, that is a picture of God’s power (the “hair” of Holofernes) entering God’s people (when the “woman” grasps his hair).

When Judith cuts off sleeping Holofernes’ head with two hacks of a sword, that is a picture of sinful faithlessness (“sleeping” Holofernes) being destroyed by God’s word (the “sword”) from His Church (“two” hacks).

Placing Holofernes’ head into a “food pouch” is probably also intended to be symbolic.

In any event, note that by lopping off the sleeping Holofernes’ head with a sword, Judith, representing God’s people, the offspring of Eve, has inadvertently fulfilled God’s prophecy to serpentine Satan at Genesis 3:15:

I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; they will strike at your head, while you

strike at their heels.

The analysis demonstrates that the story of Judith is a remarkable picture of the victory of the Church over evil through use of God’s holy word, using Biblical types, or symbols, in a fashion that is perfectly consistent with the balance of inspired Scripture. The analysis dramatically proves that the decision of the Roman Catholic Church to include the Jewish Book of Judith in the canon of inspired Scripture, over the objections of the great Protestant reformers and even of the ancient scholars of rabbinical Judaism, was a sound one. We have evidence, here, that not only is the Book of Judith divinely inspired, but the Roman Catholic Bible contains the most complete canon of inspired Scripture, and the MAGISTERIUM OR TEACHING AUTHORITY OF THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH IS, INDEED, THE DIVINELY-INSPIRED SOURCE OF TRUTH IN THE WORLD TODAY.

(By Peter J. Dawson)

TO MULTIPLY MERIT IN SUFFERING

(Clip for your prayerbook)

My blessed and sweet Mother, offer this cross to Jesus, thy Divine Son, in union with His Passion and thy Dolors, to expiate my sins, to ransom sinners, and for they own intentions. O clement, O loving, O sweet Virgin-Mother Mary.

(from “THE MARYFAITHFUL” May-June, 1988, Vol. XX, No. 3, with permission)

THE POWER OF MARY’S PRAYER

The Blessed Virgin is called powerful and even all-powerful. Because she, more than nay other, more than all the angels and saints, has this great prevailing gift of prayer. No-one has access to the Almighty in the same way

PILGRIMAGE to MEDJUGORJE, ROME and ASSISI, 20 – 30 JUNE 2000

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Post Office (Home Location) Plus four, if available Area Code Home Area Code Office

Emergency Contact: _____ Phone: (____) _____ - (____) _____ - _____
Required for Air Travel First and Last Name Relationship Area Code Home Area Code Office

\$350 Deposit (\$250 Non-Refundable) Enclosed: •
Single Supplement \$200 • (Advised for Smokers/Snorers)

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PPM 6/2000

as His Mother. Her Son will never refuse anything She asks of Him, and this is the source of Her power. so long as Mary defends the Church, no Power on earth of the evil spirits, or great Monarchs or human strength, or popular violence will be able to harm her; for human life is short but Mary reigns in heaven, eternally Queen.”

(by Cardinal John Henry Newman from “THE MARYFAITHFUL” May-June, 1988, Vol. XX, No. 3, with permission)

A CHILD’S VIEW OF GOD

Many thanks to a reader of the *Messages of Medjugorje* from **Rocky Mountain Marian Center** for sending in this unique and touching description of God, written by a little boy names **Danny Dutton**, age 8, from **Chula Vista, CA**. It was a homework assignment given by a third grade teacher asking the students to explain “God.” Two well-used phrases come to mind: “Out of the mouths of babes . . .” and “A little child shall lead them . . .”

GOD

One of God’s main jobs is making people. He makes these to put in place of the ones that die who there will be enough people to take care of things here on earth. He doesn’t make grownups. Just babies. I think because they are smaller and easier to make. Then was He doesn’t have to take up His valuable time teaching them to talk and walk. He can just leave that up the mothers and fathers. I think it works out pretty good.

God’s second most important job is listening to prayers. An awful lot of this goes on, as some people, like preachers and things, pray other times besides bedtime. God doesn’t have time to listen to the radio or TV on account of this. As He hears every thing, not only prayers, there must be a terrible lot of noise into His ears, unless He has thought of

a way to turn it off.

God sees everything and hears everything and is everywhere, which keeps Him pretty busy. So you shouldn’t go wasting His time by going over your parents head and ask for something they said you couldn’t have.

Atheists are people who don’t believe in God. I don’t think there are any in Chula Vista. At least there aren’t any who come to our church. Jesus is God’s Son. He used to do all the hard work like waking on water and doing miracles and trying to teach people about God who didn’t want to learn. They finally got tied of Him preaching to them and they crucified Him. But He was good and kind like His Father and He told His Father that they didn’t know what they were doing and to forgive them and God said OK. His Dad (God) appreciated everything He had done and all His hard work on earth, so he old Him He didn’t have to go out on the road anymore. He could stay in Heaven. So He did. And now He helps his Dad out by listening to prayers and seeing which things are important for God to take care of and which ones He can take of Himself, without having to bother God with. Like a secretary only more important, of course. You can pray anytime you want and they are sure to hear you because they’ve got it worked out so one of them is on duty all the time. You should always to Sunday School because it makes God happy, and if there’s anybody you want to make happy, it’s God. don’t skip Sunday School to do something you think will be more fun like going to the beach. That’s wrong! And besides the sun doesn’t come out at the beach until noon, anyway. If you don’t believe in God, besides an Atheist, you will be very lonely, because your parents can’t go everywhere with you like to camp, but God can. It’s good to know He’s around when your scared of the dark or when you can’t swim very good and you get thrown in real deep water by the big kids. But you shouldn’t just always think of what God can do for

PILGRIMAGE to MEDJUGORJE, SAN GIOVANI (BLESSED PADRE PIO) and ROME, 15 -26 AUGUST 2000

✂ ----- ✂

Name: _____ Room With? _____ **PPM 8/2000**
 Address: _____ Date of Birth (DOB): ____/____/____ Age: _____
 Month / Day / Year Kept Confidential
 City: _____ State: ____ Zip: _____ - _____ Phone: (____) _____ - _____ - _____
 Post Office (Home Location) Plus four, if available Area Code Home Area Code Office
 Emergency Contact: _____ Phone: (____) _____ - _____ - _____
 Required for Air Travel First and Last Name Relationship Area Code Home Area Code Office
\$350 Deposit (\$250 Non-Refundable) Enclosed: • **\$2655 PPM Total Package Payment Enclosed: •**
Single Supplement \$200 • (Advised for Smokers/Snorers)
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you. I figure God put me here and He can take me back anytime He pleases.

And that's why I believe in God.

**“Messages of Medjugorje” Vol. 11 No. 12 November 1998,
Rocky Mountain Marian Center, Center for Peace –
Denver, Ed and Jo Ann Langfield, 1638 South Rosemary
Street, Denver, CO 08231-2604 303-755-7575)**

HOW MOTHERS ARE MADE

There is a popular song which tells how boys and girls are made. “Girls,” it is said, “are made of sugar and spice and everything nice. Boys are made of snips and snails and puppy dogs’ tails.”

But what are mothers made? To answer that question we shall go a long way back, because it takes a long time to make a mother. In the cosmic preparation for motherhood three steps are necessary:

1. *Interiority of generation.* In the physical order, a flame lights a flame, a torch lights a torch. In lower forms of life, such as the amoeba, there is a fission, or splitting, as the young life breaks off from the parent cell. Motherhood is still a long way off, for there could never be a mother without an intimate close, and vital relationship between the body of the mother and the body of the young offspring.

It took centuries to prepare for this interior act of generation. Some land crabs come down from the mountains to sea, push their eggs into the water, and then abandon them. No real motherhood here, for the young never see their mothers, nor do the mothers care for the young. This universe of ours is full of orphans; the young that are begotten are completely forgotten. Almost all fruit is orphaned, inasmuch as it lies an independent existence from the tree. Butterflies are thoughtful to some extent, inasmuch as eggs are often hatched under a leaf, where they are least exposed. Maybe nature is kind to certain

butterflies, for how shocked mothers would be to see a fuzzy-wuzzy, ugly caterpillar--the kind that only a mother could love. Hens are much kinder to the young--so kind that the Lord used them as an example of his concern men:

How often have I been ready to gather they children together,

As a hen gathers her chickens under her wings:

And thou didst refuse it!

No boy who ever gathered eggs from the barnyard or crib, as I did when I was a boy, will ever forget the wrath of a cackling, setting hen. You begin to know what an “old hen” is, when you go about gathering eggs. After all, you can’t blame then hen; she can never find anything where she “lays” it.

As we see nature unfold, there is an increasing unity of mother and offspring until finally many mothers carry the young with them. Despite all this cosmic evolution, however, there could never be a human mother until love came into the world. Then alone would there be true Interiority of generation. This would happen not as a result of seasonal urges and sex impulses alone, as it does in the animal order. In addition so sex, which is common to the animals, there must also be love, in order that there be no ravishing or stealing away of the worth of the person.

If a mother is to be made, then what is begotten must come from a free act of will, in which a woman freely submits to the love of a man. Such surrender would not be a passive one, like the earth to the seed, but rather an active one, in which two humans who are freely united in souls freely unite in body. One might almost say that the generation begins in the mind and in the soul with love and completes itself in the body.

All love tends to an incarnation, even God’s. Generation, then, is not a push from below but a gift from above; it is a reflection of the Eternal Generation in the Bosom of the

PILGRIMAGE to MEDJUGORJE, ROME (CANNONIZATION of BLESSED CATHERINE DREXEL) and ASSISI, 24 SEPTEMBER – 6 OCTOBER 2000

Name: _____ Room With? _____ **PPM 9/2000**

Address: _____ Date of Birth (DOB): ____/____/____ Age: _____
Month / Day / Year Kept Confidential

City: _____ State: ____ Zip: ____ - ____ Phone: (____) ____ - ____ (____) ____ - ____
Post Office (Home Location) Plus four, if available Area Code Home Area Code Office

Emergency Contact: _____ Phone: (____) ____ - ____ (____) ____ - ____
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\$350 Deposit (\$250 Non-Refundable) Enclosed: • \$2550 PPM Total Package Payment Enclosed: •

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PPM 9/2000

Father, Who in the agelessness of Eternity says, “Thou are My Son. This day I have begotten Thee.” The roots of it are hidden in Heaven, for in the great Hebraic tradition we read a line wherein God speaks and says, “Shall I Who give generations to other, Myself be barren?”

The offspring now is seen as a incarnation of the mutual love of a husband and a wife. when a mother carries the young life within her through a free act of love, she has a different kind of love from what any man has for a neighbor. Most of us love a nonself, or something extrinsic and apart from our inner life; but a mother’s love during the

time she is a flesh-and-blood ciborium is not for a non-self but for one that is her very self, a perfect example of charity and love which hardly perceives a separation. Motherhood then becomes a kind of priesthood. She brings God to man by preparing the flesh in which the should will be implanted; she brings man to God in offering the child back again to the Creator.

II. *Care of the young.* Mothers in the animal kingdom care only for a body; mothers in the spiritual kingdom must care also for a soul, a mind, and a heart. The soul comes from God and must go back again to Him. God sets the target,

CONDITIONS for PILGRIMS of FAITH MARIAN CENTER (PFMC) PILGRIMAGES

TRAVEL AGENCY

The **PFMC** is not in the travel service business but contracts with a number of reputable travel service businesses with expressed terms and conditions which are applied both to the **PFMC** and pilgrims coordinated by the **PFMC** with arrangements through **European Incoming Services (EIS)**.

CANCELLATION PENALTIES and REFUNDS

Cancellation must be made through the **PFMC** and **EIS** in a timely fashion. No refund to “no-show” pilgrims. **EIS** and airlines used control the refunds of airfare. A **\$250 non-refundable charge** is taken from deposit for administration and processing at time of application. The following is an estimate of the Cancellation Penalties for this **PPM**:

	Days Before Departure	Penalty Per Pilgrim
It is the policy of the PFMC that youth and young adults who are not high school graduates must be accompanied by one or both of their parents or a legal guardian on any of the pilgrimages coordinated by the PFMC.	>60	\$250
	60-30	\$900 (or \$250+ Airfare as Airline may not refund airfare)
	30-00	No refund

RESERVATIONS and PAYMENTS

For reservations, please complete the form on the front or below, cut it off and mail it to the **PFMC** at the address shown above with a deposit of **\$350** per person. The balance is due no later than **60 DAYS BEFORE DEPARTURE**. **Personal checks and charges are accepted (Visa, M/C or Discover Only)**. Reservations with **full payment** may be accepted less than **60 days** prior to departure **subject to availability of air and land space**. Use **Priority Mail** for all applications and payment related correspondence after **60 DAYS BEFORE DEPARTURE**. **Applications must be signed by the pilgrim.**

PASSPORT

All pilgrims must be in possession of a valid passport prior to departure. Passport applications may be processed through most local county clerk’s offices. **PPM** coordinators can assist you in getting passport application forms and completing them. A personal appearance is required with two (2) passport photographs and a valid birth certificate with a raised seal at the passport office.

MEDICAL EXPENSES

Should you require medical treatment while away from home, you must arrange for payment for services rendered. Special travel medical insurance applications are available from either **EIS** or the **PFMC**. Medications cannot be purchased without a doctor’s prescription. Be sure to bring any necessary medication with you and have it at all times in your carrying bag.

INSURANCE

Travel, medical and cancellation insurance is highly recommended. For the sick, medical insurance which includes provisions for medical evacuation from overseas is mandatory.

RESPONSIBILITY

EIS and the **PFMC** arrange with airlines, hotels and other independent firms and families to provide pilgrims with travel services. Despite great care in choosing service suppliers, **EIS** and the **PFMC** do NOT control them and therefore cannot be held responsible for their acts or omissions, the quality of services, hotel accommodations, overbooking, flight delay, weather conditions and other circumstances over which **EIS** and the **PFMC** have NO control. Pilgrims accept these terms and conditions by signing applications. Travel services are subject to conditions imposed by these suppliers who document their liability in tariff forms, contracts and international agreements. **EIS and the PFMC, therefore, cannot assume responsibility for any losses, damages, expenses from injury, accident or death, delay of baggage or other properties, the act or omission of any person or firm other than EIS, or their employees or agents, the PFMC, mental breakdown, government action, strikes, lock-out, war, weather or other factors and causes beyond their control, acts of vandalism, air/land piracy, burglaries, assault or any physical harm to pilgrim property/person.** Failure to follow instructions or to obtain required documentation including passports, visas and health certificates, where required, releases **EIS** and the **PFMC** from responsibility for any refund.

the parents are the bow, and their vocation is to shoot the arrow straight. When a child is given to his parents a crown is made for that child in Heaven, and woe to the parents who raise a child without consciousness of the eternal crown!

It does not take long in the animal order to generate and develop the brain of a monkey, because the monkey brain does not have very much to do. but it takes along time to develop the mind of a child, to inculcate ideal, virtues of purity, honesty, patriotism, and piety. Animals can quickly leave their parents, because they have no eternal destiny.

But humanity is under a compulsory educational act, and to fulfill this, there must be domesticity. The home is the schoolhouse for affection wherein a mother completes the work that was begun when the child was born. Motherhood then turns into mother craft, as biology hands the work over to ethics. the canoe can quickly haunch out on the waters when it is made, but the big ship has to wait for engines because it has a better port. A tiny ball of unconsciousness needs much mother care to become all that God destined it to be. Maybe that is why mothers are against war; they realize better than anyone else how long it takes to make a man.

III. *Greater attention to individuals of the species.* A mother must love each offspring as if it were the only one in all the world. This means recognizing that human beings are not just individuals, but persons. In the animal order there are individuals; in the human order there are persons. The difference between an individual and a person is that: individuals are replaceable, and person are not. For example, you go to buy oranges in a store and say, "No, this one is bad. Give me another." But you cannot say that bout children. A child is a person--unique, incommunicable, irreplaceable--that is why there is so much sorrow in a mother when one is lo**Saint** It is a person and an immortal soul that has departed.

This, incidentally, is why every mother gives to the child a name which implies dignity, uniqueness, and apartness. There is no greater refutation of Communism I the world than a mother. Because Communism denies the value of person, it affirms that we are like grapes who have no other destiny than to have our life ground out of us for the sake of the collective wine of the state. Every mother arises to protest and proclaim, "This child of mine is a person and may not be submerged in any totality of a class or a state or a race; he is unique; he has a name; he is my son!"

That is how mothers are made. Nature had to prepare for them through millions of years by begetting a love that would freely desire children, a love that would educate them, and a love that would sacrifice for them because of their sovereign worth as persons endowed with immortal souls. Such love could not come from the beast, for that kind of love is a gift of God.

Motherhood is too noble to be without an ideal, God, Who became Man, preexists His Own Mother, as an artist preexists his own painting. On one occasion, Whistler was complimented for the beautiful painting of his mother. His answer was, "You know how it is. One tries t make ones Mother as nice as one can." There is no reason to feel that Christ would do otherwise, for as God, He preexisted His Own Mother. That every mother might understand that the interior generation if born of love, She, the Ideal Mother, conceived because she cooperated with the Love of God. One day, out from the great White Throne, of Light, there came an Angel of Light who descended over the plains of Israel: passing by the daughters of great kings of the East, the Angel came to a women who was kneeling in prayer and said, Hail, full of grace." These were not words; they were the Word, and "The Word was made Flesh, and dwelt amongst us." And she, the Mother, was overshadowed by the Spirit of Love and bore within herself the Guest Who was really the Host of the World. This was the greatest love that the world ever knew--the Love that came down into a Woman and ended in and incarnation.

This Mother gave further example to all mothers by caring both for the Body and the soul of Her Son. She cared for His Body, for she wrapped Him in swaddling clothes and laid Him in a Manger. She cared for His soul and His Mind, for He was subject to her. What a lesson for children to learn! This Child, Who was subject to His Mother, was also the Creator of the world. Every mother, when she picks up the young life that has been born to her, looks up to the heavens to thank God for the gift which made the world young again. But here was a Mother, a Madonna, who did not look up. She looked down to heaven, for this was Heaven in her arms.

Finally, she gave the example of the worth of personality to all mothers, for, like every mother, she gave her Child a name. Since this Child was unique, it was fitting that he be given a name that would describe His Mission. This Child came not to save people from insecurity, or to make them rich and powerful, but to save them from their sins. Hence He was given the name of Jesus, which means Savior. It was an irreplaceable name, before which the heavens and the earth trembled, and before which our knees bow.

If any one of us could have made our own mother, we would have made her the most beautiful woman in the world. As God pre-existed His Own Mother somewhat in the way that an artist preexists his work, we can understand why she should be the Madonna of the World. Then, when He took on human flesh and became a Babe, we can understand why He climbed up her body as an ivory tower, to kiss upon her lips a Mystic Rose.

The mother is both the physical preserver of life and the moral provider of truth; she is nature's constant challenge to death, the bearer of cosmic plenitude, the herald of eternal realities, God's great cooperator. To this Modern

Woman and Pattern Mother, we say in the language of
Mary Dixon Thayer:

Lovely Lady dressed in blue--
Teach me how to pray!
God was just your little Boy,
Tell me what to say!
Did you lift Him up, sometimes,
Gently on your knee?
Did you sing to Him the way
Mother did to me?
Jesus, my dear little Brother,
Gave me a treasure true,
When for my very own mother,
Mary, He gave me you!
When for my very own mother,
Mary, he gave me you!

(By Most Rev. Fulton Sheen, D.D. from "THE
MARYFAITHFUL" May-June, 1988, Vol. XX, No. 3, with
permission)

THE CHRISTIAN MOTHER

Mother is the sweetest work in any language--the word surcharged with emotional content. Philosopher and poets alike have believe "mother love" to be the ideal love, the real love, a love utterly unselfish and boundless. From conception to death she intuitively and naturally believes in giving, with no thought of getting. Hers is a disinterested love. Most other forms of love are based on reciprocity. But genuine love rests upon the solid foundation of renunciation, self-forgetfulness and self-giving, even to the extent of crucifying oneself for the other.

In this authentic love Jesus Christ Himself is the Perfect Model. In His Life and Death, we see the Most Perfect Selfgiving for others. For when we stop giving ourselves to others, we stop loving; and when we stop loving, we stop growing as we should. And a retarded growth can prevent us from reaching God Himself. In giving, each one of us a mother, God has placed motherhood on a pedestal as an example of genuine love and growth reaching out to God Himself.

Mother is the word most used by soldiers dying I the battle front. Mother is the word that so often escapes the lips of the grey-haired as they themselves pass into oblivion. that word can rouse in us a host of pleasant memories. Let me recall just one:

I can still remember that day when I got up from bed in a mood, upset and irritated, for no apparent reason. I got angry with every one and with everything. And as if to punish myself, I went to school without taking breakfast I did not even take the tiffin, which served as the midday meal.

The first two periods went on peacefully. By the third period, I was hungry and began to spend the time in day-

dreaming. "What excuse to give my companions for not bringing the tiffin? Will I manage without food till 4 o'clock? I should have brought some money with me."

My day-dream was abruptly broken when the teacher called out: "You, there, stand up." From bad to worse; "I thought as I got up, "a hungry stomach and a caning too." But he told that there was someone waiting for me outside.

I went out. And there was my younger brother with the tiffin in his hand. "Mother asked me to give this to you," he said. My joy know no bounds, for I knew how foolishly I had acted.

A mother's love had no limits. She saved me from an embarrassing situation. She cold have said: "Let him learn a lesson," and she would have been perfectly correct. But no; that was not her way. That is not the way a mother behaves; she conquers with love.

The Vital Role

A Mother can conquer the hearts of her children from the earliest years. It is she who can mold her children by her word and example. It is she who is by their side all the 24 ours of the day from early childhood to adulthood. It is to her that the children look up for imitation. Children begin to imitate --science tell us-- as early as 24 days after their birth. It is she who can instill in her children moral and religious principles by her example. She is the most apt person for this; and a failure in this can do immense harm to her children and would be a grave neglect of her God-given responsibility. Delinquent and problem children are often the result of delinquent and problem mothers.

The mother is the mistress of the home. It is she who can give the tone she wants to her home. In the past, man spent the major portion of his life within their family set-up. Today mot men spend the major portion of their life outside the family circle. in highly organized but "impersonal" social set-ups which are geared around economic production.

As a necessary reaction to this depersonalizing environment, man feels a greater need for the inmate relationships of marriage, family life and friendship. It is the wife (and mother) who can provide the necessary warmth in the home. If the husband and children do not experience this warmth and intimacy in the home, they do not feel the need to come home any more. And eventually the family may break up or keep up a front due to social pressure, while the family is already broken up on reality. For a man works, suffers, struggles and even gives his life for love's sake. But then the, if that love is absent, he finds no meaning for existence. And if he carries on exiting he seeks love elsewhere. For every man grown tired of striving and suffering when life never offers any love, friendship or sympathy.

It is up to you, Christian mother, to make your home a

cherished place--a home with which husband and children look back with nostalgia even in their old age or when they spend their pastime in narrating the pleasant memories of their sweet home.

(By Fr. J. Varappilly, S. D. B. from "THE MARYFAITHFUL" May-June, 1988, Vol. XX, No. 3, with permission)

TEN COMMANDMENTS for a MOTHER-IN-LAW

Thou shalt love, honor, and respect the new couple.

Thou shalt allow them complete independence.

Thou shalt speak only kindly, loyally about them.

Thou shalt not find fault.

Thou shalt not give advice unless requested.

Thou shalt not expect them to visit you too often.,

Thou shalt not visit them too frequently, and never enter their home without knocking.

Thou shalt not mention how much you look forward to grandchildren.

Thou shalt respect their taste in home decorating, though it differs from yours.

Thou shalt petition daily the Heavenly Father, in whose love they abide, for their happiness.

(by Iola M. Irwin from "THE MARYFAITHFUL" May-June, 1988, Vol. XX, No. 3, with permission)

PRESS BULLETIN 138, March 8, 2000.

THE REALITY OF TESTIFYING

At all times throughout history the Church has tirelessly repeated Jesus' command: "Go and make all nations my disciples!" With the water of baptism God bestows on man the grace of adoption, but also the duty of making others Christians. That is a universal command that holds equally for each one. So the human creature would not forget its order, God arouses him in various ways: through joy and sorrow, sickness and health, success and failure. So that he would not forget the necessity and duty of testifying God again uses various occasions. One of them is also this Jubilee Year 2000 of the birth of Christ. Another occasion is the special presence of Our Lady here in MEDJUGORJE. And her latest message again brings this problem to reality. A Christian is a man for others or he is not a Christian at all. Others on the path of our life are for this that they lead us to Life - Christ. Opening ourselves to them, therefore, we purify our heart and permit God to fill it with this immeasurable love.

Fr. Branko Rados

NEWS

NUMBER of COMMUNIONS and CONCELEBRANTS

In February at the shrine of the Queen of Peace in MEDJUGORJE 23,000 Holy Communion were distributed and there were 608 concelebrations at Holy Mass by priests from home and abroad.

February, like January, is usually a month with the least number of pilgrims visiting. Yet, in spite of that, we recorded the visit of groups from: France, Lebanon, Ireland, Poland, Austria, Czech Republic, USA, Germany, Slovenia, Italy, Canada, England, Korea, Australia and, of course, Croatia.

MISSIONARY TRAVEL OF FR. SVETOZAR KRALJEVIC

At the invitation of MEDJUGORJE pilgrims and Centers of Peace, in February Fr. Svetozar Kraljevic visited the United States of America and England. Upon his return he said the following:

"Again and more than ever we realize that the priests from MEDJUGORJE have to travel even to the most distant places in the world and get around to the prayer groups and communities that have come together for the purpose of personal and community Christian renewal, for a more intensive Christian living and for spreading the message that Blessed Virgin Mary has spoken through the visionaries in MEDJUGORJE.

Already a tradition, a Marian conference is held every year in February (first Friday, Saturday and Sunday) in the California city of San Ramon, near San Francisco. The chief organizer is Anna Marie Maagdenburg with Rev. Richard J. Culver. Anna Maria is well known to us in MEDJUGORJE for the expert and practical help that she unselfishly provides to young people with impaired hearing.

In this Jubilee Year the main theme of the meeting was "THE YEAR 2000 OF CHRIST'S PRESENCE". The principal participant was the Most Reverend Bishop Kenneth D. Steiner. About 1200 participants with hearty applause welcomed his strong call to practical living of the holy sacraments and daily prayer. Listening to Bishop Steiner all of us again discovered how it is possible in a joyful and interesting manner to speak about the most serious truths of the Christian life. I spoke about pilgrimage as being prayer made incarnate. The believer on pilgrimage experiences the essence of prayer which biblically engages human life and helps the praying person especially to experience prayer and clearly to witness his Christianity to the world.

We all listened to the words of Fr. Rene Laurentin as to the words of one's beloved teacher. He spoke about the place, meaning, and nature of Marian calls in the modern Church and world. The words of visionary Ivan Dragicevic, full of courage and hope, were listened to by all with gratitude. The birth of his second daughter stirred a

special feeling of respect in everyone.

The community of **MEDJUGORJE** prayer groups held a retreat from *February 18-20* in the town of **Nuneaton** near **London**. About 80 leaders and involved members of those communities gathered in the monastery of the Dominican Sisters. **Daily Eucharistic celebration, praying the rosary, adoration of the Most Blessed Sacrament, meditation on the reality of the cross, sufferings, and death of our Lord, meditation on the Christian life and vocation that we have**, were our themes that filled up those three days. The participants especially stressed how they realize that they need to organize these kinds of Christian, spiritual encounters to maintain the spirit that Mary began in the hearts of all and even more so to be able to live a Christian life in the modern world, full of temptations and doubts."

DAY OF THE SICK AND INFIRM

A day for sick and infirm people is designated in the program for the Jubilee year in the parish of **MEDJUGORJE** and, that according to the recommendation of the bishops of **Bosnia-Herzegovina**, to be on *February 11*, the day of **Our Lady of Lourdes**. At the evening mass the parish church of *Saint James* was full of sick and infirm people of the parish and of neighboring places. On every *First Friday* throughout this Jubilee Year the evening liturgy program will be dedicated to the sick. In future years in the parish of **MEDJUGORJE** the day of **Our Lady of Lourdes** will be designated as a day for the sick and infirm.

"RADIO PRAYER GROUP"

Every Tuesday on the "Mir" **MEDJUGORJE** radio station the program "Pray together with joyful hearts" is broadcasted *Saint*

On *Saturday February 19*, the members of prayer groups for all parts of **Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina** gathered in **MEDJUGORJE** for an unordinary way of prayer. In question, namely, is the group that participates every *Tuesday* in the prayer that **Fr. Slavko Barbaric** leads on the waves of the radio station "Mir" **MEDJUGORJE**. The members are all those that the radio broadcast reaches, and wish also in this way to be connected with Our Lady's messages of peace and conversion by means of prayer. About 130 members from **Bosnia-Herzegovina** and **Croatia** came together. Their intention is to meet in prayer by means of radio not only on *Tuesday*, but all the more often also on pilgrimages to the **SHRINE OF THE QUEEN OF PEACE IN MEDJUGORJE**.

REMEMBERING THE HOLY LAND

The **MEDJUGORJE** parish group of pilgrims that went on pilgrimage to the **Holy Land** in November last year, gathered *February 19th* at the evening prayer program in the church of *Saint James*, **MEDJUGORJE**. The evening mass was presided at by **Fr. Bozo Lujic**, who was their

guide in the Holy Land. In a moving sermon he reminded those present of the Divine footprints and the ways on which they made pilgrimage, stressing the healing activity of Jesus, both the bodily as well as the even more important way - the spiritual. Something that in this Jubilee Year we should not forget!

ON FOOT TO MEDJUGORJE

The Polish pilgrim **Henrik Kozlowski** stayed in **MEDJUGORJE** some days on his journey to the Holy Land. Henry is 48 years old and has already made pilgrimage on foot to **Santiago de Compostela**, **Lourdes** and **Fatima**. The goal of his journeying on foot is to reach the Holy Land on *March 23rd* to meet with the Holy Father who will then be on pilgrimage in the homeland of Jesus.

<http://www.tel.hr/MEDJUGORJE/enpb2000.html>

PRESS BULLETIN 139, March 22, 2000.

LENT

"Do not dedicate to anyone else the time that is reserved for God, not even when we do not succeed in taking good advantage of that time; to stay faithful, that is critical." That is the way deceased **Cardinal Joseph Bernardin** of Chicago described his decision of long-ago that he would arise early every morning and dedicate the first moments of his day to God. We have begun the preparation for Easter and at least externally stored some Lenten resolutions in our thoughts. Our own memory tells us that the Holy Seasons up till now have not yielded the shifts and radical changes needed. Perhaps it will also not happen this time. What we can certainly do is - not dedicate to anyone else or anything else the time that is reserved for God. Thereby it is possible also to achieve the many other necessary Christian values.

Fr. Ivan Landeka

NEWS

ANNUAL APPARITION TO MIRJANA SOLDI ON MARCH 18, 2000

Dear children! Do not seek peace and happiness in vain, in the wrong places and in wrong things. Do not permit your hearts to become hard by loving vanity. Invoke the name of my Son. Receive Him in your heart. Only in the name of my Son will you experience true happiness and true peace in your heart. Only in this way will you come to know the love of God and spread it further. I am calling you to be my apostles.

The apparition started at 9:55 a. m. and lasted about 5 minutes. Our Lady prayed over everyone and blessed everyone. **Mirjana** especially recommended the sick. This time Our Lady did not say anything about the secrets.

VISIT OF BISHOP FROM THE CARIBBEAN

As we published in Bulletin No. 137, in **February Bishop**

Robert Rivas was in **MEDJUGORJE** for a private visit. Many pilgrims come to **MEDJUGORJE**, among them more and more priests, and men and women religious. It is completely natural also that more and more bishops are coming. According to the **Zadar declaration** of *April 1991*, the bishops should accompany the events in **MEDJUGORJE** in order to know where their faithful are going. We took advantage of this opportunity and spoke with **Msgr. Robert Rivas, Bishop of Saint Vincent** and the **Grenadines in the Caribbean Islands**, who spent ten days in **MEDJUGORJE**. We are grateful to him for being available to share his testimony with us. **Fr. Slavko Barbaric** spoke with **Bishop Rivas**. Here is a part of that conversation:

SB: Tell us a little about yourself first?

RR: My name is **Robert Rivas**. I was born in **Trinidad, Tobago**. I entered the religious life, the Dominican order, at the age of 18. I did my novitiate and studies in Ireland. I was ordained in 1971. I was born in June 1943. After my ordination in Trinidad, I went to the **Engelicum in Rome**, and completed my studies there -- I received a Baccalaureate license in Theology. I went back to Ireland and studied Communications, Radio and TV production. I was very interested in that kind of work. When I returned to Trinidad, my superior told me I had been gone too long, 8 1/2 years, and that I needed to be 'inculturated' again to the local situation. I worked in three parishes over 7 years. After 5 years I was given the job of Director of Communications which I did for 2 years and then I was appointed **Novice Master for the Dominicans in Formation**. I did this work for 10 years, preparing young men for the priesthood and religious life. I also was a **University Chaplain** for 6 years during that time. In the early 1980's I was given an appointment in **the Caribbean as the first Dominican to be the Assistant to the Master of the Dominican order in Rome for the promotion of Dominican life in the Caribbean**. The idea was to promote unity on the various existences of the **Dominicans** in the various dioceses in the Caribbean. There are at least 6 provinces within the Caribbean. My work was to coordinate all these groups toward common formation, -- the dream was to have a **Dominican** province in the Caribbean. I did that for 4 years and then I was appointed **Bishop of Saint Vincent, an island in the Caribbean**.

SB: When and how did you hear about **MEDJUGORJE** for the first time?

RR: In **Trinidad** a lot was going on in regard to **MEDJUGORJE**, and then already from the first days of the apparitions. One of the pilgrims invited me to come I only responded to the invitation in 1988. I was very happy and satisfied with my first visit to **MEDJUGORJE**, **BECAUSE I EXPERIENCED A RENEWAL OF FAITH AND LIFE BY THE FAITH OF THE PILGRIMS. A SPECIAL GRACE OF MEDJUGORJE IS THAT THE PRIESTS WHO COME WITH A**

GROUP, START TO MINISTER ESPECIALLY AS PRIESTS, MAKING THEMSELVES AVAILABLE FOR CONFESSION AND FOR CONVERSATIONS. THE GREATEST GRACE OF MEDJUGORJE REALLY IS CONFESSION. Pilgrims by their coming to **MEDJUGORJE** become eager to be active in their own parishes - both in regard to prayer and the sacramental life, and parish activities in general. Due to all that I experienced with the people, I have to say that a special work of grace exists here and that Mary is present. I really believe that Our Lady is speaking here.

SB: What convinced you the most and helped you to accept **MEDJUGORJE**?

RR: Again I have to say: **IT IS THE PILGRIMS WHO STARTED TO CHANGE THEIR LIFE HERE AND DECIDED TO LIVE THE FAITH.**

SB: Now you are in **MEDJUGORJE** the second time and no longer as a priest, but as a bishop. Now what can you say?

RR: I decided this time to come and to be in silence and to remain incognito. I wanted to make a retreat here and to be in silence. However, that did not happen, because pilgrims sought me out for confession and I also preached. I understood that my role also as a priest has changed. **THE LOVE OF THE FAITHFUL FOR A BISHOP ESPECIALLY TOUCHED ME. WHOEVER LOVES A BISHOP, LOVES THE CHURCH. THE HOLY SPIRIT IS AT WORK HERE. OUR LADY IS AT WORK HERE. I PERSONALLY WANT TO BE CONTINUALLY UNDER HER PROTECTION.**

SB: Would you like to say something from **MEDJUGORJE**?

RR: What I am trying to realize in my life is simplicity. I think I have learned simplicity in suffering in my priesthood, and I have grown in profound love for God, Our Lady, the Church and complete surrender to Christ. All that I want is to do God will and God's work. My message to the parish community, to the visionaries, to priests in the parish and to all pilgrims is that they be capable of surrendering their life completely to God and to be freed for love, that the gospel be lived in complete simplicity and beauty. I want for all of us to know that **Jesus is the King of our life**. We Catholics must be capable of showing the world the beauty of our faith with the help of Our Lady. I would recommend to everyone to come to **MEDJUGORJE**, because here they will deepen their faith for the Church and Our Lady and thus become good witnesses to others of the good news. And in **MEDJUGORJE** the good news is: Peace.

SB: Thank you for this conversation and we promise you our prayers. **(Emphasis added by Editor and Publisher)**

VISIT OF A BISHOP FROM BRAZIL

From *March 3- 5th, 2000* **Bishop Joao E. M. Terra** was on a private visit in **MEDJUGORJE**. He is the **Auxiliary**

Bishop of Brasilia in Brazil. This was his second visit to **MEDJUGORJE.**

A HEART FOR OUR LADY

On the path to **Cross Mountain** a group of **Polish** pilgrims from **Krakow** halted in prayer before the sculpture of Jesus resurrection and as a sign of love and gratitude toward Our Lady, made a large heart out of stones from the path around the one to whom they wrote out their wishes and prayers with the small stones. Truly extraordinary and touching.

SEMINARS IN "DOMUS PACIS"

During the past two weeks in the **DOMUS PACIS HOUSE OF PRAYER** Fr. Slavko Barbaric conducted two fasting and prayer seminars for young men in the Cenacle community who are being healed from drug dependency. About 80 young men took part in the seminars each of which lasted for a week.

In the same house of prayer from *March 3-5th*, Fr. **Branimir Musa** conducted a course for high school girls from **Zagreb**.

<http://www.tel.hr/MEDJUGORJE/enpb2000.html>

REFLECTIONS on OUR LADY's MESSAGE of MARCH 25, 2000

Again I greet all those who are expecting and contemplating Mary's messages of **MEDJUGORJE**, and then trying to incorporate them in their daily lives. Before we look at the latest message, I wish to remind all of us what Mary told us in the message of February 2000. In that message there were after all three main points, that we awaken from the sleep of lack of faith and of sin because it is a time of grace, that we pray for the healing of hearts so that we may be able look at God and the other people with our hearts, that we pray for the experience of God's love for those people who have not yet experienced it, and that we may with our lives show others God's immeasurable love for us. The lack of faith itself and every sin is essentially a real sleep, and here we just have to think of Jesus' words which He took from the Prophets: "These people have eyes, but cannot see, have ears and cannot hear." So here it really concerns an inner blindness and deafness. This time of the apparitions as well as this time of Lent are both times of grace in which we again ought to awaken, and let us work on this during this Lent, also especially because we accept Mary's messages and believe that it is She who is speaking to us. So it is our real assignment with which we may never become tired and in which we must really stay awake and continue seeing where we should awaken or where we are still asleep. Sleep comes easiest when I am unable to see the relationships with others that do not succeed. We always see and expect that which the others are meant to do for us, but when they do not do it for us, then we remain wounded and thus permit sinful behavior toward them. The true form of being awake with the heart begins when we begin to see what we do for or against the others. And then along with

this humility must also be in place, because only then are we able to ask for forgiveness and thus reconcile, and there where we have humility and love, there we also able to live in peace. We are all wounded because we expect very much from the others but at the same time are not willing to give them what they expect of us. This is why we remain wounded and it is through our woundedness that we do evil things or justify our sinful behavior. Every one of us need a healing of the heart so that we become able to see God and the others around us with our hearts. There the question, "How do I see the others?" is a good one for us to ask ourselves. I can see the others with the eyes of love, mercy and goodness and in so doing always create good relationships, or I can see them with the eyes of egotism, pride, envy, laziness, and dependency, because then I will always have reasons to judge or complain about the others. How often have we made the others sound bad because our pride or egotism were wounded? How often were we like that rather than saying, 'I was an egotist' and expected this or that from the others and because they did not do it, they were bad. I should have simply said that I was proud and egotistical. When we see the others with love, then we will primarily see the others as people, and only then perhaps their sins. The other question is how do I see God? We can see God only in that we expect something from Him and thus our prayers themselves are only egotistical because we ask that He do something for us. If we see God only that way we will also very quickly have problems with Him and then complain about Him and accuse Him of everything that is not going well. But we can also see God the way that Mary is teaching us when She told us in one message: "Seek God not because you need something, but because He loves you." Doing that would be a true healing. The third point is that it is our assignment to always pray that others, who have yet to experience God's love, may also come to experience God's love, because only love can bring us to new relationships with God and with the others. And here not merely our prayers but also our example are mandatory, because it is also our lives that should help the others to discover the God and His immeasurable love for us. So let us pray for this without ever tiring of it.

Regarding the visionaries we can say the following: Vicka is here at home and untiringly speaks with the pilgrims while we are soon expecting Ivan to return to **MEDJUGORJE** with his wife and now two children. Ivanka and Jacov are also here with their families. Marija had been here since March 18 with her children, while Mirjana and her family are also at home. Mirjana had her yearly apparition on March 18 but Mary already told her on March 2 that she would appear to her on the 18th at 10 o'clock. The prayers were organized at the Cenacolo Community and a great number of people came to pray. At 10:55 Mary came and stayed for about five minutes. Mirjana told us that Mary prayed over everyone and blessed everyone, and Mirjana especially recommended the sick. This time Mary did not speak about the secrets but she

again gave us a message.

Dear children! Do not seek peace and happiness in vain, in the wrong places and in wrong things. Do not permit your hearts to become hard by loving vanity. Invoke the name of my Son. Receive Him in your heart. Only in the name of my Son will you experience true happiness and true peace in your heart. Only in this way will you come to know the love of God and spread it further. I am calling you to be my apostles.

And so in this message it again concerns a call about our seeking peace and happiness in the wrong places and wrong things, and so it always concerns a call concerning our conversion. So it is important to come to see where we are really seeking our well-being, our luck and our peace. Recognizing where we are seeking these and then changing this, is also a grace. Our hearts very easily become hard when we turn toward the world and that is because we love the world. That is why we so often do not hear what God is telling us, and therefore we can understand why people turn to God and open themselves to Him only once they are having a bad time or when they have arrived at the end of a dead-end road. Only when we have hit the wall hard with our own heads do we really start thinking. Mary tells us to call on the name of Jesus and His name is He, the person. ***Saint*** Paul tells us: "In this name we are saved." Whoever is able to say "Jesus is my Lord" is simply His. We are supposed to take Jesus into our hearts, because only in this way will we ever come to experience real peace and also God's infinite love. Mary calls us to become Her Apostles because anyone who has experienced God's love can and will become an Apostle. One is simply unable to hide love because love will then lead our lives, and then in our behavior, more easily than in our words, the others will then come to recognize love, because if we speak nicely but behave differently, then we will not remain credible. And so we wish to pay more attention now and throughout the rest of this year for where we are seeking our peace and our well-being. We should ask God and His light to show us where these places and things are and then leave them and then chose good places and things in which to seek our peace and well-being. We can also perhaps unite this intention with this Jubilee Year when we are called, by the Church to travel to good places and also to the places where we have been promised a plenary indulgence. This is a time of grace, as Mary constantly is reminding us, and so we may not circumvent this grace because God, in His goodness and His love, is giving this gift to us.

The serious streams of pilgrims have again begun to return to return to **MEDJUGORJE**, and right now there are again pilgrims from every part of the world and this was especially the case for the Feast of the Annunciation. If I just scan who is here then there are at least 700 pilgrims from Hungary and many from Romania, the Czech Republic, many French, Austrians, Germans, Italians, Irish,

Americans and also a large number of Croatians who came spontaneously because they have been able to tell that their country again needs Our Lady's help.

Mary again gave us a message on the 25th of the month and Mary is again repeating things that She has said before.

PRAY AND MAKE GOOD USE OF THIS TIME

I am sure that it is clear to all of us that in nearly every message Mary has been calling us to prayer. She also said "pray and make good use of this time" in last month's message and I believe that if She is saying this so often that we should really take this seriously and ignore all excuses that we might be able to come up with that we are unable to pray. Mary most certainly knows why She is saying these words so often and even if we do not know why, we should still be able to hear them and then accept them. In this spirit it is very important that we accept Mary as our mother, because every good child, even if it does not understand why, will still do what its mother says, and I hope that all of us have already learned that we only can come to understand things when we have begun to do them. We must ask ourselves with what does our time pass? For what are we using it? When it is said so often and also correctly 'time is money' we can say, 'time is grace'. Lost time is therefore, lost grace. What happens to our time in relationship to prayer? Many people complain that they do not have enough time for prayer and therefore do not pray or pray very little. It is not time that is the problem. The key for proper use of this time is not the hours, but is love. So when we know for what we have the most time, then we will also know what we are loving. In the process of conversion, we should examine our use of time. A priest spoke about time in the following manner... if you work for ten hours, you are still left with fourteen hours. If you sleep for eight hours, then we are still left with six hours. If you need to eat for two hours, you are still left with four hours. If you watch television for four hours, you are still left with two hours. Could you not just use those last two hours for prayer? Time there always is, but for what we use it, depends on love!!! Make good use of this time...

BECAUSE THIS IS A TIME OF GRACE

This expression can be understood from two sides. First, from the very beginning of the apparitions until this very moment it has been a great time of grace for this Parish as well as for every one of the many millions pilgrims who either have returned to their faith or who have had an easier decision to pray, to fast, to attend Mass and go to Confession. But, on the other hand, it is also Lent and according to the Church Liturgy we are also called upon to use this time to again convert in that we do acts of penance. It is a time of grace. From God's perspective, all time is a time of grace. God loves us and wishes to make us great gifts. So from His perspective, there is never a better or a worse moment because He is always ready to give, but from our perspective we are able to speak of times of grace because we are more open. A time of grace, from our

perspective, is also a time when we must suffer, because suffering often makes it clear to us what we are doing wrong and then we turn toward God and thereby convert ourselves. But let us also pray that every one of us, and all people, accept this time of grace. Moreover since it is also a Jubilee Year, and thus the year in which the Holy Father in Rome has said to all of us that it is a Year of Grace and, therefore, there are different towns and churches where believers, if they fulfill the conditions, can also attain plenary indulgences. It is a time of grace when we pray and when, like the Pope says, we wish and pray for reconciliation inside the Church and among all Christian Churches as well as among all religions. Mary says...

I AM WITH YOU

We all know that there is not a single new message that has been given in **MEDJUGORJE** when we hear "peace," convert yourselves, pray, fast, believe, love, reconcile yourselves or when we hear about the Rosary, the Mass, Confession, reading the **Bible**. All these have been taken from either the **Bible** or from Catholic tradition, and so there are no new messages in the monthly messages. All this we can do, but there is a new message and that is Mary's presence with us here in **MEDJUGORJE**. And this new message is that She has been here with us now for some 18 years and 9 months by way of Her daily apparitions, and Her weekly and then monthly messages here. For many who only look at **MEDJUGORJE** from the outside, it is a real problem because they ask themselves why Mary has stayed here for so long and why on a daily basis, and therefore can one believe this? For us who believe that Mary is continuing to appear here, the special message is Her presence here and the special grace that God has given us during this long time by way of Mary's presence here. In the Biblical revelation one finds the words "I am with you, have no fear" some 365 times. Jesus often said this and also after the Resurrection when He said "peace be with you, have no fear, it is I." Man needs the presence of God, for otherwise he remains fearful. Mary is Jesus' mother, the Emmanuel's mother, and thus the mother of the God "who is with us"; and therefore she can also speak of this presence. She is with us as mother. **MEDJUGORJE** can only be explained properly by way of Mary's presence here. It can not be explained in any other way. When someone wishes to explain **MEDJUGORJE** in some other manner, then he very soon becomes entangled in impossible situations. When one tries to explain **MEDJUGORJE** due to some disobedience, or lies, or some manipulation, then one soon arrives at the end of a dead-end. The so many good fruits themselves speak for the reality of Mary's presence here, and any manipulations have never brought and will never bring about any such good fruits. And these good fruits are themselves the primary criteria. There are people who act and write against **MEDJUGORJE**, and one of these said that the conversions in **MEDJUGORJE** are happening based on nothing. When someone says or believes such a thing, then one must immediately ask how it is possible for

something good to come about based on nothing. Mary is with us and for this we wish to be grateful. When Mary says...

AND I INTERCEDE FOR EACH OF YOU BEFORE GOD

...we already know that Mary is our mother and our intercessor, and that She helps us in that She prays for us. She is a mighty intercessor and She does so for every one of us. When we see Her as the new Eve, as the woman who fights against Satan, then we can also say the following... Satan accuses the brothers, so it says in the **Bible**, and Mary does it exactly the other way around, in that She helps us, interceding for us. She knows that we need Her, she loves us and therefore intercedes for us before God so that we may encounter Emmanuel, Her Son. She has no other wish but to lead us all to Her Son, and therefore She is the Mediatrix and therefore She is our mother and therefore we may deduce that we always ought to have hope because we have a mother in Heaven who speaks on and intercedes on our behalf.

FOR YOUR HEART TO OPEN TO GOD AND TO GOD'S LOVE

Mary prays for us so that our hearts may open themselves to God and to His love. So in this message Her purpose has but once again been expressed very clearly. We know for what She prays and it concerns the same thing when She says that we ought to pray for those who have yet experienced God's love. When She says that She is praying for our hearts to open themselves to God and to His love, then we ought to ask ourselves what it is that closes us from God and from His love? And what is it that helps us to open ourselves to God and to His love? It is only our pride, our egotism, our selfishness, our wishes in which we follow our own will and listen only to ourselves that will close us to God, to His love and to His will. Every dependency and every turning toward this world rather than to Him will close us. The good that we have can also close us from God because we somehow have decided that we can be alone and do not need God. This is the greatest of all deceptions to which man can fall victim! Where man wishes to make himself independent from God, there he is signing his own, his family's as well as other people's death warrant. God has revealed Himself as our Father and His Son says "I am the way, the truth, the life and the light" and so He wishes to serve us and so we have no reasons at all to close ourselves from Him or to be fearful of Him. When we have sinned we may come to Him because He is merciful, but also difficulties and problems can close us from God in that we then judge or accuse God for our situation. But we may also hope that exactly our difficulties and problems may also have us come closer to God and to His love; moreover, many people have witnessed precisely this experience - that when they found themselves in that dead-end road, they then started to pray and to think, and, in so doing, found their way to God. So it should really become a joy for us to

know at every moment that Mary is in fact praying for us. So when we have just once been touched by God's love for us, then we know that everything will turn out for the good. Then...

PRAY WITHOUT CEASING

We certainly have, speaking generally, problems with prayer, especially when we hear "pray without ceasing", because, for instance, we are unable to pray the Rosary without ceasing, and we are unable to be in Church or at Adoration without ceasing. For those prayers we must all take well-defined time and that is because we have been made this way. But still prayer without ceasing is possible when we come to realize that prayer is an encounter. We can encounter God everywhere because God is everywhere, and if we have an open heart for God and have been touched by His love then we will recognize Him in our lives, in all that we do, in all encounters with others and in our encounter also with nature. As we all know from Mathew, Chapter 25, Jesus says that in every person, and most especially in every suffering person, we find Jesus and every encounter with Jesus that happens with love for the people is in fact an encounter with Jesus. Mary calls us to pray...

UNTIL PRAYER BECOMES A JOY FOR YOU

When we come to love God and have come to feel God's love for us, then we will certainly always have joy even when we suffer because it is in everything that we encounter God. Here we must however emphasize that we must pray for this grace because many people and sadly, even many Christians have never had a good relationship with prayer. Even many who do pray do not experience joy and prayer and it remains difficult and therefore do not like to pray. The first step has already happened, and that is that Mary is praying for each of us so that prayer may become a joy for us. If we decide for prayer, then we should never pay any attention to our feelings but simply to stay loyal to doing so. Then there is the formal prayer with the Rosary, Holy Mass, Adoration, Confession and reading Holy Scripture and when these become a joy for us, then our entire life will soon become a joy and even when we suffer. We who are so often plagued by problems and worries can so easily fall into sadness, endless worrying and feelings of uselessness. We Christians should never have reasons for this to occur because God is with us and one can say, especially there, where things are the hardest for us. One thing again remains to be emphasized and that is that THIS A TIME OF GRACE and Mary is calling upon us to MAKE GOOD USE OF THIS TIME. Therefore, we especially from now until Easter, really ought to decide to pray, to fast and to do good works. Once we have done this and been touched by God's love, then we will be touched again and this time more deeply than before and then be carried by God all the way. This will then also mean a resurrection for us and for which we now also wish to pray...

God, our Father, we thank You that You have, out of Your love for us, given us Your Son and that He did not even protect Himself from all suffering only so that He could be our salvation. Give us the grace that we may in the suffering of Your Son recognize Your love for us, that our hearts may open themselves to You and to your love. We bring before You our hearts and we ask that You cleanse us of everything that closes us from You, so that we may, in every situation of our lives, remain open to You and to Your love. God, our Father, give us the grace of prayer without ceasing, that we may recognize and then meet You, our Father, in every creature, in every person and in everything that we experience in our lives. We ask of You now on behalf of our families, of all pilgrims and of the whole world that during this time of grace that everyone may touched by Your love and that we may all open ourselves to You and to Your love. Touch with Your love, the people who still are running their own lives with a lack of faith, and touch all those who are still in sin because their hearts are only turned toward the world. In a special way we ask You on behalf of all those people who have placed themselves, other people or only the material world at the first place in their lives, so that they may be freed and they then may come to adore and pray to You, the only true God. We also ask You on behalf of those people who find themselves under the influence of evil and for those who have given their entire lives to things that are evil, that You may, through Your Son, Jesus Christ free them, so that they, too, may come to live in true freedom and that they may then encounter You and Your love. God, our Father, bless us, our families, all pilgrims, the entire Church and the whole world that we may, during this Jubilee Year, be ready to forgive one another, that forgiveness may come into the Church and among all other Churches and Communities, and that all of them may find unity, that all races may be healed of all effects of war and so that they may all live in peace. For this we ask you in the name of Your Son, Jesus, along with Mary, our Queen of Peace. May it be so, peace be with all of you!

Fra Slavko Barbaric
MEDJUGORJE; March 28, 00

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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.

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 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 People being blessed should not be misled into thinking that blessing by the laity in any way replaces blessing by a priest, whose Holy Hands are consecrated by the Bishop in the sacrament of Holy Orders.

We request a \$5 donation per small bottle. This covers \$3 for the bottle, packaging and special handling plus \$2 mailing or postage expense.

2000 PFMC RETREAT CONFERENCE TAPES

Bob Pladek of **Catholic Focus Productions, Inc.** did an excellent job of taping the speakers at the most recent and

all of the past **PFMC RETREAT CONFERENCE** events. An order form is enclosed for those who may not have made the event but wish to obtain the wonderful audio tapes. Note that the two talks by **Father William Ashley** were replaced with talks by **Father Bill McCarthy** and **Father Andrew John Winchek**. You may call 1 800-TAPES-123 if you do not find any order form enclosed. The entire set is **\$65 plus \$4 shipping**.

LETTERS / CARDS / e-MAIL

Dear Keith and Kathleen and Staff,

Thank you for putting together such an awesome retreat weekend. How blessed you are to be called to such a wonderful ministry. Kathleen I hope you are feeling better. I continue to pray for you and your husband and all the workers at the PFMC.

I have never in my life felt the Holy Spirit in such a way that I'm sure will never leave me. My prayer life has been enriched thanks to your efforts, and the Love of Our Lord. God Bless you, Your sister in Christ

Mary

Dear Kathleen and Keith and Staff,

Thank you so very much for the beautiful retreat. It definitely was life changing for me.

I just listened to the tape on Prayer and am convinced that Fr. Bill McCarthy is a modern day apostle.

Kathleen, I hope and pray that the Lord is touching you with His healing love every moment and bringing you to perfect health so that you and Keith can continue to do the Fathers work for many more years. Prayerfully and Gratefully,

Helen B.

Dear Kathleen and Keith

What a fantastic Conference! Dom and I want to thank you both for the privilege of being able to share in all the blessings.

Being a Vendor was quite a new experience for Dom but through it we were able to share the "Good News" with so many old friends and new ones as well.

Saturday Mass was one we will never forget. Father Semana was a joy to behold. It opened up a deeper meaning of the Mass for me and a new searching to participate to the full *Saint*

Kathleen you are constantly in our prayers for a complete recovery. God is using you in a powerful way and many souls are being saved because of it. Fr. John offered the Healing Mass for you last night. The sense of the evening was how deep and abiding the love of God is for us and how much we should rejoice in that love.

We feel so united with you as couples in Ministry. We pray it will be God's will for you to come on the radio. You have so much to give and so many hungry souls out there. We really believe in this Jubilee Year that it is a time

of favor from the Lord and the “captives” will be set free..
We love you,

Joan and Dom

Dear Kathleen,

The children loved the blue rosary beads. We are learning the Sorrowful mysteries for Lent. I came to you at the conference when you were flat on your back. Please, if you would like, drop a simple note to the children as they pray for you. They are so encouraged when they hear from others in answer to their prayers.

(Children, thank you for your prayers. I have deeply needed them, and because of them I have been able to offer up a lot of pain for souls. Keep praying Mother Mary’s rosary for it is a ladder to Heaven)

Kathleen

Dear Staff,

A sincere thank you for arranging a most blessed retreat. My faith and spirituality were most definitely brought to another level. Praise be Jesus and Mary! Please extend my heartfelt appreciation to all the priests for their devout participation and wonderful teachings. I couldn’t help but feel how pleased God must be with them and all of you at the Center. What would we do without our priests?

Fr. McCarthy’s teachings especially touched my heart. I received such confirmation from God that He wanted me there. I will be there for the entire retreat including Fr. DeGrandis’ extended teachings.

It’s wonderful work that you do for Jesus and our Catholic faith. Many thanks to all of your volunteers who helped you make it possible. God Bless everyone,

Maryanne H.

Kathleen is recovering but slowly. She has what is called Piriformis Syndrome due to an injury to the sciatic nerve during the fall she had on 2/14/2000 while delivering packages to a Post Office. She is progressing with Physical Therapy and dealing with the tired feeling. It will be awhile before she fully regains use of her left leg. Please continue prayers for her.

Keith

NOTICES for **PFMC** AREA EVENTS

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 to support events for which you have an interest. Thank you.

Pilgrimage to MEDJUGORJE and Rome and Assisi

Want to pilgrimage to **MEDJUGORJE** and **Rome** and **Assisi** for **June 20 thru 30, 2000** for **\$2499**? Want to visit **Rome** with an opportunity to obtain a **JUBILEE INDULGENCE** from the Holy Father by going through doors of all 4 major basilicas? If interested, call **Kathleen** at **Pilgrims of Faith Marian Center (PFMC)**, (856) 768-9228.

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Pilgrimage to MEDJUGORJE and Rome and Assisi

Want to pilgrimage to **MEDJUGORJE** and **Rome** and **San Giovanni Rotundo (Blessed Padre Pio)** for **August 15 thru 26, 2000** for **\$2655**? Want to visit **Rome** with an opportunity to obtain a **JUBILEE INDULGENCE** from the Holy Father by going through doors of all 4 major basilicas? If interested, call **Kathleen** at **Pilgrims of Faith Marian Center (PFMC)**, (856) 768-9228.

Pilgrimage to MEDJUGORJE and Rome and Assisi

Want to pilgrimage to **MEDJUGORJE** and **Rome** and **Assisi** for **September 24 thru October 6, 2000** for **\$2550**? Want to visit **Rome** with an opportunity to obtain a **JUBILEE INDULGENCE** from the Holy Father by going through doors of all 4 major basilicas and attend the Canonization of Blessed Catherine Drexel? If interested, call **Kathleen** at **Pilgrims of Faith Marian Center (PFMC)**, (856) 768-9228.

Pilgrimage to the Holy Land

Want a wonderful, gentle paced pilgrimage to see where Jesus walked in the **Holy Land** with a requested donation as reasonable as possible to include all morning and evening meals, transportation, overnight accommodations and full spiritual program? Can you depart on **November 1, 2000** for **14-15 full holy days**? We are planning to stay overnight in convents, monasteries or hotels that will provide an atmosphere for a year 2000 pilgrimage you will never forget. We are currently planning to have **40** seats available and transfer through **Rome** with an opportunity to obtain a **JUBILEE INDULGENCE**. **We are now taking names of seriously interested pilgrims**. If you are interested, please send your name and address to **Pilgrims of Faith Marian Center (PFMC)**, 61 Cooper Road, Voorhees, NJ 08043-4963.

Thanks again for your assistance, we really need it.

Keith and Kathleen

CATHOLIC TALK RADIO

If you live in the **Delaware Valley** or **Southern New Jersey**, listen to **In His Sign Ministries “Putting It On The Line,”** 5-6 PM, Monday-Friday on **WTMR-AM 800**.

Also listen to the extended **“HELP WAKE UP AMERICA”** from 2-2:45 PM, Monday-Friday on **WTMR-AM 800**.

Kathleen and **Keith** as well as others from the **PFMC** will be joining **Dom Lettieri** more frequently on **WTMR-AM 800** and plan to be there on Thursdays from 2:15 PM to 2:45 PM for **“PUT ON THE ARMOR OF GOD”** sponsored by the **PFMC**.

CALENDARS:

In *April*, the Church celebrates the Solemnities of *PASSION (PALM) SUNDAY (16)*, and *EASTER SUNDAY (23)*, the Feast of *Saint Mark, Evangelist (25)*, the Memorials of *Martin I, Pope (13)*, *Fidelis of Sigmaringen (24)*, *Peter Chanel (28)*, *Louis de Montfort (28)*, *Catherine of Siena (29)* and *Pius V, Pope (30)*. The *EASTER TRIDUUM* is *Holy Thursday (20)*, *Good Friday (21)* and *Holy Saturday (22)*.

The *FEAST of DIVINE MERCY*, not yet officially placed on the Church Calendar is celebrated by many churches as requested by Jesus in his Apparitions to *Blessed Faustina Kawalska* on the *SECOND SUNDAY of EASTER (30)*. *Pope John Paul II* has selected this day to Canonize *Sister Faustina* as a Saint of the *Roman Catholic Church*. The *DIVINE MERCY NOVENA* starts on *Good Friday*.

In *May*, the Church celebrates the Feasts of *Saints Philip and James (3)* and the *VISITATION (31)* and the Memorials of *Saints Joseph the Worker (1)*, *Athanasius (2)*, *Nereus (12)*, *Achilleus (12)*, *Pancras (12)*, *Isidore the Farmer (15)*, *Pope John I (18)*, *Bernardine of Siena (20)*, *Bede the Venerable (25)*, *Pope Gregory VII (25)*, *Mary Magdalene de Pazzi (25)*, *Philip Neri (26)* and *Augustine of Canterbury (27)*. The Church calendar recognizes *Mother Day (9)* and *Memorial Day (observed) (31)*.

AROUND the PFMC AREA

Sunday, 30 April 2000: The *FEAST of DIVINE MERCY* will be celebrated at *3 PM* in a number of area churches.

Christ the King Church in Haddonfield will host *Holy Mass* celebrated by *Father Tim Byerley*.

The PILGRIM

Pilgrims of Faith Marian Center (PFMC)
A Religious Association, Inc. - NON-PROFIT and
IRS Code 501(c)(3) TAX EXEMPT

Keith and Kathleen Werner,
Co-Directors, 61 Cooper Road,
Voorhees, NJ 08043-4963

(856) 768-9228 FAX: (856) 768-9428



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**PRIORITY DATED
RELIGIOUS MATERIAL**

*Mailed early AM,
Thursday, 4/13/2000*

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PLEASE DO NOT THROW THIS AWAY!!

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

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!*"



Reserve the weekend of *February 23rd, 24th and 25th 2001* for the **PFMC RETREAT CONFERENCE** at the **Four Points Hotel** in **Cherry Hill, NJ 08034**. **Speakers will be Fr. Hampsh with 3 day extension with Fr. Robert DeGrandis.**

Please make your **ROOM RESERVATIONS** on the list with the **Four Points Hotel, 1-800-257-8262, NOW** and plan to pre-register for the **RETREAT CONFERENCE** with the **PFMC** as soon as the information sheet with registration form becomes available.

For more information, call the **PFMC** at 856-768-9228.

INTERNET

Surf for the **PFMC** presence on the Internet at:

<http://www.geocities.com/pilgrimsfaith>

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

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.