



The **PILGRIM**

Vol. 11 No. 5 *Pilgrims of Faith Marian Center (PFMC)*

May 2000

Our Lady's MESSAGE of 4/25/2000 via Marija Pavlovic Lunetti and the Franciscans at Medjugorje

Dear Children! Also today I call you to conversion. You are concerned too much about material things and little about spiritual ones. Open your hearts and start again to work more on your personal conversion. Decide everyday to dedicate time to God and to prayer until prayer becomes a joyful meeting with God for you. Only in this way will your life have meaning and with joy you will contemplate eternal life. Thank you for having responded to my call.

Father Slavko Barbaric's REFLECTION begins on page 20

A PRAYER

Oh Lord, through Saint Louis de Montfort, You gave us the private devotion to consecrate our lives through the Immaculate Heart of Mary. It is in this prayer that we totally give over all of our property, our possessions, our lives, our families, daily actions, sufferings, and joys. Lord, help us in this surrender, and help us to place all trust in your Sacred Heart through Our Lady's intercession. You immerse us in the fountain of Your Love, the abyss of total union with You.

We have placed all of the buildings, property, vans and means of transportation, volunteers, readers and pilgrims, and work of evangelization of the one true Catholic faith into the two hearts Jesus and Mary. Continue to bless us in every way, that we may all find holiness as we come closer to our Heavenly goal.

Thank you, Lord, for all you have given us to share with others. May we continue to be instruments of your peace and love. Help us to continue to bring to others the love we have for our Catholic faith.

AMEN!

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

PHONES

The **Pilgrims of Faith Marian Center (PFMC)** phone system at Epiphany House has been set up so that all previously used numbers ring through Epiphany House. When no one is at Epiphany House, particularly at night and on weekends, (856) 768-9228 and (856) 753-9252 ring over to new unlisted phone lines at 129 Deerfield Avenue. When the ring through is active because no one is picking

"The PILGRIM" for May 2000 is dedicated to "Our Lady, Brightness of Everlasting Light." The Table of Contents / "IN THIS ISSUE . . ." is on page 3.

up at **Epiphany House**, some extra rings will be heard before you can leave a message. Please be patient and wait at least 5 or 6 rings.

All FAX messages should be sent to (856) 768-9428. They go to the FAX machine in **Epiphany House**.

PLEASE BOOK EARLIER IF YOU WANT TO GO ON PILGRIMAGE THIS JUBILEE YEAR!

The airlines and hotels are asking for names for all Jubilee Year pilgrimages. Because of the large numbers of people leaving for **Europe** for the Jubilee Year, hotels and airlines are overbooked and requiring names as well as deposits to hold confirmed space. We will need to release unnamed airline seats and rooms on pilgrimages where we do not have names and deposits to cover the airline and hotel deposits at 60 days and 30 days before departure.

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.

19th ANNIVERSARY PILGRIMAGE to MEDJUGORJE, ROME and ASSISI

We still have a few seats and overnight accommodations without names booked but with deposits made by us to hold seats and rooms for this beautiful pilgrimage to **Medjugorje, Rome** and **Assisi** which departs from **Newark, NJ**, on **June 20, 2000**, and returns on **June 30, 2000**. It is exceptionally well priced at **\$2499**. **Father Michael Culkin** will be Spiritual Director. **Terry Bright, OCDS (Discalced Carmelite), 717-569-6330**, will be the Coordinator. It is important for you to know that **we have written confirmation of the air seats and the overnight accommodations**. We need your **NAME** and **FULL PAYMENT** by **EXPRESS MAIL** or call **Kathleen / Dotty** at **856-768-9228** with a credit card.

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 near **Rome**. The itinerary has been well publicized and there are plenty of PINK information sheets and reservations forms in circulation. If you do not have one, find a FAX machine, even in the corner sandwich shop, and call us with the number. We will FAX you a form upon receipt of your call.

PILGRIMAGE to MEDJUGORJE for YOUTH MONTH then ROME and PADRE PIO

Michael McColgan will be leading a pilgrimage to **Medjugorje** departing **Newark** on *August 15th 2000*. The Spiritual Director will be **Father Ronald Falatico** of **Saint Peter Parish, Pleasantville, NJ**. Pilgrims will be in **Medjugorje** until *August 20th 2000*.

Returning to **Italy** pilgrims will go directly for 2 *nights* in **San Giovanni Rotundo** on the **Gargano** where **Blessed Padre Pio** is buried and then on to **Rome** for 4 *nights*. Not only will the group visit the home of **Blessed Padre Pio** until his death, they will also stop at **Monte Sant Angelo** to see the shrine grotto of **Saint Michael the Archangel** and then visit the **Church of the Eucharistic Miracle in Lanciano** on the way to **Rome**.

This pilgrimage includes round trip air fare from **Newark** to **Split, Croatia** via **Rome** and return *August 26th 2000* with Holy Mass and religious program daily. Tour the major basilicas in **Rome** as well as the **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. Overnight accommodations (double occupancy) include all breakfasts and suppers, as well as 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 11 or the light yellow information sheet enclosed. **Mail your coupon with deposit to PFMC**. Call **Kathleen** or **Dotty** at 856-768-9228.

MARK McCOLGAN PASSES ON

We wish to lift up the soul of **Mark McColgan** who died *April 6th* in heart surgery. **Mark** volunteered at the **PFMC** ever since **Mike** first went to **Medjugorje** with us in *1989*.

He was always here when we needed him.

Mark had a massive heart attack and was a candidate for heart transplant. The Lord gave him enough time to for the family to gather around him in his last hours. **Mike** and **Mark's** wife, **Barbara**, said **Mark** was in perfect resignation and peace.

Mark loved to come to the **PFMC** and we loved having him. He was always cheerful with so many stories to tell. He took an interest in everyone, and was always so loving and gentle in spirit. His love for **Our Lady** radiated from his eyes. We pray for those of his family and especially his wife, **Barbara**, and sons, **Mike** and **Sean**, who are in sorrow and missing him. We ask **Mark** to keep an eye on the **PFMC** and its volunteers from up above.

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.

PILGRIMAGE to MEDJUGORJE, ROME, for the CANONIZATION of BLESSED CATHERINE DREXEL and the CONSECRATION of the WORLD including RUSSIA, 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 pass through the Holy Doors of four major basilicas with an opportunity for the Jubilee Blessing. Pilgrims will have seats for the **Canonization** of **Blessed Catherine Drexel** on *October 1, 2000* and then visit **Assisi** for 4 *days* during the Papal visit there. There are additional opportunities for the Jubilee Blessing in **Assisi** as well as **Santa Maria degli Angli** where the **Portiuncula Chapel** is located. Pilgrims will return to **Rome** and be present for the **Collegial Consecration of the World and Russia** as an additional effort on the part of **Pope John Paul II** to satisfy all that he has met **Our Lady's Fatima** request.

This pilgrimage includes round trip air from **Newark** departing *September 24, 2000* to **Split, Croatia** via **Rome** and return *October 9, 2000*, all transfers, housing and hotel, breakfasts and suppers, tour of **Rome** and **Medjugorje**, see the visionaries, private homes of the residents in **Medjugorje** with **English** speaking guide. Insurance encouraged and available. Escort and guides throughout. Package price is **\$2899** including all taxes. Tips, beverages, and laundry are not included. Spiritual Director is still to be determined with coordination by **Kathleen Werner** assisted by **Pat Kinneman**. Please complete the registration coupon at the bottom of page 12

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**.

or the aqua information sheet enclosed. Mail your coupon with deposit to **PFMC**.

PRAYERS FOR OUR BELOVED DEAD

O Most Blessed Virgin Mary, my Mother, I turn to thee in supplication. By that sword which pierced thy sorrowful heart when thou didst behold thy beloved Son, Jesus Christ, bow down His head and give up the ghost, I pray and beseech thee to help the holy souls in purgatory, and particularly those for whom I now pray. (Pause: mention the names of the beloved dead for whom you are praying.)

Mother of Sorrows, Queen of Martyrs, for the love of thy Divine Son, Whose precious blood was shed for us, help us with thy powerful intercession, who are in danger not only of falling into purgatory, but of losing our souls forever in hell. O Mary, Mother of Grace, Mother of Mercy, pray for us now and at the hour of our death. Eternal Father, through the most precious blood of Jesus and the sorrows of Mary, have pity upon the holy souls in purgatory. Amen.

(Novena Book In Honor of Our Lady of the Prairies - Our Lady of the Fields)

IN MEMORIAM

The **PFMC** has lost another wonderful volunteer and friend, **Caroline Hale**. We are all still in shock and, in our own way, grieving because she was so dear to us.

Caroline gave many of us wonderful days of sharing and laughter. She would come to the **PFMC** with her little dog, **Megan**, and spend hours "fixing up things", answering phones, and folding newsletters, and doing all sorts of little things that helped **Kathleen** and **Dotty**. Often she would just come and stay for the weekend with **Keith** and **Kathleen**, and was always a delight.

Last summer, **Caroline** and **Kathleen** canned 10 bushels of Italian tomatoes into Italian sauce . . . a first try for both of them. It turned out "yummy". Her loss has deeply touched all of us. We console **Jason** her son and the family in their grief, and we join in many many prayers for **Caroline's** soul. May she finally be in peace.

We love you **Caroline** and we miss you very much. Pray for us and for the **PFMC** you so loved to work in.

ANNUAL POT-LUCK PICNIC and PFMC MEETING COMING UP - MARK YOUR CALENDARS for 8/20/2000

We annually have a picnic and **PFMC** meeting. This year it will be the *Third Sunday in August – 8/20/2000*.

We will combine this with an open house for those who have not yet seen the **Epiphany House**.

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The picnic and meeting will still be held at the **Werner** home at **129 Deerfield Avenue, Marlton, NJ** because it is so nice to enjoy the swimming in the pool on a hot *August* afternoon. Directions may be found in the centerfold of the *March 2000* issue of **“The PILGRIM”** or we can send them to you.

The picnic is pot luck - bring a casserole or a dessert to share and, if you wish, something to cook for yourself on the grill. If you aren’t a casserole fixer, bring a bucket of chicken or package of ribs! Around **3 PM**, we pray the Chaplet of Divine Mercy on our Rosary and hold a brief meeting to fulfill our federal government requirements for an annual meeting. One of our priest spiritual directors will give a short talk.

We always have a lot of fun...so good to see pilgrims, acquaintances, readers of **“The PILGRIM”** and their

friends. Please, make a point that if you have never come to a reunion picnic you will come this year, and if you come every year, bring your friends and introduce them to our work. **Keith** will run van loads of the curious over to **Epiphany House** for tours of the new building. We may move the meeting there if it is inclement (rainy) weather.

YOUR FINANCIAL HELP

Because the **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.

BIBLE STUDY

Our bible study on the 2nd and 4th Mondays at 7:30 PM is going very well. All are welcome. We have had several meetings now and are studying **Genesis**. Each night is a program within itself, so you can come at any time and pick up easily. Those who have been coming are quite excited at what we are beginning to see and learn. Consider if you have a group studying at your house, that you might all join us. The gathering is in the upstairs Great Room at **Epiphany House, 61 Cooper Road, Voorhees, NJ**. We hope to see you all there. The book and religious article area will be open after each gathering.

The following dates are for you to put on your calendars: *May 8th and 22nd, June 12th and 26th, July 10th and 24th, August 7th and 21st.*

HEALING PROGRAM

Have you felt that you would like to learn more about spiritual healing, laying on of hands, and praying with others? If you are interested in such a program, please call **Kathleen**. This program is being considered for the fall.

RADIO PROGRAM

Dom Lettieri, host of **In His Sign Ministries "Putting It On The Line,"** 5-6 PM, Monday-Friday on **WTMR-**

The PILGRIM

AM 800 has approached us to start a **PFMC** program one time a week. We have agreed to do a **PFMC** program and are setting up a start up date with him. We will broadcast from the gathering room upstairs at **61 Cooper Rd**.

Our goal is to provide solid Catholic faith material, (i.e., sacraments, discussions on the Eucharist, prayer for healing, maybe some call ins). We'd like to have discussion for promotion of Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, as well as the rubrics and parts of the Holy Mass, the rosary and **Our Lady**, and the role of Roman Catholics in Evangelization of our faith. We plan to have priests and nuns as guests whenever possible.

The theme of the **PFMC** program will be "**Put on the Armor of God.**" If you would like to sponsor a program either in memory of a loved one, or as a donation from yourself, we would greatly appreciate your help. The **PFMC** half-hour weekly program will cost about \$85.

We will establish a **PFMC RADIO TIME FUND** and try to build up some reserves for future weeks. In time, if we see support for it, and more time is offered to us, we might be open to extending the **PFMC** time to a full hour with definite call-in TALK RADIO time. This would increase the phone bills and cost to about \$200 per show. Please would you consider helping us make all this possible?

We have often been guests on **Dom's** program, and have found it to be a real source of reaching many souls. We thank **Dom** and his board for asking us to do our own program, and offering us to share the time with us.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

We need volunteers to help in the **PFMC** daily. If you have time during your week, and can help with answering telephones, filling mail orders, typing material, maintaining our mailing lists, cleaning, maintaining inventory on the computer, helping with mailings, etc. we ask you to call us, or just come in. We will give you a good orientation, and make use of the gifts that God has given you. We need you for a few hours to full days each week. If you can only come once a month, we can use you to help with the processing of the BULK MAIL each month. We want to keep the **PFMC** open from 10:AM to 5 PM daily. In order to do this we need a solid list of volunteers we can count on to meet their scheduled times. Please come and see the new **PFMC**. We know you will enjoy what you see and finding a way of helping out.

CONGRATULATIONS - KATHERINE AND RALPH BAGNATO

Keith and **Kathleen** are to become grandparents for the first time, and the excitement of planning and preparing is such fun. Their daughter, **Katherine**, and her husband, **Ralph Bagnato**, found out that they are expecting TWINS.

The ultrasound has shown the babies to be identical twin boys! They are due in *July* but expected to be delivered early - near the end of *June*.

Please pray for healthy babies, a persevering mom, **Katherine**, anxious grand mom-moms, **Rita** and **Kathleen**, grand pop-pops, **Ralph** and **Keith**, and a safe delivery. And pray for dad, **Ralph**, too - he's still in awe!

Congratulations, and our prayers and best wishes!

PRAYER for SPECIAL FAVOR

O my dearest Mother Mary Queen of the Prairies, behold me, your child, at your feet. I have come to plead for this favor. (Here mention your special intention.) I beg you to present my petition to your Divine Son. If you will plead for me, I shall not be refused. I know dearest Mother that you would have me seek God's Will in all things. Therefore, with childlike trust I abandon myself to God's Holy Will concerning my request. If what I ask for should not be granted, pray that I may receive that which will be of greater benefit to my soul. O Mary help of Christians, hear my prayer. Look upon my love for you and the confidence I have in you. Do not refuse me, sweet Mother of Perpetual Help, but for the sake of Jesus, thy loving Son, hear and grant my prayer.

Amen.

(Novena Book In Honor of Our Lady of the Prairies - Our Lady of the Fields)

WHO IS THE POPE?

Heaven and earth come together in the man we call the Pope. As Christ's Vicar, he speaks with authority for the powers beyond the edge of the rainbow. As a spokesman for God's people, he must echo the agony and the ecstasy that mark man's sojourn on earth.

Paradoxically, the Pope often seems to get the short end of the stick from both heaven and earth. At times the Almighty appears to overwhelm him with the demands of the divine message, while lesser powers plague him with the problems and complexities of a society estranged from God.

In a sense he is lord of all he surveys. Millions pay him homage. In reality, he is the servant of the servants of God, as he is reminded, quite dramatically, at the time of his proclamation as Pope.

Of necessity, he must move about in the mosaic splendor of mediaeval art and statuary. In spirit, he lives as the poorest of the poor, stripped of privacy, leisure, and the closeness of loved ones. There is a frightening loneliness at the very top. Even time, the pauper's inalienable possession, is denied the Pope as he is hurried from audience to audience, ceremony to ceremony, problem to problem.

His words can unleash a torrent of praise or a storm of criticism. And his great agony must be the knowledge that, like Christ, he will occasion the rise and the fall of many. His teachings touch the very heart of man's life, his directives affect the God-fearing and the godless, his call to peace and justice must rise above the tumult and the outcries of the oppressor and the oppressed.

The Pope's love must be universal: sustaining the weak, admonishing the wayward, rewarding the loyal, comforting the poor, motivating the rich, consoling the downtrodden, bringing hope to the hopeless.

His love, like a refreshing breeze, must cleanse while it invigorates, purify while it stimulates.

Daily he must catch the divine fire from heaven and carry its warmth and light to people everywhere. Daily, too, he must gather up the ills and the hurts and the grief's of earth and make them his very own, before offering them up before the great white throne of the Father of heaven.

Heaven and earth expect no less from him, for he is the Pope.

(By Father Eugene Palumbo, SDB, "The Catholic Yearbook" 1997)

POPE IS SURE

On the 19th of November, 1997, **John Paul** declared: "It will not be darkness to reign in the Year 2000, the new century will be enveloped in God's love. It will be like a time of grace, like the fulfillment of a plan of love for all humanity and for each of us."

Then, making *Saint Augustine's* words his, he continued: "Do not fear, it will not be the end of an old world, but the beginning of a new world."

(*"Echo Mary Queen of Peace" #145 May-June 1999*)

SAINT AUGUSTINE

Every man twists for himself a rope by his sins... Who makes a long rope? He who adds sin to sin. How are sins added to sins? When the sins which have been committed are covered over by other sins. One has committed a theft. So that he may not be found out to have committed it, he seeks the astrologer [to prove his innocence]. It was enough to have committed the theft. Why will you add sin to sin? Behold! Two sins [are] committed! When you are forbidden to go to the astrologer, you revile the bishop. Behold! Three sins! When you hear it said of you, "Cast him forth from the Church," you say, "I will go to the party of Donatus [the Donatist schism]." Behold! You add a fourth sin. The rope is growing. Be afraid of the rope. It is good for you to be corrected here, when you are scourged with it, that it may not be said of you at the last, **"Bind his hands and feet, and cast him forth into outer darkness" [Matt. 22:3].** For **"with the**

cords of his own sins everyone is bound [Prov. 5:22] (ibid., 10:5).

(by James Akin "THIS ROCK" January, 2000)

THE POPE on the SECRET LETTER of FATIMA

Pope John Paul II, during his visit to Germany in the fall of 1980, was asked by pilgrims about the Secret Letter of Fatima. His response appeared in the paper *Stimme des Glaubens* after his visit. According to the paper the Holy Father said the following:

"It should have been made public in 1960, but because of its troubling content, and to dissuade the superpowers from undertaking war, my predecessors in the papal chair have chosen the diplomatic way." The Pope thus admitted the authenticity of the excerpt made by Pope Paul IV. "All Christians should be content in the knowledge that the oceans will inundate whole continents and millions of people will die from one moment to the next. Hearing this, people should not long for the rest of the secret."

"Many people would like to know the secret only for sensation. They forget, however, that along with knowledge goes responsibility. They only want to satisfy their curiosity; they are not concerned to do anything to avert the impending times of trouble--and this is a dangerous attitude." Then the Pope took in his hand the rosary and said, "**This is the remedy that should be used in our struggle against evil. Pray the rosary daily! Pray, pray, and do not inquire anymore. Everything else should be entrusted to the Holy Mother of God.**"

He was then asked about the future of the Church. He said the following: "We shall prepare for trials in the near future. Yes, even if it costs us our lives. Furthermore, it is necessary to give ourselves completely to Christ, and for Christ! The trials can be mitigated by your and our prayers, but to prevent it is no longer possible, because only this way can the real renewal of the Church come about. How often the Church has been renewed in blood! It won't be otherwise now. Be strong! Be prepared! We should trust ourselves to Christ and His Mother. Pray often, and say the rosary. Then, although we will have done a little, we will have done everything."

We published the following excerpt--made by Pope Paul VI for the diplomatic circles--for those responsible Christians who want to be prepared, and who want to lessen the severity of the approaching chastisement. While the Pope's hands are bound in many ways, ours are not, and by publishing the letter we obey only the express desire of Our Heavenly Mother: "Go, my child, and proclaim it!" The excerpt itself is shocking, but it is not the whole text of the secret. As we have seen, the Pope even added to it. But it is enough to instigate more prayers. Therefore we join the Pope and say: "**Pray, pray, especially the rosary!**"

The PILGRIM

On January 22, 1980, *Our Lady* told the following to the visionary priest of the **Marian Movement of Priests**: "*Mankind is on the verge of annihilation, brought on at its own hands. What I have predicted in Fatima, concerning the last part of this century, has already begun. My Immaculate Heart is trembling and in anguish about the fate awaiting you....Pray and do penance to shorten these hours!*"

Can the present "peace movement" be seen as the fulfillment of what *Our Lady* requested in Fatima?

THE WANDERER published, in its May 27, 1982 issue, an article about a two-day conference in Washington, D.C., sponsored by the **American Enterprise Institute**. The subject of the conference was the new Soviet peace offensive sweeping through the free West, while in the **Soviet Union** the leaders of the same movement are thrown into jail. The speakers charged that the Churches have become a prime institutional base for the **Soviet** peace offensive and propaganda, thus helping the **Soviets** achieve their goal: the enslavement of the world, and the annihilation of Christianity. One of the speakers was **Father James V. Schall**, a **Jesuit** professor. A reporter posed the following question to him: "'If religion is used to advance an evil philosophy and a system of government that is known to be militantly atheist and brutally and unrelentingly oppressive, a philosophy and system that by physical force and propaganda penalize and stamp out beliefs in God and Christianity, can such use of religion be considered the ultimate blasphemy?" **Father Schall** responded, "I think so."

Despite the gloomy picture of the Secret Letter, *Our Lady* promised peace in Fatima. If you want to know more about how this peace will come about, we strongly recommend the reading of **The Age of One Fold and One Shepherd Is Coming** by Stephen A. Foglein. This 190-page book is the best current evaluation of our situation, as based on the Secret Letter. On that basis the author selected and evaluated prophecies from the **Bible** and from the tradition of the Church, and applied them to our present situation. The result is a fascinating and complete analysis of our time and our future from an historic perspective. The book has been praised by many secular and religious leaders. Very readable.

Order your copy today from: **Atlas Books Publishing Co.**, P.O. Box 844, Mountain View, CA 94042.

Remember: there are only a few daring voices still crying in the wilderness. Only your indifference can silence them!

DEDICATED to OUR BLESSED MOTHER - GREETING MARY

Hail Mary, hello, how are you?
I greet you with love,
And I thank you for being available.
Deeply, I breathe your roses,
The twelve fresh roses you place in my spirit
Every morning when I say hello to you.

Full of grace are you,
Grace spilling over Heaven's boundaries
Into my world, living water, bread and wine,
The unmerited favor of God
That you come carrying to me,
Your arms always full of gifts.

The Lord is with thee,
Jesus Christ the Messiah is with you,
And you teach me how to recognize
That the Lord is with me.

Blessed art thou among women,
Glowing with love for Jesus,
Pure blessedness never tainted
But alive with holy beauty.

And blessed is the fruit of thy womb,
Jesus,
The most blessed of humanity,
Delivered through you, Virgin Mary.
Jesus, the most cursed of humanity.
Who became a curse for me
So that I might be blessed
With his resurrection life.

Holy Mary, Mother of God,
Teach me to value motherhood,
Help me to pray for mothers and fathers
To love and support each other.
Show me how God loves you.

Pray for use sinners now
And at the hour of our death.
Pray that I can live each moment
Consecrated to love, to Christ,
That I recognize each now
As the moment of salvation
So that I die prepared for eternal life.
Pray that I can crucify my passions.
Those passions that make me a sinner,
And that I can die to sin on the cross with Jesus.
As you look on weeping and praying
But joyous, knowing that resurrection follows.

Hail Mary, full of grace,
The Lord is with thee.

Blessed art thou among women
And blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus.
Holy Mary, Mother of God,
Pray for us sinners,
Now and at the hour of our death. Amen.

(By Mark Andrews, The Cursillo Movement, Trenton
Diocese June and July, 1998)

MARY, QUEEN of PRIESTS, PRAY for US!

I address an urgent appeal to the earth. I call upon the true disciples of God, living and reigning in the Heavens." (Those living in the state of grace and who imitate the virtues of Our Lord.). "I call upon the true imitators of Christ made Man, the only true Savior of men. I call My children, My true devotees, those who will be given to Me, that I may lead them to My Divine Son, those whom I carry, so to speak, in My arms, those who have lived by My spirit."

Note the motherly love and care of Holy Mary for us, Her children and listen to Her sorrowful words which tell of God's plans for a world that no longer deserves His love and care. Here is a final appeal to those left in the world...those who may still be saved,... those who will heed and amend their lives.

"Finally, I call the apostles of the latter times, the faithful disciples of Jesus Christ, who have lived in scorn for the world and themselves...in poverty and humility, in contempt and silence, in prayer and mortification, in chastity and union with God, in suffering and unknown to the world. *It is time they come forth and emerge to enlighten the earth.*"

So does Our Lord expect us to live. It is a beautiful description of the life of a true Christian in this day.

"Go reveal yourselves as My cherished children. I am with

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Secretary: Fay Ramos, Treasurer: Dot Lyons

Youth Ministry: Joanne Niece, Communications: Bob Van Horn
Eucharistic Adoration: Florence Mastercola, Pro-Life: Sam Berger
Typing Team: Sam Berger, Irene Wells, Pat DiMaria and others
SPIRITUAL GUIDANCE: Father Jim Sauchelli, Father Joe
Szolack, Father John McFadden, Father Cadmus Mazzarella,
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many wonderful pilgrims and volunteers to mention them all by name.

you and in you, provided your faith is the light that illumines you during these days of woe. May your zeal render you as famished for the glory and honor of Jesus Christ. Combat, children of light, you, little number who see clearly, *for behold the time of times, the end of ends.*”

With such beautiful words ringing in our ears, can we Ferro anymore?

“In my time the devil is **Outside** the Church, but in 100 years, the devil will be **INSIDE**” (John Henry Cardinal Newman, 1890.)

He is definitely **INSIDE** today!

“If anyone should glory in having God for his father, and yet has not the love of a child for Mary, he is a deceiver, and the only father he has is the devil” (*Saint Louis de Montfort*)

In 1957, *Our Lady* said to Sister Lucy that the devil was about to make his attack on Her. This he did in the ensuing years. Devotion to Her became practically nil. The Church went into a crisis. Vocations became a disaster.

“The most infallible and indubitable sign by which we may distinguish a heretic, a man of bad doctrine, a reprobate, from one of the predestinate, is that the heretic and reprobate have nothing but contempt ND indifference for our Lady, endeavoring by their words and examples to diminish veneration and love of Her, openly or hiddenly or sometimes by misrepresentation. Alas! God the Father has not told Mary to dwell in them, for they are **Esau**” (*Saint Louis Marie de Montfort, “True Devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary”*)

“Without Mary’s light, theology is in darkness, in heresy. The sign by which the sons of God are distinguished from the Synagogue of Satan is true devotion to Mary.” (*Saint Lawrence of Brindisi*).

“Heretics despise the Church of God and take confidence in their own false doctrines, lifting themselves up against the knowledge which is according to God, Whose people they have torn to pieces.” (*Saint Jerome*).

“No one can fulfill the duties of a Christian without knowing them. *We positively maintain that the will of man cannot be upright nor his conduct good while his intellect is the slave of crass ignorance. A man who has become blind is certain to walk into the mouth of danger.* We solemnly affirm: the majority of those who are condemned to eternal punishment fall into this everlasting punishment fall into this everlasting misfortune through ignorance of the Mysteries of the Faith, which must necessarily be known and believed by all who belong to the Elect.” (*Pope Saint Pius X*)

His Holiness also, stated: “There is always some hope for reform of evil living as long as the light of Faith is not wholly extinguished; whereas, if as a result of ignorance, lack of Faith is added to corruption, the situation scarcely

admits of remedy and the road to eternal ruin lies open.”

Crass ignorance played a major role in the crises in the Church and her institutions, and opened the way to loss of Faith and even eternal perdition. The remedy cannot be delayed.

(by Father Andrew B Horvath B.A, M.A.)

WOULD YOU . . . ?

If Jesus came to your home to spend a day of two...

If He came unexpectedly, I wonder what you’d do!

Oh, I know you’d give your nicest room to such an Honored Guest,

And all the food you’d serve Him would be the very best,
And you would keep assuring Him you’re glad to have Him there...

That serving Him in your home is JOY beyond compare.

But when you saw Him coming, would you meet Him at the door

With arms outstretched in welcome to your Heavenly Visitor?

Or would you have to change your clothes before you let Him in,

Or hide some magazines and put the Bible where they’d been?

And wish you hadn’t uttered that last, loud, nasty word?

Would you turn off the radio, and hope He hadn’t heard?

Would you hide your worldly music and put some hymn books out?

Could you let Jesus walk right in, or would you rush about?

I wonder if the Saviour spent a day or two with you,

Would you go right on doing the things you always do?

Would you go right on saying the things you always say?

Would your family conversation keep it’s usual pace,

And would you find it hard each meal to say the table-grace?

Would you sing the songs you always sing and read the books you read,

And let Him know the things on which your mind and spirit feed?

Would you take Jesus with you everywhere you’d planned to go,

Or would you, maybe, change your plans for just a day or so?

Would you hope they stay away until His visit ends?

Would you be glad to have Him stay forever, on and on,

Or would you sigh with great relief when He, at last was gone?

It might be interesting to know the things that you would do
If Jesus came in person to spend some time with you!

(Author Unknown)

- (4) for those who try to publicly implant in children's hearts indifference, contempt and even hatred of this Immaculate Mother, and
- (5) for those who insult her directly in her sacred images.

(**"The Blue Army of Our Lady of Fatima"** Washington, N.J.)

FIRST SATURDAY DEVOTION

Origins

The **First Saturday Devotions** to the *Immaculate Heart of Mary* was first mentioned by *Our Lady of Fatima* on **July 13, 1917**. After showing the three children a terrifying vision of hell she said, "You have seen hell where souls of poor sinners go. To save them, God wishes to establish in the world devotion to My Immaculate Heart. If what I say to you is done, many souls will be saved and there will be peace...I shall come to ask for...the Communion of reparation on the First Saturdays...."

Eight years later, on **December 10, 1925**, *Mary* and the Child Jesus appeared to **Lucia**, the sole surviving **Fatima** seer, at a convent in **Pontevedra, Spain**. *Our Lady* rested her hand on **Lucia's** shoulder, revealing a heart encircled with thorns.

The Child Jesus said: "Have compassion on the heart of your most Holy Mother, covered with thorns with which ungrateful men pierce it at every moment, and there is no one to make an act of reparation...."

Conditions

Our Lady spoke next, saying: "**Look, my daughter, at my heart, surrounded with thorns which ungrateful men pierce it at every moment by their blasphemies and ingratitude. You at least try to console me and say that I promise to assist at the hour of death, with the graces necessary for salvation, all those who, on the first Saturday of five consecutive months, shall confess, receive Holy Communion, recite five decades of the Rosary, and keep me company for fifteen minutes while meditating on fifteen mysteries of the Rosary, with the intention of making reparation to me.**"

Why Five Saturdays?

Christians have always honored the Blessed Virgin on Saturday because of her constant faith in Jesus on that first Holy Saturday before the Resurrection.

Five first Saturdays of reparation were requested to atone for the five ways in which people offend the Immaculate Heart of Mary:

- (1) attacks upon Mary's Immaculate Conception;
- (2) attacks against her Perpetual Virginity;
- (3) attacks upon her Divine Maternity and the refusal to accept her as the Mother of all mankind;

TEN COMMANDMENTS of a MOTHER

Develop an intimate personal relationship with Jesus. He is your primary love. Allow Him to love you, forgive you, speak to you, guide you, heal you and fill you. Try to keep a Spiritual journal of the messages you receive from Him.

Keep your priorities in order – Jesus first, husband second, children third, activities including spiritual outings forth. The best thing you can do for your husband is to love Jesus, and the best thing you can do for your children is to love their father, just as he is. Try not to work outside the home. If you do work, try to make sure that work does not interfere with your primary responsibilities. Write up a weekly schedule setting aside prime time for Jesus, your husband and each child.

Realize that you are the heart of the home. It is your prime responsibility to work with your husband to make sure his wishes are carried out with love. Love is your greatest gift. Love, love, love! Affirm, affirm, affirm!

Let your husband know the problems and difficulties that you and your children are experiencing in living a Christian life. Work with God and your husband toward solutions. TV is problematic because of the amount of violence and promiscuity. Work out selective watching of TV with your husband. Sports have become a false god in America. Share your insights with your husband.

Pray with your husband. Share your journal with him. Allow the Lord to sanctify and purify your relationship with Him. Ask the Lord for the strength to love him with His

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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.

Love and Purity.

Spend quality time with each child – loving them. There is nothing like a mother’s love. You will intuitively know their needs and problems. Share openly with them and allow them to be open with you. Their fears, worries and temptations you should know. Pray for guidance and wisdom. Dare to discipline with love and firmness.

Support your husband in setting up a place for family devotions. Encourage your family at Family devotions to place everything in God’s hands – their worries, fears, doubts, difficulties and temptations. God is really present to each of them. God is really their Father. Mary is really their mother. The Holy Spirit is really present to each of them. Jesus lives in their hearts, speaking, loving and forgiving.

Try to set the tone in living a simple, humble, non-violent lifestyle. This is a challenge in a materialistic, pleasure seeking, individualistic culture. You are called often to heroism. TV heroes, movie stars, and sports heroes are generally not the best role models. Watch over the songs your children are listening to, and the posters they want to hang up. This calls for real wisdom.

Try to discern with each child, the call of the Lord upon their life. All are called to put Him first and to serve Him with all their hearts. This is difficult and heroic in today’s world.

With your husband make Sunday the Lord’s Day and a day of family togetherness. Encourage your family to frequent reception of the Sacraments of the Eucharist and Reconciliation.

“My Father’s House” Moodus, CT, with Permission)

HE IS

He is the First and Last, the Beginning and the End!
He is the keeper of Creation and the Creator of all!
He is the Architect of the universe and the
Manager of all times.

He always was, He always is, and He always will be...
Unmoved, Unchanged, Undefeated, and never Undone!

He was bruised and brought healing!
He was pierced and eased pain!
He was persecuted and brought freedom!
He was dead and brought life!
He is risen and brings power!
He reigns and brings Peace!

The world can't understand him,
The armies can't defeat Him,
The schools can't explain Him, and
The leaders can't ignore Him.
Herod couldn't kill Him,

The Pharisees couldn't confuse Him, and
The people couldn't hold Him!
Nero couldn't crush Him,
Hitler couldn't silence Him,
The New Age can't replace Him, and
Donahue can't explain Him away!

He is light, love, longevity, and Lord.
He is goodness, Kindness, Gentleness, and God.
He is Holy, Righteous, mighty, powerful, and pure.

His ways are right, His word is eternal,
His will is unchanging, and
His mind is on me.

He is my Redeemer,
He is my Savior, He is my guide, and He is my peace!
He is my Joy, He is my comfort, He is my Lord, and
He rules my life!

I serve Him because His bond is love, His burden is light,
and His goal for me is abundant life.
I follow Him because He is the wisdom of the wise, the
power of the powerful, the ancient of days, the ruler of
rulers, the leader of leaders, the overseer of the
overcomers, and the sovereign Lord of all that was and
is and is to come.

And if that seems impressive to you, try this for size.
His goal is a relationship with ME!
He will never leave me, never forsake me, never mislead
me, never forget me, never overlook me, and never
cancel my appointment in His appointment book!

When I fall, He lifts me up!
When I fail, He forgives!
When I am weak, He is strong!
When I am lost, He is the way!
When I am afraid, He is my courage!
When I stumble, He steadies me!
When I am hurt, He heals me!
When I am broken, He mends me!
When I am blind, He leads me!
When I am hungry, He feeds me!
When I face trials, He is with me!
When I face persecution, He shields me!
When I face problems, He comforts me!
When I face loss, He provides for me!
When I face Death, He carries me Home!

He is everything for everybody, everywhere, every time,
and every way.

He is God, He is faithful.
I am His, and He is mine!

My Father in heaven can whip the father of this world.

So, if you're wondering why I feel so secure, understand this...
He said it and that settles it.
God is in control,
I am on His side, and that means all is well with my soul.

Everyday is a blessing for GOD Is!
He is my source of existence and Savior. He keeps me functioning each and everyday.

Without Him, I will be nothing.
Without Him, I am nothing but with Him I can do all things. **(Philippians 4:13)**

He is JESUS!!!
(from: mardy64@aol.com)

PERFECT or NOT – A CHERISHED CHILD

Debbie and her husband Michael welcomed the news of her pregnancy. They had two children, Katie 8, and Kevin 7, and looked forward to having a new baby join their family.

Debbie was very happy and felt well. "I loved being pregnant," she said, "I didn't even have morning sickness." But the fear she had was more than the ordinary concern of other expectant mothers. She worried, especially if the child were a boy, that there may be the possibility of his being autistic, as Kevin is.

In the first trimester, although there was some bleeding, her doctor assured her that everything was normal. Debbie took care of her health and kept regular appointments with her obstetrician. An ultrasound was recommended at the 18th week of her baby's life, a routine observation of the baby's growth and development.

The use of ultrasound technology as a step in diagnosing defects in an unborn child has become a regularly used

procedure over the last 20 years. It has also been accepted in the general population to the degree that family picture albums begin with this scientifically produced image as a first baby picture.

In Debbie's case, the ultrasound revealed what could be a debilitating abnormality in her baby's development. The findings led to a series of progressively intensified tests. For Debbie, however, her faith remained a constant as this ordeal unfolded.

Her days and nights were filled with the usual matters of caring for her home and family and the extra care that Kevin needed. Additional visits to doctors' offices, labs, and hospitals were, of course, time consuming and the need for them frightening. Concern and love for the child she was carrying was something she had experienced before, and Debbie and Michael continued to anticipate and hope for the birth of a healthy child.

The obstetrician explained that there appeared to be cysts on the baby's brain. He explained that such cysts normally disappear by the 24th week and was probably not significant. He recommended, however, that she meet with a neonatal physician for a second ultrasound. Results of that test and genetic risk factors necessitated further referrals. Two days later, Debbie had an appointment with a genetics counselor, who recommended amniocentesis and informed her that abortion was an alternative in the event suspicions were confirmed. The counselor advised Debbie that there were only two weeks remaining until the 20th week—the suggested deadline for the opportune time to terminating a pregnancy.

For Debbie and Michael, abortion was never an option. Perfect or not, this baby was a gift — cherished and precious.

Debbie dreaded having amniocentesis, the recommended procedure, in which a needle is inserted through the

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

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Name: _____ Room With? _____ **PPM 8/2000**
Address: _____ Date of Birth (DOB): ____/____/____ Age: _____
Month / Day / Year Kept Confidential
City: _____ State: ____ Zip: _____ - _____ Phone: (____) _____ - (____) _____ - _____
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PPM 8/2000

abdomen into the uterus to remove amniotic fluid for analysis. The technology that allows the withdrawal of fetal cells from the womb holds inherent hazards. There is the possibility of piercing blood vessels, introducing infection, or causing premature labor. Reports vary on the percentage of miscarriages caused by the procedure.

There are cases in which amniocentesis discovers defects that are corrected by intra-utero surgery, thus giving a baby the opportunity to develop normally to term. Debbie relied on the information given her that she and her baby were in good hands. She was informed there would be a greater chance for her baby's well being if physicians were alerted to any special needs before delivery.

Though anguished, Debbie had acted quickly, meeting with one specialist after another. She longed to be past that harrowing time. Within four days, she was told that her baby showed signs of birth defects and there was the possibility she might give birth to another autistic child. Her fears were compounded by the pressures of clinical results and recommendations. Now she would have to decide if she would allow amniocentesis, a potentially dangerous procedure.

Debbie recalled, "I went to the hospital chapel and prayed because one in 200 babies die during amniocentesis."

Debbie's prayers were for her baby's safety and for help with the decision she had to make. She wanted to be prepared for the delivery; she wanted the doctors prepared. She decided to proceed with the amniocentesis. Yet, concern about the dangers remained with her day and night.

Once, she was lying on a table in a hospital room. Waking from sedated sleep, she looked up to see a doctor holding a lifeless newborn. He spoke to her: "I hope you know you killed a perfectly healthy baby."

It was a dream—the most vivid she had ever experienced,

ultrasound screen as it showed the positioning of the needle into the amniotic sac and her baby's reaction. "He jumped to the other side of the uterus when the needle was inserted," Debbie said.

She would not allow the risk of danger to her child a second time. Her assessment of her baby's chances for a healthy life included her knowledge of test results and heredity statistics. It also included reflection and hope. Her love for her unborn child would not allow him to die before he had a chance to live.

Although abortion was not advised, it was mentioned as an easily available alternative. "It's brought up," Debbie said, "so it's out there to think about."

Debbie hopes she gave the specialist something to think about. There was only one response she could give to the prognosis that the baby would probably live no more than one year.

"If he lives for only one minute, it's his minute," she said.

Debbie resumed normal monthly visits with her obstetrician. She understood his concerns and the reason he had referred her to specialists. He encouraged her with his belief that her baby would be well and there were no further referrals or counseling. Debbie returned to the hospital only once more—when she went into labor.

Dillion is three months old now. The knowledge obtained through state of the art technology, the science of genetics, and highly trained professionals was proven wrong by Dillon. He's simply a baby, a healthy child whose blue eyes and curly lashes compete for attention with his dimpled smile. It's difficult to tell which is his best feature.

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

and it held more than a warning to Debbie. It held promise. She had not contemplated taking the advice of "professionals" or anyone who suggested abortion. Rather, she had stormed heaven for an answer to her plight. She would give birth and love and care for her child, perfect or not. The experience strengthened her faith, and she embraced a message that would grow in her as her baby was growing. Debbie didn't think of the dream as a vision sent by God, yet she held its significance in awe. There were many times she would contemplate the dream and be buoyed by it.

Amniocentesis results indicated Trisomy-18, a term given to cell division disorders that cause birth defects. When a second amniocentesis test was recommended, Debbie refused to have it. During the first test she watched the

Debbie is busier than many young mothers. She's finding time to let others know about the false information she was given, how test results are often used to encourage abortion, and how she withstood any subtle or overt pressure to choose abortion. She remembers her dream she had and hopes the words, "You killed a perfectly healthy baby," will never be part of anyone's nightmare.

(by Jean Long writes from Medford Lakes, NJ, "Lay Witness" 1/99 with Permission)

HOW the ROSARY CLOSED AN ABORTION CLINIC

Recently, I led a pilgrimage to *Our Lady's Shrine at Lourdes, France*, for the **Diocese of Palm Beach**. It truly is a blessed place where *Our Lady* appeared to *Saint Bernadette Soubirous* 18 times in 1858. She gave her now familiar message of prayer, recitation of the Rosary and penance--always penance and mortification--for the struggle against evil and the promotion of everlasting life.

I came away from **Lourdes** more convinced than ever of the power of the Rosary as an instrument of prayer for life, especially the life of the innocent unborn in the womb. The little ones in the womb are Mary's children, too. They are made in the image and likeness of God. They need a mother's protection and nourishment.

In our diocese on a recent occasion, 400 of our people, with many **Knights of Columbus** and families, joined together to pray the Rosary for life in front of an abortuary. Our **Respect Life Office** notified the local civic authorities of our intentions. We obeyed the law and notified our local parish priests where the abortuary was located.

On the evening of the designated, all of us came together at the local parish to begin the Rosary, and continued it as we moved to the abortuary. We prayed the 15 decades of the Rosary at the abortuary. We returned to the cars and on foot to the church, always continuing to pray the Rosary.

The abortuary staff was upset, but closed their operations during the time of the prayer vigil itself. Two weeks later, or thereabouts, the abortuary closed entirely.

In our diocese, we intend to continue to locate other abortuaries, pray the Rosary, please God, with the same result.

Surely, no one has more influence with her Divine Son, more grace to enlighten minds and give strength to choose life not death than Mary, the Mother of God. Surely too, no one knows this teaching better than the Knights of Columbus and their families.

For if someone had said, "keep it simple," what can be more simple than directed prayer--praying the Rosary in front of an abortuary, praying for life.

May God bless you and yours.

(by Most Rev. Thomas V. Daily, D.D., Bishop of Palm Beach, FL and Supreme Chaplain, **Knights of Columbus** in "THE MARYFAITHFUL REVIEW" Sept./Oct. 1990)

PRAYER FOR THE HELPLESS UNBORN

Heavenly Father, Thou have created man in Your own image, and You desire that not even the least of us should perish. In Your love for us, thou hast entrusted Your only Son to the Holy Virgin Mary. Now, in Your great love, protect against the wickedness of the evil spirit of "Death", those little ones to whom You have given the gift of life.

Give each mother the strength to turn against the abortion mills, and see that life is more precious than anything. Give them support and the ability to feel and know love. Fill them with a strong desire to protect and nurture their unborn baby. Help them in their decision and surround them with Your angels of protection.

AMEN

(by Kathleen Werner)

✂ ----- ✂ ----- ✂ -----

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Month / Day / Year Kept Confidential

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LOVELY LADY

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 does to me
Did you hold His hand at night
And, did you ever try
Telling Him stories of the world?
And oh! Did He cry?
Do you really think He cares
If I tell Him things,
Little things that happen? And
Do angel's wings make a noise?
Can He hear me if I speak low?
Does He understand me now?
Tell me, for you know!
Lovely Lady dressed in blue
Teach me how to pray!
God was just your little boy

HOPE, THE GIFT of a MOTHER'S HEART

Two of my granddaughters were going through a very difficult time in their young lives. Katie was 8, Sarah 6, and their parents had recently divorced. The girls traveled to the West Coast that summer to vacation with us. They were experiencing intense feelings of sadness, anger and fear in spite of our best attempts to entertain them with the many tourist attractions available in southern California.

Their agitation noticeably increased as the time approached for them to return home. Earnestly I prayed: "Jesus, please grant me wisdom. How can I help these precious little ones?" The Holy Spirit led me to give each of them a rosary bracelet. I reminded them about the Christmas story and how Mary cared for the infant Jesus. "She is you Mother, too, and she'll never leave you." I explained. "You can tell her anything and she'll listen and comfort you." After their return home, I received a phone call from my son, Chris. He said, "Mom, the girls are talking to their bracelets all the time and it really seems to be helping. Thank you for knowing what to do." Mary's love has been a constant source of restoration and renewal for me since I was introduced to her by the Sisters of Mercy in grammar school. Listening to the scripture stories, I pictured a woman of faith and hope who trusted in the Father's love even in the midst of great hardship and suffering. Her cousin, Elizabeth, defined Mary's true nature with the words, "**Blessed is she who believed that the promise made her by the Lord would be fulfilled**" (Lk. 1:45).

The PILGRIM

In **Luke's Gospel**, *Gabriel* proclaimed to Mary that her child "**will be great, and will be called Son of the Most High. He will rule over the house of Jacob forever and his kingdom will have no end**" (Lk. 1:32). There is a traditional belief that Mary was a mere teenager when these words were spoken. For thirty years she saw no signs that *Gabriel's* proclamation would come to pass. Jesus led a very ordinary life among simple people. Yet Mary "**treasured all these things and pondered them in her heart**" (Lk. 2:19). Regardless of the circumstances, she continued to hope and believe that God's will would be accomplished.

Her ability to hold on to the promise made it possible for Mary to recognize the time for her son to be revealed. The wedding at Cana and her request to provide more wine signaled the beginning of Jesus' public ministry. He told his mother, "**My hour has not yet come,**" but she **simply turned to the servants and instructed them to "do whatever he tells you"** (Jn. 2:5). Her years of waiting and hoping produced a new wine which continues to water our thirsty souls.

We live in a time when darkness seems to be engulfing our planet and violence has become commonplace. Maintaining a positive attitude regarding worldwide events seems increasingly difficult. The mother who bore Jesus also lived through an era when evil seemed to triumph.

She watched her son's agonizing death and listened to the jeering crowd. The Gospel of Matthew describes the moment when Jesus yielded up his spirit. "**The veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom, the earth quaked and rocks were split, tombs were opened and the bodies of many holy men rose from the dead**" (Matt. 27:51). It seemed all was lost and the end of the world had come. For Mary it was the fulfillment of the prophecy given by Simeon many years before: "**..sword will pierce your own soul too, so that the secret thoughts of many may be laid bare**" (Lk. 2:35).

It is crucifixion of her son which dramatically illustrates Mary's hope filled heart. **John's Gospel** describes her demeanor: "**Near the cross of Jesus stood his mother..**" (Jn. 19:25). She could have given in to hysteria, doubt and fear, yet she stood in solidarity with Jesus. If the true meaning of hope is to persist in expecting something against all odds, Mary uniquely qualifies for the title "Queen of Hope."

Her example of courage can renew our determination to refuse to fall prey to the winds of discouragement circling around us. An ancient Chinese saying helps put things in perspective. "You cannot stop the birds from flying over your head but you can keep them from building a nest in your hair." Pessimism regarding the future may be the

disease of today's society but Christians are called to believe in the Father's mercy. Jesus promised, **"I am with you always, even to the end of the age" (Matt: 28:20)**. This promise challenges all believers to wait patiently and confidently for God's will to prevail.

The gift of hope may become strengthened by remembering the times when the Lord granted answered prayer. I often find solace by reading over my spiritual journals and discovering the countless occasions God intervened on my behalf, especially when all seemed hopeless.

Learning to cultivate an attitude of gratitude makes it easier to face the problems of daily living. One church I recently visited displayed a large book in a prominent place in the vestibule. The cover is engraved with the words "Grateful Remembrances" and the congregation is invited to write any answers to prayer they have received. The book contains hundreds of pages of testimonies and is a source of reassurance for many.

In every Catholic Eucharistic liturgy throughout the world, the priest intones a profound postscript to the Lord's Prayer: "Deliver us, Lord, from every evil, and grant us peace in our day. In your mercy keep us free from sin and protect us from anxiety as we wait in joyful hope for the coming of our Savior, Jesus Christ."

The gift Mary's heart brings to the people of God is the ability to hope joyfully for the revelations yet to come.

(by Barbara Shlemon Ryan, Chariscenter USA, 7/8-9/1998)

A HEALING POEM

Jesus,
Most beloved, sought after,
Lamb of the Father,
Lamb of my heart.

In your eyes I see my tears.
My soul agonizes,
Too small to absorb
The intensity of your love.

You wait,
Your heart agonizes
Endlessly waiting for me,
Patient...waiting,
Inviting...waiting,
Seducing...waiting.
I cannot draw closer,
Alternately raging and terrified,
Ashamed of my darkness,
Afraid of your light.

But you are my constant,
Yours is the siren song,
Haunting.
I cannot turn away.

Reach for me, O Lord,
Because I cannot come closer.
Hold on to me, O Lord,
Because I cannot sustain
My grasp of you.

Believe in me, O Lord,
Because I am so congested
With self-disdain
That I cannot persevere.

Free me, O Lord,
Be become not me
Because I cannot balance
The both of us.

Feed me, O Lord,
Because nothing else fills.

Let me rejoice in you
The loveliness of your touch,
The softness of your kiss,
The satisfaction of your embrace.

Jesus, my Lord, beloved,
Designer of all my yearnings,
Possess me,
Endlessly.
Be not deterred by me.

(by Shirley Cox, International Newsletter of the Association
of Christian Therapists, March/April, 2000)

SAINT BASIL

Those who overstep the borders, making the words of **Scripture ["And God said, 'Let there be lights in the firmament of the heavens... and let them be for signs and for seasons" Gen. 1:14]** their apology for the art of casting nativities [horoscopes], pretend that our lives depend upon the motion of the heavenly bodies, and thus the **Chaldeans** read in the planets that which will happen to us. By these very simple words, "let them be for signs," they understand neither the variations of the weather nor the change of seasons; they only see them, at the will of their imagination, the distribution of human destinies. What do they say in reality? When the planets cross in the signs of the **Zodiac**, certain figures formed by their meeting give birth to certain destinies, and other produce different destinies

(The Six Days' Work 6:5 [A.D. 370]).

SAINT JOHN CHRYSOSTOM

Let us show forth by our actions all excellencies of conduct, and kindle abundantly the fire of virtue. For **"you are**

lights,” he [Paul says, ‘shining in the midst of the world’ (Phil. 2:15). ...And in fact a deep night

oppresses the whole world. this is what we have to dispel and dissolve. It is night not among heretics and among Greeks only, but also in the multitude on our side, in respect of doctrines and of life. For many [Catholics] entirely disbelieve the resurrection; many fortify themselves with the horoscope, any adhere to superstitious observances, and to omens, and auguries, and presages

(Homilies on 1 Corinthians 4: 11 [A.D. 392]).

THE PATIENCE of SAINT REMIGIUS

A fine example of complete resignation to the Will of God is found in the life of *Saint Remigius*, Archbishop of Rheims.

Foreseeing a sharp rise in the price of food for the coming year, he set aside great provisions like another *Joseph*, in order to aid those in distress once hardship struck.

Some men were so wicked as to blame the generous archbishop for his behavior, however. “What’s that old man trying to do?” said the fools. “He’s 80 years old, is he afraid he’ll die of starvation? Is he thinking, perchance of establishing a new city? Or has he got a notion to become a wheat merchant--maybe even a money-lender?” Spurred by furious hatred, they set the archbishop’s granaries on fire. As soon as the Saint got wind of it, he mounted a horse and rode off to the granaries to try and save the provisions. When he reached the scene of the disaster, however, he found the situation hopeless. The flames had already devoured everything.

What a terrible trial! What would the virtuous archbishop do now? Would he break into bitter tears or call down the wrath of God upon the perpetrators of this crime?

Not at all. Calm and resigned, *Remigius* remounted his horse, drew close to the fire as though wanting to warm up (it happened to be one of the coldest days of winter) and said, “A hot stove feels good to an old man like me!”

And that is how this generous patriarch resigned himself totally to the Will of God in the great loss he had sustained.

Saint Remigius, bishop of Rheims, converted the Franks, by baptizing their king, Clovis. *Saint Remigius* died on January 13, 533, and his feast day is October 1.

(“THE MARYFAITHFUL REVIEW”, Sept./Oct. 1990)

REFLECTIONS in LATER LIFE

October in San Diego is almost the same as any other season except that the days gradually grow shorter; and in the evening there is a stimulating nip in the air when the sea breeze drifts in. The gardens are resplendent with chrysanthemums, asters, and nasturtiums, along with the exotic flowers that bloom throughout the year. The birds never fly South, and as the winter months approach, they

The PILGRIM

even seem to multiply, singing their joyous songs all through the day.

On this *October* afternoon I sat by the window in a condominium located above the ocean. I was working on my novel, which was nearing its completion. I looked out at the patio...tenants wearing dark glasses were basking in the sunshine, while others splashed in the pool. It was like a scene from one of **Scott Fitzgerald’s** novels. I smile. How happy the past few years had been.

I knew most of the tenants: **Peggy** with her whimsical humor who called herself a “born again agnostic”; **Peter** and **Wendy** who were forever in and out of love; **Dave**, a lonely man who had just left his wife; **Bill**, a long-haired, bearded, starving artist; **Jackie**, a struggling writer. Because I left my door open and was always willing to listen to their problems, they gave me the title of the resident shrink.

I left my typewriter, went into my bedroom, and put on my jeans and sneakers. I walked out the front door, down the flower-bordered path that led to the ocean. I found my favorite spot and stretched out on the sand. I put my hands behind my head and lay there watching the foamy waves dash against the rocks. I could smell and taste the pure salt air...a gentle peacefulness coursed through my body. I looked at the rosy sky while my past life flipped through my mind like scenes from a motion picture. I lived that day in June when at eighteen I walked into the convent and said within my heart: “This is my life forever.” Now, lying here with the breeze blowing against my face, I realized with joy and gratitude that I had reached the autumn of my life – a time for reflection, creativity, growth, happiness.

Many years ago, my favorite poet, **Robert Browning**, inspired me with his constant theme of love, delight, compassion. To **Browning**, life was a continuous growth. There was no turning back, always a pushing forward. His famous “**Rabbi Ben Ezra**” speaks of old age as the best of life. This is the time to use all of the creativity that lies within us – “The last of life, for which the first was made.”

Years later I discovered a scientist-priest, **Teilhard de Chardin** who spoke in language of poetry. **Teilhard**, like **Browning**, believed that in spite of our years we may remain forever youthful. **Teilhard de Chardin** said: “May Christ-Omega keep us always young...(And what better argument for Christianity could there be than an enduring youthfulness drawn from Christ). For old age comes from Him. Old age leads on to Him, and old age will touch me only in so far as He wills.”

Eckhart, a **Dominican** writer and poet of the fourteenth century shared the same thought. He said that to be near to God we must be eternally young. We should forever enjoy the power of springtime. Yet, it is only when we relinquish the material things of this life that we can attain the joyfulness of youth. When we learn to sink into God’s

beauty we shall feel that heaven has already begun. **Eckhart** says that all human beings are artists because they all feel the need to create. "Every artist," said **Eckhart**, "wants to leave behind a gift. It is their way of saying thank you."

One does not have to write a book, erect a building, or leave a painting for an art gallery to feel that life is complete. Self-fulfillment is to marvel in the beauty of created things – to see and feel and hear God's voice in the roaring sea, the blossoming flower, a cry of pain, and the music of a child's laughter. It is to live in peace with oneself and all of God's creation.

As the sun begins to set beyond the horizon, casting golden lights over the sea. I see the future spread before me like a soft green meadow filled with peace. My youth with its carefree happiness is gone forever, but in its place is something new and beautiful. The years that have passed have seen pain, joy, suffering, and triumph. Because of this my life is now richer, fuller, more meaningful. Now more than ever before I can be a true **Dominican** and go out to others and share, "the fruits of my contemplation."

(by Sister Helen Wall, O.P. Used with permission of Vance E. Lichty Publisher)

PRAYER to OUR LADY of the BLESSED SACRAMENT

O Virgin Mary, Our Lady of the Blessed Sacrament, glory of the Christian people, joy of the Universal Church, salvation of the world: pray for us, and awaken, in all the faithful, devotion to the Holy Eucharist, in order that they render themselves worthy to receive it daily. AMEN.

LITTLE JESUS

Little Infant Jesus of Good Health, God of Love, born to suffer for me! In Thee above all do I find the courage and strength I need in the trials and troubles that weigh so heavily upon me.

By the Sorrows of Thy Most Holy Mother, I implore Thee to lighten the burdens of my soul with Thy holy consolations and to relieve my bodily infirmities with Thy Merciful kindness, if it so pleases the will of our Father in Heaven. AMEN

LITTLE GUIDE of LOVE – ON THIS DAY

Mend a quarrel. Search out a forgotten friend. Dismiss suspicion, and replace it with trust. Write a love letter. Share some treasure. Give a soft answer. Encourage youth. Manifest your loyalty in a word or deed.

Keep a promise. Find the time. Forego a grudge. Forgive an enemy. Listen. Apologize if you were wrong. Try to understand. Flout envy. Examine your demands on others.

Think first of someone else. Appreciate, be kind, and be gentle. Laugh a little more.

Deserve confidence. Take up arms against malice. Decry complacency. Express your gratitude. Worship your God. Gladden the heart of a child. Take pleasure in the beauty and wonder of the earth. Speak your love. Speak it again. Speak it still again. Speak it still once again.

(The Society of Saint Mary Magdalene, Fountain Inn, SC with permission)

MAY OUR LIFE BE A HOST

My Daily Offering: I offer all...

--Heavenly Father, I place myself upon the paten, with my whole being, my soul, my body, with my intellect and my will for I offer You all that I am and have.

--I place upon this paten, all my joys, my sorrows of today, my work with its fatigue, my crosses with their bitterness.

--I place also upon this paten all those whom I love, those who do me good, those who have recommended themselves to my prayers.

Through the Immaculate Heart of Mary

--I unite all this to the offering of Jesus as a holocaust of love for the salvation and sanctification of priestly and religious souls and for my own sanctification.

The drop of water, it is our life. United to Christ.

--By this drop of water which represents me, O my God permit me to cast into the Chalice, with Jesus Christ, every moment of my life so that all may be sanctified, supernaturalized in the Blood of Christ and may pass through Him to the Adorable Trinity.

--I cast also into the Chalice and I offer Thee the life and sufferings of those who do not offer them, that their lives and sufferings be united to those of Christ who suffered as they do and who died for them.

In all the Masses

--O my Jesus, I unite myself to all the Masses which will be celebrated this day throughout the world, in union with the intentions of your Sacred Heart.

O my Jesus, I beg of you to retain for me, from each of these Masses, a drop of Thy Precious Blood, in expiation for my sins.

--O Divine Heart of Jesus, give to the world many and holy priests to continue the work of your Redemption. Amen.

(:mike.com – internet)

RECENT DISCOVERIES ABOUT BLESSED JUAN DIEGO

From the Desk of Monsignor Jose Luis Guerrero Rosado, CANON, BASILICA OF GUADALUPE

<http://www.princeofeden.com/>

Dear friend of *Our Lady of Guadalupe*,

I have worked for many years at the request of the **Holy See** on the Commission studying the cause for sainthood of *Blessed Juan Diego*, the seer of the *Virgin of Guadalupe*.

The Commission has made some startling discoveries about the true identity of *Juan Diego*. He is so much more than the humble Indian we thought him to be.

His name was **Cuauhtlatotzin**.

He was a royal prince, a fearless military general, a philosopher, a poet and had several wives, as was the custom of his people in *16th Century Mexico*. He gave all this up to become a Christian and an ambassador of Christ not only for the **Mexican** peoples, but for the whole world.

It is my opinion that *Juan Diego* will soon become known as one of the greatest saints in the history of the Church. He will be recognized as something of a **Patriarch**, along the line of **Abraham** and **Moses**. It is significant that God should reveal him to us in this way, now, as we enter the *Third Millennium*.

Juan Diego's whole story is now revealed in a book called **PRINCE OF EDEN** by **Doctor Christine Jones** soon also to be made into a major motion picture. The book includes an Afterword by me and the two other priests working with me on the Commission.

A new web site contains much of this information about *Juan Diego*, the book, the film and a documentary video on the making of the film.

Please support this important apostolate by visiting the web site and help bring the whole story of *Juan Diego* and the message of the *Virgin of Guadalupe* to the world:

<http://www.princeofeden.com/>

Thank you for supporting this cause,

Msgr. Jose Luis Guerrero Rosado

PRIESTS: ANGELS on EARTH

To help us understand the divine dignity of the priesthood so we shall comprehend more fully the infinite greatness of the Mass, read carefully the following pronouncement of saints.

Saint Ignatius, martyr, says that the priesthood is the most sublime of all created dignities.

Cassian says that the priest of God is exalted above all earthly sovereignties, and above all celestial heights--he is inferior to God alone.

Innocent III says that the priest is placed between God and man; inferior to God, but superior to man.

Saint Denis calls the priest a divine man and the priesthood a divine dignity.

Saint Ephrem says that the gift of the sacerdotal dignity surpasses all understanding

Saint John Chrysostom says that he who honors a priest honors Christ, and he who insults a priest insults Christ.

Saint Ambrose has called the priestly office a divine profession.

Saint Francis de Sales, after having given orders to a holy ecclesiastic, perceived that in going out the priest stopped at the door as if to give precedence to another. Being asked by the saint why he stopped, the priest replied that God favored him with the visible presence of his guardian angel who, before he had received the priesthood, always remained on his right and preceded him, but now since the moment of ordination, walked on his left and refused to go before him. It was in a holy contest with the angel that he stopped at the door!

Saint Thomas says the dignity of the priesthood surpasses even that of the angels.

Saint Gregory Nazianzen has said that the angels themselves venerate the priesthood. All the angels in Heaven cannot absolve a single sin. The guardian angels procure of the souls committed to their care, grace to have recourse to a priest, that he may absolve them.

Saint Francis of Assisi used to say, "If I saw an angel and a priest, I would bend my knee first to the priest and then to the angel."

Saint Augustine says that to pardon a sinner is a greater work than to create Heaven and earth. To pardon a single sin requires all the omnipotence of God. See the power of the priest.

Saint Alphonsus: "The entire Church cannot give God as much honor, or obtain so many graces as a single priest by celebrating a single Mass. Thus, by the celebration of a single Mass, in which he offers Jesus Christ in Sacrifice, a priest gives greater honor to the Lord than if all men, by dying for God, offered Him the sacrifice of their lives. With regard to the power of priests over the real Body of Jesus Christ, it is of faith that when they pronounce the words of Consecration, the Incarnate Word has obliged Himself to obey and to come into their hands under the sacramental species."

Saint Cyprian said that all who had the true spirit of God were, when compelled to take the order of priesthood, seized with fear and trembling.

Saint Epiphanius writes that he found no one willing to be ordained a priest, so fearful were they of so divine a dignity.

Saint Ambrose, as he himself attests, resisted for a long time before he consented to be ordained.

Saint Francis of Assisi never consented to be ordained.

No one on this earth can give God as much glory as a devout priest.

(from "How To Be Happy, How To Be Holy" by Father Paul O'Sullivan, O.P.)

GENERAL OVERVIEW of OUR LADY'S MESSAGES through MEDJUGORJE

PEACE - Already on the third day, Our Lady stressed peace as the first of her messages: "*Peace, peace, peace, and only peace!*" after which she said twice, "*Peace must reign between God and man and between people*". Considering that **María** could see a cross, when *Our Lady* gave this message, the obvious conclusion is that this peace comes from God. God, who through *Our Lady* in Christ became our peace. (**Ephesians 2:14**) "**For He is the peace between us**"...This peace, "**the world cannot give**" (**John 14:27**) and that's why Christ commanded His apostles to bring it to the world (**Matthew 10:11**) so that all men could become "**sons of peace**" (**Luke 10:6**). That's why *Our Lady* as "*Queen of Apostles*" in Medjugorje specifically refers to herself as "*Queen of Peace*". Who better than she, can more successfully convince today's world, which is faced with the threat of destruction, how great and how necessary peace is.

FAITH - The second of *Our Lady's* messages is faith. Already on the fourth, fifth and sixth day of apparitions, *Our Lady* exhorted those present to have strong faith. Understandably, she repeated this message many times. Without faith we cannot arrive at peace! Not only this but faith is itself an answer to God's Word, which he not only proclaims but actually gives to us. When we believe, we accept God's Word which in Christ, became "**our peace**"(**Ephesians 2:14**). Accepting it, the individual becomes a new creature, with a new life of Christ within, and a share in God's nature (**1 Peter 1:4, Ephesians 2:18**) In this way the individual ensures peace with God and with others.

Once again there is no-one who can better understand the necessity and efficaciousness of faith than *Our Lady*. That's why she stressed it on every occasion and charged the visionaries to bring the light of faith to others. *Our Lady* presented faith as an answer to everything, no matter whatever people were looking for. She presented it as the pre-requisite of all prayer, desires and demands, relating it to health, wholeness and to all other human necessities.

CONVERSION - Conversion was another one of *Our Lady's* frequent messages. This presupposes that she noticed either a weakness or a complete lack of faith in humanity today. And without conversion it is impossible to achieve peace. True conversion means, the purifying or cleansing of the heart, (**Jeremiah 4:14**), because a corrupt or 'deteriorated' heart is the basis of bad relations, which in turn brings social disorder, unjust laws, base constitutions etc. Without a radical change of heart, without the conversion of the heart, there is no peace. For this reason, *Our Lady* continually suggests frequent confession. The request is directed to all without differentiation because, "**not one of us is just**"..."**all have wandered, not one does right**" (**Romans**

3:11-12).

PRAYER - Almost daily, from the fifth day of apparitions onwards *Our Lady* recommends prayer. She requests everyone to "**pray without ceasing**" **just as Christ himself taught. (Mark 9:29, Matthew 9:38; Luke 11:5-13)** Prayer, therefore stimulates and strengthens our faith, without which our relationship with God is disordered; as is our relationship with each other. Prayer also reminds us of how close God is to us even in our daily lives: In prayer we acknowledge Him, we give Him thanks for His gifts to us, and we are filled with a hopeful expectancy of that which we need, but particularly our redemption. Prayer solidifies the equilibrium of the individual, and aids us in our 'ordered relationship with God', without which it is impossible to maintain peace either with God or with our neighbor.

The Word of the Lord acquainted itself with all humanity and awaits humanity's response. It is precisely this which gives prayer its "justification". Our response should be "spoken faith", or "prayer". In prayer, faith animates, renews, strengthens and sustains itself. In addition to this, man's prayer really bears witness to the Gospel, and to the existence of God, thus provoking a response of faith in others.

FASTING - Already on the sixth day of the apparitions, *Our Lady* often recommended fasting because it aids faith. That is, the practice of fasting aids and ensures control over oneself. Only the person who can dominate himself is truly free, and is capable of abandoning himself to God and to his neighbor, as faith demands. Fasting guarantees him that his abandonment to faith is secure and sincere. It helps him to free himself from every slavery, but especially to the slavery to sin. Whoever is not in the possession of oneself is in some way enslaved. Therefore fasting helps the individual to restrain himself from disordered pleasure seeking which in turn leads him to a futile and useless existence often wasteful of the very goods which are necessary to others just for basic survival.

With fasting we also retrieve the gift which creates within us a realistic love for the poor and the destitute, which up to a certain point eases the difference between rich and poor. It, therefore, heals the wants of the poor and also heals the excesses and over-indulgence of others. And in its own way, it gives a dimension of peace which today in a special way, is threatened by the difference in the lifestyles of the rich and the poor.(e.g. North and South).

To sum up, we can say that *Our Lady's* messages underline that peace is the greatest good, and that faith, conversion, prayer and fasting are the means by which we can attain it.

(by *Father Ljudevit Rupic, Professor of Theology and translator of Sacred Scripture into the Croatian language.*)

<http://www.tel.hr/medjugorje/euvodpor.html>

FORGIVENESS

During Lent we often hear the word **f o r g i v e n e s s**. God's activity in the Old Testament is permeated with forgiveness. The activity of Jesus is filled with events of forgiveness that are always tied to definite persons. In the profession of faith (the Creed) we declare our faith: "I believe in the forgiveness of sin". God on his part bestows forgiveness. The Lord's Prayer (Our Father) contains yet another aspect, and that is one commanded to Christians, but not only to Christians, among themselves. We pray, namely, "as we also forgive those who trespass against us." Experience shows that we forgive with difficulty and that we literally undergo pain when it is required of us. Yet, it belongs to the way of conversion which is a fundamental part of the faith. What is to be done?

I make mistakes, I commit sins. . . The feeling - I am better than someone else or even what I myself did is not so bad - does not contribute to forgiveness but rather hinders it. But if I have the feeling - I too am no better than anyone else - things change. I become more gentle, more compassionate toward my neighbor and his behavior. Here precisely is the core of what Jesus calls forgiveness.

Father Ivan Landeka

N E W S

NUMBER OF HOLY COMMUNIONS AND CONCELEBRANTS

During March in the shrine of the Queen of Peace in Medjugorje 58,000 Holy Communions were distributed and there were 1213 concelebrations at holy mass by priests from home and abroad, that is 39 priests daily.

March is a the months in which a greater number of groups and individuals come to Medjugorje. The greatest numbers of pilgrim groups in Medjugorje were for the feast of the Annunciation on March 25th and on March 18th when the visionary Mirjana Dragicevic Soldo had her annual apparition. At the end of March, Medjugorje was really alive!

So we recorded groups visiting from: Brazil, Belgium, Singapore, Switzerland, Slovakia, Latvia, Mexico, Hungary, France, Lebanon, Ireland, Poland, Austria, Czech Republic, USA, Germany, Slovenia, Italy, Canada, England, Korea, Australia and, of course, Croatia.

VISIT OF BISHOP FROM GERMANY

From March 18th to 23rd Msgr. Franziskus Eisenbach, auxiliary bishop of Mainz, visited in Medjugorje. He said the following about his impressions:

"I am here as a pilgrim. I want to get acquainted with Medjugorje and to pray in it. For years already I know about and follow Medjugorje and I also wanted to come earlier, but I waited for a sure sign for myself when to decide to visit Medjugorje. This time I was expressly invited, therefore I came.

Already my first impression is that the church is continuously full at all the masses, and especially at adoration. It is obvious that many people have understood that this is a special place of prayer. The experience of many is that their personal prayer improves and that it is supported by the experience of community prayer. I know many people who in Medjugorje have renewed their faith and have learned to pray again. And now I too have personally been able to experience how Medjugorje helps in this sense.

Another experience that for me is very important is that in Medjugorje it is not just a matter of prayer, but that prayer also brings forth fruits in the service of man, especially of man in affliction. It was especially important for me to get to know the "Mothers' Village" where mothers with children, abandoned children and orphans of war find a refuge, and everything is also connected with a large garden where encounters take place between the children of healthy families and the children of those who for various reasons have lost a normal family. I saw that abandoned children here have a chance to learn how to live. And that is very important. The community of Sister Elvira in which those addicted to drug and other evils find a place of refuge and healing also impressed me deeply. I celebrated Holy Mass and prayed morning prayer with them. It was very nice to see with what strength they pray and how joyfully they celebrate Holy Mass. I understood that the main method of healing is the deepening of faith and the experiencing of community in prayer and work.

It was important for me to hear about the God-Parent program for children, that is, the action of helping the children of fallen defenders, in which many families from Germany cooperate helping every month with a financial contribution for the destroyed families and their children. These works of active love for the needy especially showed me that in Medjugorje it is not just a matter of the correct spirit of prayer. Love toward God that is shown in prayer has brought fruits that are recognized in the care of man.

By all means I also wanted better to understand the very phenomenon of apparitions. Therefore I made an effort at least to meet someone of those who tell about their experiences and affirm that they see *Our Lady*. I met one of the visionaries, spoke with her and was present at an apparition. At my first meeting with Marija in her family home I found her in the garden working in rubber boots. She is a completely normal, young woman with three children. In conversation with her I understood that she is a very alert person, knows how to ask questions and to speak of her experiences and discerns things well, sees what is good and what is not good. She invited me also to participate in prayer with her when she prepares the encounter with *Our Lady*, that is continuing already more than 18 years. We prayed in the chapel of her home where quite a few people were gathered for this occasion. We prayed the rosary in various languages and waited for the moment of apparition. Marija gave a brief notice that the

moment of apparition was getting close and after a prayer that she led, she remained in silence. We all knew that it was the moment when she sees *Our Lady*. After the apparition she told us that *Our Lady* prayed over everyone and blessed us all. Once more she invited us to take part in a prayer. The meeting with Marija showed me that she is a completely normal, young woman, that she is standing with her two feet on the ground and that she is taking good care of her children. I saw that she has a good relationship with her family and with the pilgrims. She is simple and natural, and then again clear and understandable when she talks about her experiences. In the end I can say that she is a woman who can be believed, who is trustworthy and therefore I have no difficulty trusting in what she says, that is, that she is seeing and that it is authentic. This for me is a very important experience, because I concluded that this place of prayer rests on the experience that these young people have received like a gift and which they confidently transmit to others.

Mary is venerated in Medjugorje as the Queen of Peace. This title and all that she sees had to prepare the world for that terrible experience of war. Ten years after the first apparition war broke out in Croatia and in Bosnia-Herzegovina. Medjugorje is a place that continuously prays for peace. The message of Medjugorje for the world is clear: it has to overcome wars and conflicts by the power of love. One gets the impression that in Medjugorje the whole man is affected: heart, soul and body. Prayers and the place of prayer here take a hold of the entire person. Therefore Medjugorje, in this sense, carries a message for the whole Church: allow God and *Our Lady* to touch us in the totality of our human reality and let us allow Mary to bestow her love on us, and thus learn to love with our whole heart. Therefore I can say that no one needs to be afraid of Medjugorje even if it has not yet been officially approved in the Church. Here prayer is really done in a way that changes a person. Therefore multitudes of the faithful who also wish to learn to pray come here. I wish that this message and this experience be carried also to Germany because we Germans are inclined to rationalism rather than to feeling. And here it is a matter of a message for man in his entirety, something that is really necessary for everyone."

SEVENTH MEETING FOR LEADERS OF CENTERS OF PEACE

At the seventh meeting for leaders of centers of peace about 100 participants from twenty countries from all five continents took part. On that occasion, as every year before, the participants adopted the following

DECLARATION

Gathered in Neum from March 19th to 24th, 2000 at the seventh meeting for the leaders of Centers of Peace and Medjugorje prayer groups, we address ourselves to the friends and the pilgrims of the Queen of Peace:

1. We are in the year of the Great Jubilee of Christianity. Let us strive to put Jesus Christ at the center of our lives

and so to make our contribution to the renewal of the Church of our times and of the local Church.

2. Within the content of the program of the Jubilee and of *Our Lady's* messages from Medjugorje we recognize connecting points. *Our Lady's* word: "Do whatever He tells you. . ." reveals to us that Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever.

3. Proclamation of the Gospel is the prophetic task of all Christians. It realized by taking first place in one's own life. A life in keeping with that is the very best proclamation. The same is valid also for those who spread *Our Lady's* messages.

4. Let *Our Lady's* invitation to peace and reconciliation be present in a special way in the life of individuals, of families and groups, especially in this year of the Great Jubilee.

5. Again we call on all to get to know better and faithfully to preserve the originality of Medjugorje spirituality.

Medjugorje, March 24, 2000

BENEFACTORS' CONFERENCE

A meeting of benefactors inspired by the Medjugorje messages will be held in Medjugorje on June 26, 2000 with the theme: "You did unto me."

The first international conference of representatives of humanitarian organizations and individuals who, inspired by the events of Medjugorje, are involved in humanitarian activity, will be held in Medjugorje June 26, 2000, starting at 9:00 AM. All those are invited who provided spiritual and material support to the war stricken population during the war in Croatia and in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

We request all benefactors and representatives of humanitarian organizations who wish to participate in the work of this conference to give notice of their arrival with the pertinent information about their organization and personal information for the participant to the association "Medjugorje-Mir" Split at fax number: 00385-21-342-258 or by e-mail to <<medjugorje-split@st.tel.hr>>

Simultaneous translation will be organized for the participants of the conference. For all additional information contact "Medjugorje-Mir" in Split by telephone: 00385-21-361-354.

DEATH OF DON ANGELO MUTTI

Don Angelo Mutti, founder and editor in chief of Echo of Medjugorje, died March 3, 2000. The bulletin Echo of Medjugorje spread *Our Lady's* messages and news of the events in Medjugorje for a period of many years. Since it was translated into ten languages he caused Mary's message of peace and reconciliation to reach every continent. The worth of Don Angelo in that was inestimable. In gratitude to him and for everything he did this way, let us commend him to prayer trusting that his co-workers will continue on the path he started.

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

PRESS BULLETIN 141, April 19, 2000.

THE WAY OF LIGHT - Via Lucis

During Lent but also in other seasons of the Church year, the Way of the Cross (Via Crucis) is prayed. We are immediately before the day of resurrection when the way of the cross - via crucis - for Jesus Christ and for Christians turns into via lucis - the way of light. The palpability of suffering and pain gently brings the suffering and pain of Jesus closer to us. The reality of resurrection is much more distant from our thinking and feeling. In recent years in Italy a very interesting prayer movement, or better yet a new form of devotion, is spreading. As in times past one used to meditate on the fourteen stations of Jesus' passion, so this new form of devotion meditates on the fourteen stations of the Risen One and the events of resurrection. In this way in the devotion of the people of God attention to the risen and glorious Jesus is more explicitly coming back. For all of us this Easter may the via crucis become the via lucis both in our personal lives and in the life of the whole Church.

Father Ivan Landeka

N E W S

SEMINARS AT "DOMUS PACIS"

During the past month at the "Domus Pacis" House of Prayer about 350 faithful gathered in prayer and meditation in the course of nine different seminars.

Members of Franciscan Youth from Hercegovina had two seminars: one in March and one in April. Father Miro Sego conducted the seminars.

The Franciscan sisters of the Hercegovina Franciscan Province and the organization "Help" that works for the prevention of addiction among young people each held one seminar.

At the end of March the Salesians from Bosnia organized a spiritual renewal for a group of young people from Bosnia.

During the past month four fasting and prayer seminars in different languages were also held.

These kind of seminars are evidence of how much spiritual renewal and growth is necessary both for youth and adults. Medjugorje with its life of prayer indeed provides that for them. That is why all the seminars are filled in advance and every year there are more and more of them.

PRIESTS AND LAITY FROM PORTLAND

Along with the large number of groups and individuals who visited Medjugorje this Lent, from March 23 - 31 at the shrine of the Queen of Peace there was also a group of eleven priests with their parish workers from Portland, Oregon in the United States. The pilgrimage to Medjugorje was really for them like an annual retreat. Inspired by Mary's messages of peace and reconciliation they returned to their homes to serve in their local Church.

CHANGE OF TIMES FOR PRAYER PROGRAM

We announce to all pilgrim groups and individual who come on pilgrimage to Medjugorje that since March 26th the daily evening program in the church is now from 6:00 PM to 9:00 PM (6:00 PM rosary, 7:00 PM Mass, blessing prayers and the third part of the rosary).

Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament is on Wednesdays and Saturdays for 10:00 - 11:00 PM and on Thursdays immediately after the evening mass. Adoration and prayer before the Crucifix is every Friday in church after the evening mass. Every Sunday at 3:00 PM the Peace Rosary is prayed on the Hill of Apparitions, and the Way of the Cross on Cross Mountain at the same time every Friday. There is opportunity for confession every evening at least one hour before the beginning of the evening prayer program.

Holy Mass for various language groups takes place during the morning according to previous arrangement.

All information in connection with the prayer program in the shrine of the Queen of Peace in Medjugorje as well as all other information can be obtained in the Information Office at 00387-88-651-988a from 9:00 AM till 6:00 PM. We request all organizers of pilgrim groups to notify their pilgrims upon their arrival in Medjugorje about the possibility of obtaining needed information at the Information Office that is located in front of the parish rectory, and not at the parish office.

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

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

Again I greet all those who are trying to follow the messages of Medjugorje. I wish everyone a Happy Easter. I wish everyone a real experience of Jesus having resurrected -- an experience of peace and joy.

As usual I would like to remind us first of what Mary told us on March 25 as preparation for Easter. There she was calling to use time, because time is grace. It is clear to all of us that the best way to see who we are or who the others are is when we pay attention to how we or they use their time. Our values can be found wherever we use our time. If someone only uses his time only for the material, then he is a materialist. If someone only uses his time for his own enjoyment, then he is a nihilist, and so forth. So, watching how and where our time is used is how we will be able to tell who we are and in the same way who the others are. We are built in a way that our bodies, our minds and our souls all need time, and a person who spends his time on all three of these areas is then a well-balanced person and at the same time a good Christian. We all know that the excuse we use the most often about taking care of our spiritual side concerns time, in other words, our not having sufficient time for it. Here we must again not forget that the key to having the needed time is not the hours but the love,

because for that which we love, for that we will use our time. Using time well signifies graces, so lost time also signifies lost graces.

Mary also told us that she is with us. This fact is the one and only new message of Medjugorje, because without Mary's special presence here with us, one cannot successfully explain Medjugorje. In this vein, the Communists claimed that this was a counter-revolution, then one said that it concerned mental illness, drugs or symptoms of addiction, then manipulations, and so forth to this very day. None of this is true, and so without Mary's presence here, one simply remains unable to explain Medjugorje correctly. So this should help us to very consciously thank God for Mary's presence here, for her daily apparitions, for her messages to us and especially for her prayers for us. She said after all that she was interceding for each of us so that our hearts may open themselves to God and to His love for us.

Mary, the intercessor, is our mother and this is our certainty and our real hope, because God will hear her prayers, and so we will receive the graces or become open to the graces.

Lent was a special time in which we could discover God's love for us in Jesus Christ, because this love was ready to suffer for us, and to go to the Cross and to die there for us. It is in that suffering that we ought to discover His love for us and then to open ourselves to it. It is here that we all should ask ourselves about our prayer, or about what is it that we wish from prayer.

Do we, in prayer, only ask for and speak of ourselves, or is it that we, first of all, ask God to touch us with His love so that we can then respond to that love in changing our lives with this love for us and for the others?

We should also ask ourselves what it is that closes us from God's love and what was it that helped open us to it.

In any case, it is mandatory that we work on ourselves and Mary called us to pray without ceasing. Prayer without ceasing is possible when we remember that prayer is a meeting with God and it is this meeting that can be without ceasing. It is the meetings that occur at Holy Mass, at Confession and at Adoration and which then are carried out in our meetings with the others and with nature. In this way our whole life will be lived as a meeting with God and then this will also become a joy because it is possible that all meetings become joyful because that which we love will always bring us joy. The danger for us is that when the love is absent, then the meeting is something that frightens us. So, we simply wish to continue on the path along with Mary thankful that she is with us and we will then also learn to use our time in such a way that we will at some point also have become worthy of entering into Eternal Glory.

Regarding the visionaries, at the moment Vicka is here at home and she continues daily to meet with the pilgrims. Marija is in Italy, and Ivan is still in the USA but is

supposed to be coming back soon. We believe that these three are still having their daily apparitions wherever they happen to be. Mirjana, Ivanka and Jacov are all living here and of these Mirjana and Jacov do occasionally still speak with the pilgrims while Ivanka, as we know, has pulled herself back and lives quietly with her family.

We have celebrated a very beautiful Easter with pilgrims from every corner of the world. The stream of pilgrims has again increased since Easter and right now we have many German and Italian pilgrims as well as English-speaking pilgrims. There are also Brazilians and Argentinians here, also Koreans and Lebanese, Slovenians, the Czech Republic and Slovakia and so forth. There are, thank God, very many people here and there are also enough Priests here to hear Confessions. Much prayer is happening in Medjugorje and this is certainly Mary's wish and her intention.

ALSO TODAY I CALL YOU TO CONVERSION

This is one of the primary messages and so Mary has shown a prophetic structure in her messages. This means that God promises peace but it is also we who must first convert, pray, fast, and have faith, and this is the way of the true prophets. God promises peace, but it is man who must do something and it is what man does that we have come to call conversion. Conversion is really our turning from the world back to God. Conversion is a process which really never ends, and of this we must become really conscious and so we may never forget this in our spiritual lives. Those who say "I have converted" must be very careful not to come to think that they have reached the end of a process, for it is much better to always think of something that has just started, and so what we have come to call conversion is only the beginning of an on-going activity of turning around, of a change in our direction. But the process of our conversion stays with us for the rest of our lives. This first of all concerns an aversion -- an aversion to the world, an aversion to all sin, an aversion to oneself, to other people, to all the material things, and so an aversion to all that which could or does in fact hinder us on the way to God. This dimension of aversion in this ongoing process of conversion also takes all of our lives, because we must fight; and this is a fight against all temptations, against all sin, against all those mentalities and logic of sin which never let go of us and never dissipate. These always try to enlist us. The second dimension of conversion is the turning toward something and here is meant a turning toward God. The more we turn toward God, the more we avert from and become free of the sinful relationships to ourselves, to the others, to the material and in general to the whole world. But in so doing we do not in any way lose ourselves, the others, the material or the world, but just come to see all these in a different light. This then shows us that conversion really carries a growth process with it -- a growth in love, a growth in trust, a growth in faith, hope, goodness, mercy; and no-one can ever be in a situation where he can say that he loves in such a way that his love, or his faith, or his hope

can no longer become stronger. This is again the reason that one should say that the process of conversion really never ends. But God also gave His own name in respect to this process of conversion, and it is Emmanuel -- this of course meaning "God with us". This means that God is with us as we go, God as the bread that is our food during our lives. And Mary as mother, as pilgrim and as our teacher in these times, as the Pope calls her in various of his documents, is also with us, and this Jubilee Year is, as the Pope also wrote in his Encyclical *MOTHER OF THE SAVIOR*, was prepared by Mary. This Encyclical was published in 1987 and there the Pope called these times Marian times. Mary is living her second Advent in order to prepare the pilgrim Church for this Jubilee Year. And so in this light one can also say that Medjugorje itself is a realization of what the Pope has been teaching us during this time. There it always concerns Mary as our mother who is accompanying us, who is teaching us and who is leading us to Jesus.

YOU ARE CONCERNED TOO MUCH ABOUT MATERIAL THINGS AND LITTLE ABOUT SPIRITUAL ONES

Here again it simply refers to the same process of conversion and conversion also means to use time in such a way that everything that we need to do for our soul, for our minds and for our bodies gets its time. To concern ourselves too much with the material means is to become imbalanced in respect to time and therefore come to neglect the spiritual and therefore the spiritual has no chance of growing. So it is important for all of us to meditate on whether we are too concerned with the material things? Mary does not say that we may not be concerned with the material or that we do not need the material. She cannot say this when we think of Jesus in the desert when he was fasting and when Satan told Him to turn the stone into bread. He did not answer "we do not need the bread" but He said "not only from bread does man live, but from the word of God". And this is what Mary is here also emphasizing to us. She wants us to use time in such a way that not only our bodies and our material needs are met, but also that the needs of our souls and minds are met and nurtured every day.

It is a great danger that man in these consumeristic times needs always more and more time for that which he has and does not yet have. In this process of being freed of all the material concerns it is fasting that helps us greatly with this. By way of fasting we absolutely become freed of unnecessary things because we come to see better what we need and what we have and thereby we more easily come to find our balance. When the material concerns overtake everything else, then we are left with no more time for the spiritual, and this may simply not happen. And Mary, all throughout the time of her apparitions, has been nudging and leading us to get the balance back into our lives, and for many conversion begins when they first of all take more time for the spiritual, and here for a woman whose husband starts taking more time for her and for the children will be

showing to her that he is in the process of conversion. The parents will start believing in the conversion of the children when the children start taking more time for prayer as well as more time for their parents. And so we must simply ask ourselves whether we have lost this balance, and if we have, then we must attend to getting it back again.

OPEN YOUR HEARTS AND START AGAIN TO WORK MORE ON YOUR PERSONAL CONVERSION

Mary told us just last month that she is praying that we open our hearts to God but we cannot just say I will now go and open my heart, but here too it concerns a matter of growth like a flower. No-one can say when a flower opens itself, but it is clear to all of us that it only will when all the conditions are what is needed for it to open itself. It is this same way when it comes to our hearts and so when we think of all the conditions that we need and when we use our time well and, of course, pray, then our hearts will also open themselves. Mary wants that we again renew our work when it comes to our own conversion, and in another message she told us that we should work on our hearts as we work on our fields. Everyone who has sewn a good seed and who is hoping for a good harvest will know that it does not suffice to just to go out and to buy the best seed. One also has to attend to the soil and it is this same way when it comes to our hearts. I believe that all conversion is a "personal" conversion. The use of this word here might have been said in order to give the visionaries themselves as well as all parents, teachers and priests, all those who are normally in the position to be talking to all the others, a nudge to attend also to themselves more than they might have been so far, or to attend more to calling the others around them to conversion, in the name of God. It can so easily happen to us that we care more about the souls of the others than we do for the condition of our own souls. The best way to go in this process is to first of all attend to oneself. When one does, then one will be more patient with the others, understand them better and judge them less because one knows that it often takes a long time until we have overcome a bad habit or until we have begun to grow. And it is for this reason that only by way of a personal conversion can we then be most loving and most effective with the others around us, because they will be the best witnesses to our own conversion. So we can very easily come into the situation of becoming Pharisees in that we can find it so easy to preach to the others. Yet, at the same time, we had not even touched with the smallest finger in ourselves what we have asked of the others, as Jesus said it to the Pharisees. Mary then says...

DECIDE EVERYDAY TO DEDICATE TIME TO GOD AND TO PRAYER UNTIL PRAYER BECOMES A JOYFUL MEETING WITH GOD FOR YOU

This decision is really that which we can do. We may not forget in respect to prayer that there are two sides, the outer and the inner. To the outer side of prayer belongs the decision to take time, to find the place, and to create the right conditions, and to remain loyal to these. When we

have all this, then we can say that we have undertaken everything, and so what then happens in our hearts is not our problem. If we in this way take time for God in prayer every day, then prayer will soon become a joyful meeting with God because He loves us and when we meet someone who loves us then it is only natural that we become joyful. I believe we may never tire in repeating this when we think of the many people in the world who never pray or who only pray very little, and who in only doing so with some sense of duty have no joy at it at all and then throw it away as soon as it is possible. This is understandable when the people do not take the time, and how can they take the time for it when they do not have the needed love for it? If we begin to pray in that way, then we will find ourselves in a circle. Here Mary is praying for us so that we may come to experience God's love for us, and this is the hope and the strength of Medjugorje, that very many people can speak of prayer and have experiences with prayer so that they may have joy and peace in doing so. This is because Mary is here and because she is praying for us and for this we may never tire of being thankful. When we have all this, we will then also have come to realize...

ONLY IN THIS WAY WILL YOUR LIFE HAVE MEANING

So the conditions that we may come to realize the meaning of our life is our relationship to God -- God who is love, life, truth, light and the way. As soon as we have lost the good relationship with God we are left with no way, no light, no truth, no life, and no love, and then our life can no longer have meaning. The call for our conversion is only made for our benefit, because it is we who lose the meaning of life when we do not convert. It is we who stay in the darkness when we do not convert and it is we who stay in hate and death when we do not convert to love and to life. This process of conversion is the only way that we can come to realize the meaning of life and for the meaning of life it is also very important to know that our life is a path. On this path everything can happen to us -- the good, the bad, the sorrowful, the joyful, something dreadful, but still none of this is our life. We might become really ill, but still this is not our life, that is the path. However, one must be very free to discover this and then also to live it. And when someone seeks the meaning of life in material things, he will never have enough of it to discover the meaning of life in it. For us it is very important to speak about this and to testify on behalf of this, because so many people in this time have lost all meaning of life, of friendship, and of love. We know how many are tortured with thoughts of committing suicide or who in fact do commit suicide today. This is also true among the young of today. There are so very many depressed people today and people who are in great fear and then easily fall into aggressive manners of behavior. These people should not be condemned because these are the people who need help because these are only the screams of their souls, and so it is so important that we also witness God's love for them. Then once we have made the

decision to take the time and to create the right conditions for our meeting and growth with God...

AND WITH JOY YOU WILL CONTEMPLATE ETERNAL LIFE

We are on a path, we are only pilgrims here and our lives end here, but at the end of it we can expect eternity. This is the so-called eschatological dimension of Christianity and it is a great danger that we can lose this eschatological and thus expectant dimension. We lose this, for instance, in the material things and in the too great concerns for the material. If we take only a little time for the spiritual, when we do not work on our personal conversion, then this expectant dimension is lost and we no longer have what is giving us meaning in this life. We Christians need this expectant dimension, because it will help us to overcome the times in our lives that are hard, that are sinful and the temptations of this life. We will also not become arrogant when we are having an easy time of it because we will always remember that we are only underway toward eternity. The awareness of this expectant, eschatological dimension of our faith is helped greatly by own prayer and our fasting, because it is there that we become freer and lighter. When Mary says bread and water, this was also the case for the pilgrims in the first few centuries because they were only able to take bread and water with them. The other day I read a book by Vittorio Messori in which he leads a conversation with Cardinal Ratzinger. There Cardinal Ratzinger says, in regard to virginity and fasting, that wherever the sense of virginity and fasting has been lost there is no longer a Church, because precisely in virginity and in fasting this eschatological dimension of our faith becomes very clear. Because when we have lost this expectant dimension there is no longer any reason to pray, to fast, to be good and to live with a sense for virginity. And when one asks the question from the other side, and asks where is there fasting, then can one say that there is no Church? Cardinal Ratzinger says, and this is probably a very important point for us, that when we make the decision and then think about eternal life, and in so doing also give signs for it in being able to forgive, being able to abstain, to wish to be freed, to avoid conflicts, then why should we think of these things with joy unless we have already experienced just a little of God's love? And if we have just experienced a little of God's love here, then in eternity we know we shall be awaiting eternal and infinite love. When we have experienced just a little peace and joy, then this will last without interruption for eternity. The joy we have here will of course not remove the Cross or the fear of death from us, but the path all along will be very different when everything is seen and happens in the light of eternity. And in this way may it then also be with all of us, so that all us may remain on this path, and for this let us now pray...

God our Father, we thank You that you sent us Your only Son, that He suffered, died and resurrected for us, that You showed us with this that You are really the Father over all life and all death. We thank You

that through the newly resurrected Lord new light came into our lives and we ask You for the grace of conversion. Give us the strength that we be able to free ourselves from all that is hindering us on our path, and give us the grace of a joyful meeting with You, so that during our path we are able to always look toward and forward to You, and that we can always with love and with joy contemplate the meaning of life. We ask You, O Father, for the visionaries, for the Priests, for this Parish, for all the pilgrims and for all who are converting, that they in speaking in Your name also personally convert themselves, that they may never tire of working on their own conversion. We ask You, O Father, touch all those who have for any reason stopped on their path, or who have gotten tired and we bring before You all those who have lost the meaning of life, that they may again find it. Bless all those who have brought their own intentions to You; may they all during this time of Resurrection remain with Your Resurrected Son, Jesus Christ. Father, protect us from all evil and from everything that can hinder us on our path to You. Mary, our mother, teacher and leader, may we under your protection continue on our path of life, so that all of us may someday be with you in eternity. May this happen through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Fra Slavko Barbaric
Medjugorje; April 28, 2000

PILGRIMS of FAITH MARIAN CENTER (PFMC)

We are not a store. We operate like a church pamphlet or book rack where you make selections and offer a donation based on value posted or received.

The **PFMC** is a LAY MINISTRY made up of dedicated Roman Catholics. It 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.

The **PFMC** is now permanently approved as an **Internal Revenue Service (IRS)** Code Section 501(c)(3) non-profit, tax exempt religious association which can accept tax deductible contributions or donations in relation to its organizational functions. These functions include pilgrimages, retreats, days of recollection, presentations, Bible Study, Rosary making, books, and religious articles.

Please patronize your local Catholic Book Store, parish book rack as well as the **PFMC**.

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

The PILGRIM

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.

DONATIONS by CHARGE CARD ACCEPTED

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

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

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

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

We appreciate the communication so that we can correct

our mailing labels. ORDER and SPONSOR **"The PILGRIM"** for your favorite religious or priest

BLESSED OIL

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

Read the articles in the *November* and *December 1994* issues as well as the **Bible** readings for the **Holy Week Chrism 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.

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 **"HELP WAKE UP AMERICA"** from 2-2:15 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.** We will soon have news about the new IHS Ministries station and the possibility of a regular time for the **PFMC** and the planned program of **"Putting on the ARMOR of GOD."** See article on page 4.

LETTERS / CARDS / e-MAIL

We receive lots of correspondence asking NOT to be removed from the BULK MAIL list. Please understand why we must ask for this correspondence. Bulk mail is not required to be returned by the U. S. Postal Service (USPS) when the delivery address is incorrect. Some USPS employees are very conscientious and will mark BULK MAIL return to sender with an indication as to non-delivery reason. Most, however, take advantage of the requirements and trash the non-deliverable BULK MAIL.

Because of this we must rely on individuals to inform us if they are getting the BULK MAIL at the correct address and wish to continue receiving BULK MAIL. When we do not get a response from a BULK MAIL recipient at least once per year we begin to evaluate that address for removal from the list. Within 6 to 8 months of continued non-receipt of correspondence the BULK MAIL list will be purged of

those addresses where no correspondence has been received. Those removed may rejoin the list with a simple note of correspondence indicating they wish to be back on the list.

We just hate to waste the Good Lord's precious resources and are doing everything to make sure that copies of **"The PILGRIM"** are being delivered to addresses where they will be read and enjoyed.

Thanks,

Keith and Kathleen Werner, Co-Directors, PFMC

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.

Pilgrimage to Medjugorje and Rome and Assisi

Want to pilgrimage to **Medjugorje** and **Rome** and **San Giovanni Rotondo (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 **\$2899?** 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 **14 day** pilgrimage, **November 1st thru 14th,** to see where Jesus walked in the **Holy Land** with a requested donation of **\$2999** to include all morning and evening meals, transportation, overnight accommodations and full spiritual program? 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 have **40** seats available. **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.**

Information sheets and registration coupons will be available in the next issue of **"The PILGRIM."**

Thanks for your assistance, we really need it.

Keith and Kathleen

CALENDARS:

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).

In *June* the Church celebrates the Solemnities of *ASCENSION of OUR LORD* (1), *PENTECOST* (11), *HOLY TRINITY* (18), *BIRTH of SAINT JOHN the BAPTIST* (24), *CORPUS CHRISTI* (25), *SAINTS PETER and PAUL* (29), and *SACRED HEART* (30) and the Memorials of *Saints Marcellinus and Peter* (2), *Charles Lwanga and Companions* (3), *Boniface* (5), *Norbert* (6), *Ephrem of Syria* (9), *Anthony of Padua* (13), *Romuald* (19), *Aloysius Gonzaga* (21), *Paulinus of Nola* (22), *John Fisher and Thomas More* (22), *Cyril of Alexandria* (27), *Irenaeus* (28), and *The First Martyrs of Rome* (30) and *The Immaculate Heart of Mary* (7/1). The Church calendar recognizes **Fathers Day** (18).

AROUND the PFMC AREA

Sunday, 20 August 2000, NOON until ? with a Brief Meeting preceded by Divine Mercy Chaplet at 3 PM: **Annual Pot-Luck Picnic and Meeting of the Membership of the PFMC**, at the home of **Keith and Kathleen Werner**, 129 Deerfield Avenue, Marlton, NJ 08053. This is just off **Hopewell Road**, one street north of the old **Kettle Run Fire Station** (now **Evesham 225**).

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**

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Wednesday, 5/10/2000*

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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**. The main speakers will be **Father John Hampsh** with 3 day extension on the **Healing Gifts of the Holy Spirit** with **Father 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.