



The PILGRIM

Vol. 11 No. 6 Pilgrims of Faith Marian Center (PFMC)

June 2000

Our Lady's MESSAGE of 5/25/2000 via Marija Pavlovic Lunetti and the Franciscans at Medjugorje

Dear Children! I rejoice with you and in this time of grace I call you to spiritual renewal. Pray, little children, that the Holy Spirit may come to dwell in you in fullness, so that you may be able to witness in joy to all those who are far from faith. Especially, little children, pray for the gifts of the Holy Spirit so that in the spirit of love, every day and in each situation, you may be closer to your fellow-man; and that in wisdom and love you may overcome every difficulty. I am with you and I intercede for each of you before Jesus. Thank you for having responded to my call.

Father Slavko Barbaric's REFLECTION begins on page 23

A PRAYER

Dearest Lord Jesus,

Even while on the cross, You had Mercy upon the good thief and you forgave him. You forgave those who persecuted You, and you had compassion as you saw your mother and the Apostle John weep in their grief.

Lord let us have that same forgiveness for those who persecute us, who talk about us behind our backs, and who hurt us in the most terrible ways. Help us to forgive those who treat us unjustly and without conscience. Help us to forgive those who accuse us without cause. We want to forgive, and yet we find it so difficult to do so. It is so much easier to lash out in anger, or to want and do anything to get revenge.

We ask Lord for the gift of kindness and gentle actions, and for all hearts to be open to truth and firm resolutions, to resolve misunderstandings. Thank you Lord, for teaching us daily, and for being there to sooth our wounded hearts and minds.

AMEN.

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

PILGRIM CHURCHES for JUBILEE 2000 in the DIOCESE of CAMDEN, NEW JERSEY.

**The Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception, Camden
Saint Joseph Pro-Cathedral, Camden
Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton, Absecon
Saint Nicholas of Tolentine, Atlantic City**

"The PILGRIM" for June 2000 is dedicated to "Our Lady of Perpetual Help." The Table of Contents / "IN THIS ISSUE . . ." is on page 3.

Our Lady of Mount Carmel, Berlin

Saint Ann, Wildwood

Corpus Christi, Carney's Point

Saint Peter Celestine, Cherry Hill

Our Lady of Lourdes, Glassboro

Saint Mary, Gloucester

Saint Mary, Malaga

Saint Gregory, Magnolia

Saint Mary Magdalen, Millville

Sacred Heart, Vineland

PRAYER FOR TRAVELERS

The Lord will guard your coming in and your going out both now and forever.

Prayer: Help us, almighty Father, to walk ever in your ways, and to travel always in your presence. Please be with us on our journey, and protect us from any peril we may meet on the way. Preserve us Lord, and those who go with us, from every evil on the road and bring us home safely. Through Christ, our Lord, your Son, we ask this grace.

Let us go forth in peace, R. In the name of Christ

AMEN.

(Franciscan Mission Associates, Mount Vernon, NY)

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

We cannot emphasize enough that 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. The airlines and hotels are asking for names for all Jubilee Year pilgrimages. 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.

PILGRIMAGE to MEDJUGORJE, ROME, GARGANO (BLESSED PADRE PIO) and LANCIANO

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 Rotondo** 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 end of the Summer season 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 13 or the light yellow information sheet enclosed. **Mail your coupon with deposit to PFMC**. Call **Kathleen** or **Dotty** at 856-768-9228.

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 **Cannonization 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 is encouraged and available. Escort and guides provided throughout. Package price is **\$2899** including all taxes. Tips, beverages, and laundry are not included. Spiritual Director is **Father Joy Chacko of Holy Name Parish** in **Delran, NJ**, with coordination by **Kathleen Werner**. Please complete the registration coupon at the bottom of page 14 or the aqua information sheet enclosed. **Mail your coupon with deposit to PFMC**.

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** and **Jordan** with a requested donation of **\$2899** to include all morning and evening meals, transportation, overnight accommodations and full spiritual program? We are planning to stay overnight in places that will provide an atmosphere for a year **2000** pilgrimage you will never forget. We currently have **40** seats available. **We are now taking applications**. If you are interested, please send your application and a **\$500** deposit to **Pilgrims of Faith Marian Center (PFMC)**, 61 Cooper Road, Voorhees, NJ 08043-4963.

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**.

The picnic and meeting will be held at the **Werner** home at

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**.

129 Deerfield Avenue, Marlton, NJ 08053-7103 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 to share a casserole, a salad, a dessert 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 a 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.

SUMMER 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, air conditioning, etc. The Summer months are usually vacation time and people forget their ministries. We need help throughout the year.

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** will take your petitions to **Medjugorje** in **September**.

Thank you greatly for remembering to send us a little something monthly especially these Summer months.

BIBLE STUDY

On the **2nd** and **4th** *Mondays* at **7:30 PM** Bible study is going very well. We have had several meetings now and are studying **Genesis**. Each night is a program within itself, so those readers interested in Bible Study can come at any time and pick up the program fairly easily. Those who have been coming are quite excited at what we are beginning to see and learn about **TPOLOGY**. 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

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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: *June 12th and 26th, July 10th and 24th, August 7th and 21st.*

THE SACRAMENTAL of a MOTHER'S LOVE

Feast of Our Lady of Mount Carmel: July 16th

The Eucharist and the Scapular

By His Sacred Passion, our Divine Saviour purchased Redemption and Sanctification for the whole human family. In order to convey to individual souls the Merits of His sacred Passion, the abundant and life giving Graces. He left in His church seven Holy Channels or Sacraments. Of these Sacraments, the Holy Eucharist is undoubtedly the greatest Manifestation of His Divine Love; for in It we actually partake of the Divine Life and Love in their very source.

However, besides the Sacraments, Jesus has left us other

helps to Salvation – the sacramentals. Of themselves, the sacramentals do not impart Sanctifying Grace to those who receive them, as do the Sacramentals. Nevertheless, they do gain for us many Graces which support us in our striving towards Eternal Life and Heavenly Glory and Happiness. Of these sacramentals, the one that perhaps reveals the greatest Heavenly Love is the Brown Scapular, the Scapular of **Our Lady of Mount Carmel**. It bears our Blessed Mother's Promise of Eternal Life:

"Whosoever dies clothed in this habit shall be preserved from eternal fire!"

As the Redeemer of Mankind, Our Lord instituted the Sacraments and also some sacramentals. However, Mary was so intimately united with Jesus that she desired only to do what He did (God's Will in all things and at all times) and to have done to her whatever was done to Him, her Divine Son, even the suffering for love of God. On **Calvary**, no one suffered so much with our Redeemer as did His Blessed Mother; thus she merited the title of co-redemptrix. As the co-redemptrix, it is only fitting that Our Lady should have established many of the sacramentals. Thus we have from her maternal hands the Scapular, the Rosary, the Miraculous Medal and many others.

It was no mere coincidence that – after Jesus had given us His Own Body and Blood, His Very Self, in the Holy Eucharist on Holy Thursday night – He gave us, in the person of Saint John, on Good Friday His most holy mother as our Mother. Nor can we discern anything but Divine Providence in that laudable practice which was long the custom, and still is, in many places; of clothing young children in the Brown Scapular as a sign of Mary's maternal love for the child. In some case, it is when the child has just become a Christian by Baptism, that is, when he or she has just been incorporated into the Mystical Body of Christ. Whose mother is Mary. In other cases, it is when the child has just received the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ sacramentally in Holy Communion for the first time at his or her First Communion and his or her breast is still aglow with the love enkindled by the Bodily Presence of Jesus within him or her.

It is Jesus Christ Who gained for us the Grace of Eternal Life. But it is His Blessed Mother, Mary, the Mediatrix of All Graces, who distributes this Grace to all of us; and one of the means which she has chosen for doing so is the Brown Scapular. In return for so great a Gift which Jesus has given us in the Holy Eucharist, we should give Him our ardent love for Him and our confidence in His saving redemption. In return for the gift of the Brown Scapular, we should love Mary and have confidence in her promise. It is chiefly by receiving Holy Communion that we show our love for Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar. It is by wearing the Brown Scapular that we best show our love for Mary. The Eucharist is the Sacrament of Infinite

Love; the Scapular is the sacramental of maternal love.

Love for Our Lady

Again and again, in revelations to favored souls, our Blessed Mother has asked that love for her be renewed in the world:

In her apparitions at **Fatima, Portugal** in 1917, Our Lady appealed in particular for a tender devotion to her Immaculate Heart. She also urged all her children to make good use of her gifts, the sacramentals of a loving Mother; her Rosary and her Scapular.

On 13th October 1917, the last of her apparitions at **Fatima**, she made her identity known to the children as she had promised by the simple declaration: "I am the Lady of the Rosary!" It was also in this vision that **Lucia dos Santos**, the eldest seer, saw her as **Our Lady of Sorrows** and, finally, as **Our Lady of Mount Carmel**, dressed in a brown **Carmelite** religious habit and holding in her hand the Scapular of **Mount Carmel**.

16th July is the Feast of **Our Lady of Mount Carmel**, our Mother of the Scapular. It commemorates the apparition of the Blessed Virgin Mary, accompanied by a multitude of angels, to **Simon Stock**, then the Superior General of the **Carmelite Order**, on 16th July 1251 at **Aylesford, Kent, England**. She was holding in her blessed hands the Scapular of **Mount Carmel** and saying: "This will be to you and all **Carmelites** a privilege, that *whosoever dies clothed in this habit shall not suffer eternal fire!*"

This means:

"Whosoever dies clothed in this scapular will be saved!"

This promise of the Blessed Virgin Mary, generally known as the "Scapular Promise", is so wonderful that it seems unbelievable. Yet it cannot be other than true:

- 1) Historical documents still exist to prove the reality of **Saint Simon's** great revelation.
- 2) The infallible Catholic Church has encouraged its members to believe in this revelation for over seven centuries.
- 3) Miracles confirm the revelation daily. Thus, **Blessed de la Columbiere, S.J.**, said:

"No devotion has been confirmed by so many authentic miracles as has the Scapular devotion!"

Popes of the past seven centuries have shown great esteem and have heaped great extraordinary favors upon the Scapular devotion. **Pope Leo XIII** commended the devotion in these strong words:

"It's nobility of origin, its venerable antiquity, its extraordinary spread in the Church, the spiritualizing effects which it produces and the outstanding miracles which are worked in virtue of it—all render the Scapular of Mount Carmel commendable to a wondrous degree!"

The 'Sabatine Privilege'

Besides the assurance of salvation given for the faithful and persevering wearing of the Scapular of **Our Lady of Mount Carmel**, Our Lady has assured Scapular wearers of their liberation from purgatory on the First Saturday after their death if they fulfill two other conditions:

1 The guarding of chastity according to their state of life; and

2. The daily recitation of 'the Little Office of the Blessed Virgin Mary' by those who can read, or the abstinence from meat on *Wednesdays* and *Saturdays* by those who cannot read. When our Blessed Mother gave this remarkable promise, more than half the people in the world were illiterate; out of regard for this fact, she gave them the alternative condition of abstinence on *Wednesdays* and *Saturdays*; but it is not left to one's will to choose either one or the other. In case a person is unable to recite 'the Little Office of the Blessed Virgin Mary' for a reason other than the inability to read, then the person may ask a priest with the proper faculties to commute this condition to something else, as, for example, the daily recitation of the Rosary, which our Blessed Mother has repeatedly requested in our days. The same applies to the abstinence condition.

This promise of deliverance from purgatory on the first Saturday after death is the famous "Sabatine Privilege".

What true Catholic does not wish to show his or her love for Mary by wearing her Brown Scapular, that noble livery which carries with it so many Graces! What true Catholic does not appreciate this most extraordinary gift of his or her Heavenly Mother when he or she realizes its significance! In our daily lives, we are frequently exposed to many temptations endangering our faith and morals. Let us, therefore, resolve to be invested at once with the armor of Mary, the Brown Scapular, to protect ourselves against the assaults of the enemy! Let us faithfully wear this badge of Eternal Salvation, this help and protection in danger, this pledge of peace and eternal union with God! Let us make up our mind that, from now on, we shall never be without our Scapular of **Mount Carmel**, which Our Lady has placed on our shoulders with the promise of her Motherly care and protection for us in life and in death.

(**"THE MARYFAITHFUL"** July/August, 1988)

GOD BLESS OUR PRIESTS

No man had a greater formative influence on Jesus than **Saint Joseph**. He provided a true image of the best in manhood. Jesus heard **Joseph's** voice greeting Mary, and noted its joy. He heard the undertone of sadness when **Joseph** said goodbye. The divine Child heard **Joseph** commanding, reading, praying, blessing, explaining. He grew familiar with the spring and the drag of **Joseph's** footsteps. He eagerly awaited their return after a journey. He knew the caressing touch of **Joseph's** hand, the security

of his strong arms.

Some of **Joseph's** ways, the nobility of demeanor, his bearing, his gentleness, passed over in subtle inheritance to the Child. Joseph's soul-quality, imaged by the exterior and visible, passed over to help shape the human personality and character of Jesus. The Virgin-Mother saw it with joy, and said it all so simply one day in the temple. Her words reflected twelve years of stored-up fond memories, the affection and unity of a family sharing together life's joys, hopes and sorrows: "Son, why hast Thou done so to us? Behold, Thy father and I have been seeking and sorrowing."

The Holy Family today is re-united in Heaven. Their love for one another continues. The love of Mary and **Joseph** for Jesus overflows and continues in an active, formative expression of love for all called to follow Him. We may infer then, that **Saint Joseph** holds a heavenly assignment to help those called not only to imitate Jesus, but to identify with Him in a special way. Among these are those called to be one with Jesus as victim in suffering for the salvation of souls. Among them too are priests, called to mystical victimhood with Him in the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass.

At the consecration of the Mass a priest identifies with Jesus, priest and victim. He says: "This is My Body... This is the cup of My Blood..." In the Sacrament of Penance the Blood of Christ washes away the guilt. The priest again identifies with Jesus as He says: "I absolve you from your sins in the name of the father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost."

A priest has an insistent and most demanding vocation to bring his mystical union with Christ as priest and victim, to fulfillment of his own life and work. The more he identifies with Christ as a priest, the more he will also become a victim, joined to the sorrow and fatigue of the Good

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

Shepherd, searching for the lost sheep. As a weak human being, he needs the help and support of all who follow Jesus and long for the spread of God's kingdom on earth.

The priest will do well to learn of **Joseph** as Jesus Himself did. The sacraments of Baptism and Confirmation call him to imitate Jesus. The sacrament of Holy Orders calls him to identify with Jesus. **Saint Joseph's** formative influence will help make the priest more able to fulfill the demanding role of being an *alter Christus*, another Christ. It was the virgin-father who provided the manly model for Jesus to follow. **Saint Joseph** now provides a heart-model for all priests, as he did for the Heart of Jesus.

("THE MARYFAITHFUL" May/June, 1988)

AND THEN I SAW MY SOUL . . .

It started last month during the **Jericho** Rosary time. The **Jericho** is a volunteer prayer effort joined by many people who pray each month from the 7th through the 14th for a particular prayer intention. The name is taken from the **Book of Joshua** where the **Israelites** walked around the city of **Jericho** with the **Ark of the Covenant** before them. On the 7th day the walls fell. In a like manner the walls of certain prayer intentions are falling as the **Jericho** Rosary prayer effort grows.

To join, pray for 30 minutes each day from the 7th through the 14th for a set time every day with the **New Ark of the Covenant**, that is Mary's prayer--the Rosary! IT IS SO POWERFUL. You may never be the same! It knocked my socks off last month! I can't wait for *July*! Your prayer is united with many others who are praying around the clock. Everything is amplified by the one body in the unity of the Holy Spirit Who is about to do heart surgery on YOU!!! The prayer intention for *July* is that all hearts will be prepared to receive the Holy Spirit! COME HOLY SPIRIT, COME BY MEANS OF THE POWERFUL INTERCESSION OF THE IMMACULATE HEART OF MARY YOUR WELL BELOVED SPOUSE!

OK, back to earth for awhile... This is so intense that I am only able now to write to you about this. Some other people have told me that similar purification's and warnings are happening in their lives as what happened to me in *May*.

It started with the understanding and directive to "continually strive for a clean conscience, for only with a clean conscience can the Lord God abide in the heart." Thinking I was generally sinless, as we mostly do, I started really trying to check all my motives, thoughts, intentions, and feelings, asking the Holy Spirit for help. Monday, my soul was unexpectedly flooded with the Holy Spirit Who brought a self-awareness of all that was good inside of me, and the beauty by which God had made me, the spirituality that was connected to my humanity and the fact that all God made was good.

The day was bliss and joy, happiness and peace. I liked

this! My very being was singing a song of praise of God. But that night around 3:00 in the *morning*, I was awakened and prompted to go into prayer, which I did obey. Then it started, scenes from my past life started coming almost like a slide show, moving from one event to another, each time showing my sins and errors in thinking and acting that I had committed in the past. At each scene, I had to look head-on at the situation and there was no denying the error. At each scene I was prompted by the Holy Spirit to turn this over to the healing light of Jesus, Who I intuitively knew stood at one side of me in spirit, and the Virgin Mary who held my hand at the other. I realized they were both there then, and are here with us now. They showed me the proper way to see each scene, to turn it over to God, to seek healing, to pray for the people or the situation.

At each scene I felt healing flood into me and into my soul, healing the past memory and situation, and a release of the negativity of sin. The scenes started getting more and more intense, and I continued to remain open as each part of my life was shown to me. I felt the Divine love of the Sacred Heart so present and Jesus' love supporting me through all of this even though I felt shame, guilt, sorrow, healing, surprise, pain, embarrassment, and dismay at times. Jesus kept covering me with His Precious Blood and I felt purified and set free at each scene. I felt His intimate and burning Presence. I continued to press on until I felt the Virgin Mary in spirit literally stop me, or I would have gone on all night. I was told to sleep.

The next day I was exhausted! I felt like crying, but could not! The following day, *Wednesday*, I had my energy back, and this time the Holy Spirit said to me to "open up and look at your soul" which somehow I was given the eyes to see in a clear and intuitive way! I saw my soul! My soul was bathed in light, love, peace, and love and I saw the beauty by which God made me. I was told to focus on this, the beauty of my soul all day and night long, since I (and many people I know) seem to spend most of the time looking at the negative side of ourselves rather than the good.

Overwhelmed with the prior few day's negative stuff, I deliberately obeyed this internal prompting and keyed and focused on what was good in me! Whew! After a long time in looking at the light and love of my soul, and since I had these new eyes I got my courage back (and being adventuresome with stuff like this), I decided to see if I could see or connect to my guardian angel! Looking for him in spirit, there he was! What I saw and felt intuitively but clearly, was the beauty and purity of what I can only describe as a pure spirit and less confined than a human soul, but of such a purity and beauty and a sort of invisibleness that is hard to put in words. I felt the angel's love and his personality. He seemed to be without borders and limits, yet was contained in one thing--lets just call him an angel. **Daniel** is his name

Venturing on, I began to explore the soul of a saint who I have known has been interceding for me for some time, and I was given the gift of connecting with him at once! This particular saint is so humble, his soul is almost crystal clear to the point of being like invisible. I witnessed such a purity and clarity to his soul! I understood the suffering in his life united to the love of Jesus and to the Cross, purified and made his soul the beauty I was able to see, and it made me appreciate suffering much more. I asked to see the soul of the Virgin Mary, after all, when things like this happen, might as well go for greatness! What I was shown took my breath away! I connected to such beauty, brightness, charity, love, purity, and peace! Oh! such a special, special Woman! She is truly God's masterpiece! Blessed and just in awe, I did not want to move, or think, or do anything but remain in her embrace.

The kid in me then thought, hey, lets see what Jesus' soul is like! So I decided to keep climbing, and I looked at the soul of Jesus, and I was given a most tremendous gift. I saw His soul clearly and intuitively! I felt like I was mentally seeing a whole ocean of light and this was Him--Jesus! such depth, endless, infinite, awesome, majestic, light, love, Eucharist, Sacred Heart love and completeness, unendingly. I could not grasp its fullness, it was beyond my capability to comprehend or even summarize! Oh! What a gift!

The next day I went to Confession and had quite the list to talk about and confess, believe me! The priest did not question it, but gave me great advice, prayer, and healing love. The healing was most intense and through the Confession I literally felt wave upon wave of healing enter my soul! Again I saw and experienced first hand the grace that Confession gives the soul and how it is needed for complete healing. It is healing to confess in prayer to God, but through God's minister, and the spoken words of absolution, the complete healing takes place.

The *next ten days* unfolded the same as the prior. Almost every other day for over two weeks I was shown past sins and areas that needed reconciliation, healing, adjustment and purification, and then the following day or two I would be given the gift of some encouragement and consolation.

Each day the tiers and levels got deeper and deeper, more intense, and moved through most all the stages of my life. I felt at times like giving up because it was just so overwhelming. I couldn't believe how much stuff kept coming up, but I know this was a grace of graces, so I just kept going and did not give in to despair, self-pity, anger, resentment, or guilt, as the scenes were shown to me. I almost wore out three different priests during this ten day period, but thanks be to God they understood and helped me! What a grace! The gift of being freed from all the past junk, many, many, many things I had totally forgotten about or blocked out of my mind, or just suppressed! It really helped that I was able to go to daily Mass and talk things over freely at home and with my prayer group

friends who prayed for me and with me.

This experience prompted me to write in last month's newsletter, "Blinded by the Light" which had indeed flooded into my soul. I was told to remember the past with love, to live the present in love, and to live for love in the future! In conclusion, I wish to help you and to encourage you in God's unconditional love.

The Holy Spirit will heal YOU and your past as much as you will allow Him to. The New Pentecost is as individual to each person as Jesus' love is individual to you. The more you and I can and will open our entire lives to the light of God, the more free we become. This was not an easy thing for me to do. I believe in looking back. The sheer determination and will to let NOTHING remain between my soul and God, regardless of how embarrassing, negative, or shameful it was, no matter what the cost, no matter what changes I needed to make, made the healing more effective and quickened the process. The Sacraments saved the day. The Holy Spirit timed everything perfectly and enlightened me only to the extent I could handle it. Jesus' and Mary's love carried me home. Am I completely whole? I have a lot of bad habits in thinking, analyzing, and reactions, that must be overcome daily by growth in faith, hope, and love... but I feel like a new person, and thank God for His mercy on me--a sinner. (...no longer the sinless one!) I have a greater understanding with other people who need prayer for past things, and I feel a new depth of peace, love, and freedom. It is a gift I am eternally thankful for, and for Jesus' personal love! Whew!!!!

(By Philip Hofstetter, LIFE IN CHRIST, a monthly Newsletter Dedicated to the Holy Spirit, Letter 70, June 25, 1998)

ANIMA MARIAE

Soul of Mary, sanctify me.

Heart of Mary, inflame me.

Hands of Mary, support me.

Feet of Mary, direct me.

Immaculate eyes of Mary, look upon me.

Lips of Mary, speak for me.

Sorrows of Mary, strengthen me.

O Mary, hear me.

In the Wound of the Heart of Jesus, hide me.

Let me never be separated from thee.

From my enemy defend me.

At the hour of my death call me.

And bid me come to thine Immaculate Heart;

That thus I may come to the Heart of Jesus, and

There with the saints praise thee for all eternity.

AMEN.

(Our Lady of the Angels Monastery, Irondale, AL)

LETTER FROM A RETREAT CONFERENCE

ATTENDEE

Dearest Keith & Kathleen,

From the depths of my heart I wish to express my gratitude for all the work you did to make the "Do This In Remembrance of Me" Retreat and three day extension with Father DeGrandis an incredible heart print on my faith journey.

I e-mailed "around the world" some deep personal things that happened to me in the hopes that my words would encourage others to continue to pray. I share with you what I e-mailed to others so you, too, can see how powerfully Jesus touched my life:

"*I was in deep conversation and prayer with Jesus and I just asked Him to please, please just let me know if my life is on the right track... does He want me to be doing missionary work in Africa.... Or is it just me that love the African people so much that I want to keep going back.... And Jesus put on my heart "Look at Me.... Look at Me on the Cross!" And so, I picked my head up.... This crucifix was huge.... With a life sized body on it.... And when I looked at Jesus – well, He was dark-skinned (as are the African people). I was just stunned! I know I saw that crucifix when I entered this room, but I didn't realize He was not white. Jesus used that as a sign for me to continue with my life in the direction He has called me.

a.. And then I asked Him to give me some words from the Bible to indicate that I am to become His Missionary Sister.... And during mass the priest spoke this, "Thus says the Lord, I will lead her into the desert and speak to her heart

b.. She shall respond there as in the days of her youth,

c.. When she came up from the land of Egypt

d.. I will expose you to me forever

e.. I will espouse you in right and in justice

f.. In love and in mercy

g.. I will espouse you in fidelity

h.. And you shall know the Lord. (Hosea 2:16-17, 21-22)

*I was standing under this crucifix and I was on my tiptoes touching the feet of Jesus and just praying and asking Him to show me the way.... To just cover me with His Precious Blood and keep me safe from the Evil One so that I would not get distracted from the work Jesus is calling me to do for Him. And then I sat down and I was participating in the workshops and teachings. Later on that same day, I had finished with my partner for the exercise we had to do and when I went to return to my seat, someone else was still working with their partner and was sitting in my chair.... So I just sat on the floor and was praising Jesus while looking at Him on the Cross.... Then I felt two human hands on my shoulders and a female voice said to me.... Don't turn around.... I have a message for you.... Do you

remember this morning when you stood under the Crucifix praying to Jesus.... I just said yes.... And she said.... Well, I don't know what your prayer was, but the Lord gave me a visualization and I must tell you.... She continued and said that the right arm of Jesus came off of the Cross and embraced me and then she saw the chest of Jesus open up and she saw His Heart and it was gushing out blood and just covering me completely.... (remember I had prayed for the Precious Blood of Jesus to cover me, but I had prayed silently and this person could not have known my prayer!!!!!!).... I just started to cry and say thank you Jesus and then this same woman said PLEASE DO NOT TURN AROUND.... And so I didn't because it doesn't matter what human being delivered the message to me.... Jesus just wanted me to get His message.... Thank you Jesus.

*Another time I also touched the feet of Jesus and just asked Him to please send me a sign that Mama was with me.... I explained to Jesus, that yes, she did fly with in the form of the black bird that has always been with me since she went to Heaven and I thanked Him for that, but I asked for a different sign.... And then off I went for my coffee.... Then I came back and was praising Jesus through the music when a woman came and sat two chairs down from me.... She was looking at me and finally said. "The Lord wants me to give you a hug.... "So I said, OK and I hugged her and said Jesus loves you and so do I then I let go of her.... But she didn't let go of me.... So I was wondering about that and she said, "The Lord has given me a word for you" so I asked her to reveal and she just said the word was MOTHER. And I started to cry.... And I said thank You Jesus.... And I told this woman that Mama had gone to Heaven almost two years ago (It will be two years March 24th) but this morning I asked Jesus for a sign that she was still with me.... And this woman said, "Come here, and she just held me and said that my Mama was giving me a hug!" Can I just tell you that I am crying while typing this.... Jesus is just incredible.... The more I surrender to Him the more He answers and blesses me with so many gifts.... He just can't give me enough to show that He loves me.... Its' amazing!

And so I share these deep personal things with you to show you that Jesus hears and answers prayers.... If He hears and answers my prayers, He will do the same for you.... Just trust in Him.... And remember everything is in His timing not yours or mine. Thank You Jesus!" (end of e-mail message)

Additionally, Keith & Kathleen, I just wanted to mention that I gave the weekend retreat to two of my angel friends as a Christmas gift. Angel Donna later remarked that this gift didn't have to be returned or anything as it was the perfect size, color, etc.... you see, JESUS IS THE PERFECT GIFT TO GIVE AND RECEIVE!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

I would encourage others to bless their friends in the same way next Christmas for the workshop scheduled for 2001.

My prayers are still with you, Kathleen, and also for the protection of both of you for the work you are doing for Our Blessed Mother and Our Lord. Thank you for everything. I am one very blessed individual who is even closer to my Heavenly Family because of the graces I received during the six days. Thank you, Jesus!

May God Bless Both of You Abundantly

Jesus loves you and so do I,

(JEANNIE AMBRIEHL O'BRIEN)

MARY TEACHES CHRISTIAN FORGIVENESS IS COMPULSORY GATEWAY TO PEACE

The Facts – When, on the fourth day, Our Lady led us to confession, She said: "Before you pray, each of you must forgive your enemies, offer them to the Father and desire for them grace and blessing." I told my parishioners and they replied 'yes', but this was followed by 20 minutes of utter silence. So I suggested that they ask for the grace to be able to forgive.

Then our Mother gave us a wonderful gift: a man called out from the center of the church: "Lord, I have forgiven, forgive me!", and then started to cry. And we all cried. It was though a tap had been turned on, and in a single voice we were saying: "Lord, I also have forgiven, forgive me!" over and over again.

That followed was an unusual spectacle. Families that were once enemies began to invite each other over for dinner, and they exchanged gifts, and then invited neighbors to celebrate with them. It was a triumph of the grace of reconciliation. (Fr. Jozo)

The theme of forgiveness and reconciliation with God and with our fellow men is very significant in this Jubilee year, and the Church calls us to live it with particular spiritual intensity (cf. Tertio Millennio Adveniente).

The Queen of Peace, as if to conclude the cycle of great Marian Apparitions which began in **Rue du Bac (Paris)** in 1830, continued with **Lourdes** in 1858 and then **Fatima** in 1917, has been preparing us for more than 18 years with Her extraordinary presence of grace in **Medjugorje**.

Right on the second day of her apparitions on **Podbrdo** (26 June 1981) Our Lady revealed the main reason for coming, and the core of her message: **"I have come that men be reconciled with God and with each other". Through Maria she later made an impassioned appeal to the world: "Peace! Peace! Be reconciled!"**

Mary's call to forgiveness is expressed in three main directions:

1.. Purification of hearts through a radical journey of conversion to God, and be able to fully accept the gift of merciful Love which God the Father is offering.

2.. Those who have accepted God's Love and Forgiveness (through the outpouring of the Spirit) unconditionally offer it to others in concrete day-to-day situations.

3.. The acceptance of others for the sake of God who is in them, no matter what their condition is.

This is the "holy way" indicated by Mary through which the life of the Holy Trinity is poured out onto the earth. Through humble and open hearts which accept the gift of grace, the Holy Trinity pours out His Life in a torrent of spiritual light, peace and salvation upon the entire world.

This is the "great sacrifice" pleasing to God and to which the Queen of Peace calls us without tiring: **"Dear Children, I wish to thank you for all your sacrifices, and I invite you to the greater sacrifice, the sacrifice of love... I invite you to begin to live love in your hearts"** (message of 27 March 1986). **"I invite you to always carry harmony and peace... With love turn into good everything that the devil wants to destroy and make his own"** (31 July 1986). **"May love get the upper hand in you all; not human, but divine love"** (20 Nov. 1986).

Our Lady, however, calls us to do more than simply forgive those who offend us. Together with the Gospel she calls us to **"love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you"** (Lk 6:27-28). **"I desire that you love everyone good and bad, with my love. Only that way will love get the upper hand in the world"** (25 May 1988). Our Lady even invites us to implore God to give us the grace **"to love all people as she loved Jesus"** (prayer to the Mother of Goodness, Love and Mercy" dictated to Jelena in 1984.)

The Queen of Peace also desires that souls be totally healed

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and freed from the devastating consequences of sin. It is inevitable that sins leave wounds in hearts, making them heavy and incapable of an authentic experience of communion with God and with others.

Mary guides us to profound inner healing. Our Lady wants to guide us on a journey of deep healing to gradually introduce us, through an ever more radical purification of the heart, to the ineffable joy of a burning communion with the Holy Trinity: ***"I invite you to prepare your hearts for these days during which the Lord particularly desires to purify you of all the sins of your past. My dear Children, you cannot do it alone, so I am here to help you. Pray, my dear Children, and then you will come to know all the evil which is in you, and you can present it to the Lord so the Lord may purify your hearts completely."*** (4 Dec. 1986)

G. Ferraro

PRAYER to OUR LADY of the SMILE

O Mary, Mother of Jesus and our Mother too, who once by a visible smile didst graciously console and cure thy privileged child Saint Therese of the Child Jesus, we beseech thee, come to us also to console us in the troubles of this life.

Detach our hearts from earth, give to us health of soul and body, make us strong in hope, and obtain for us at last, that we enjoy forever in Heaven thy maternal and enrapturing smile. **AMEN.**

(Imprimatur: Andre Jacquemin, Bishop of Bayeux and Lisieux, February 26, 1960)

JOHN PAUL SAYS "MARRIAGE GOES BEYOND 'A FEELING'"

The Catholic Church's laws regarding marriage are pastoral tools to protect individuals, promote true married love, and safeguard God's design for matrimony, **Pope John Paul II** said. "Conjugal love is not only or even especially a feeling; instead, it is essentially a commitment to another person, a commitment which is assumed with a precise act of the will," the Pope told members of the Roman Rota, the Church's highest marriage court.

In his *Jan. 21* speech, the Pope said the Church's marriage laws are based on an authentic understanding of conjugal love "between two persons of equal dignity, but who are distinct and complementary in their sexuality."

Pope John Paul said Church action is needed to counteract "a widespread deterioration of the natural and religious meaning of marriage" as seen in the growing number of couples who live together without marriage and in "the insistent public opinion campaigns aimed at obtaining conjugal dignity for unions between persons of the same

sex."

Married love means a total life long commitment of self-giving, exclusive, indissoluble, and fruitful love, he said.

"In light of these principles it can be seen how incongruous is the attempt to attribute a 'conjugal' reality to same-sex unions," he said.

First of all, the Pope said, there is "the objective impossibility of making the partnership fruitful through the transmission of life according to the plan inscribed by God in the very structure of the human person."

Another obstacle, he said, is the absence of "that interpersonal complementarity between male and female willed by the Creator both on a physical-biological level as well as on a psychological level.

"Love is not an end in itself and it cannot be reduced to a corporal encounter of two beings, but is a profound interpersonal relationship which reaches its crowning moment in full, mutual giving and in cooperation with God the Creator, the ultimate source of every new human life."

The Church's marriage laws, Pope John Paul said, are supported by its experience and are "rooted in the existential reality of the human person."

If marriage is seen only as a public celebration of a couples' attraction for each other and their feelings of love for each other, "how can one be surprised that such a marriage is destined to fail?" the Pope asked. "Once the feeling or attraction ceases, the marriage shows itself to be lacking every element of internal cohesion."

The commitment that a man and a woman make to each other in the sacrament of matrimony—through a precise act of the will expressed in their consent—is what qualifies their love as being conjugal love, the Pope said.

In freely assuming the commitment of marriage, he said, the couple is making "the conscious and responsible assumption of a commitment through a juridical act with which, in mutual giving, the spouses promise each other total and definitive love."

The fact that couples are assuming such a serious and lifelong obligation requires the Church to ensure they are well prepared for marriage, the Pope said.

(Vatican News, Jan.-Feb. 1999, National Catholic Register)

CONTRACEPTION and the REJECTION of GOD

At the origin of every human person there is a creative act of God. No man comes into existence by chance; he is always the object of God's creative love. From this fundamental truth of faith and reason it follows that the procreative capacity, inscribed in the human sexuality, is—in its deepest truth—a cooperation with God's creative power. And it also follows that man and woman are not the

arbiters, are not the masters of this capacity, called as they are, in it and through it, to be participants in God's creative decision. When, therefore, through contraception, married couples remove from the exercise of their conjugal sexuality its potential procreative capacity, they claim a power which belongs to God: the power to decide *in a final analysis* the coming into existence of a human person. They assume the qualification not of being cooperators in God's creative power, but the ultimate depositaries of the source of human life. In this perspective, contraception is to be judged objectively so profoundly unlawful as never to be, for any reason, justified. To think or to say the contrary is equal to maintaining that in human life situations may arise in which it is lawful not to recognize God as God.

(Pope John Paul II to a Study Seminar on "responsible Parenthood" September 17, 1983. Published in *L'Osservatore Romano* 10 October, 1983 taken from "THE MARYFAITHFUL" May/June, 1988, with permission)

TEN COMMANDMENTS for a MOTHER-in-LAW

Thou shalt love, honor, and respect the new couple.
 Thou shalt allow them complete independence.
 Thou shalt speak only kindly, loyally about them.
 Thou shalt not find fault.
 Thou shalt not give advice unless requested.
 Thou shalt not expect them to visit you too often.
 Thou shalt not visit them too frequently, and never enter their home without knocking.
 Thou shalt not mention how much you look forward to grandchildren.
 Thou shalt respect their taste in home decorating, though it differs from yours.
 Thou shalt petition daily the Heavenly Father, in whose love they abide, for their happiness.

(by Iola M. Irwin from "THE MARYFAITHFUL" May/June, 1988)

HAD SHE SAID NO

Who would God's most Faithful Servant be?
 Our Dear Lord's Mother, it's plain to see.
 33 years Our Lord walked this earth.
 She was there for it all, right from His Birth.
 She had a CHOICE. She had a free will.
 HAD SHE SAID NO, Heaven would be closed still.
 She said, "Be it done unto me according to thy word."
 HAD SHE SAID NO,
 The word Christian, never would've been heard.
 Simeon said, "A sword your soul shall pierce."
 HAD SHE SAID NO,
 She could have saved all those tears.
 The Journey to Bethlehem, the Stable and the Manger -
 HAD SHE SAID NO, Christ would still be a stranger.

The Wedding Feast of Cana -
 His first miracle, water to wine -
 HAD SHE SAID NO,
 we would have never known the Divine.
 Devil's cast out, lepers cleansed, the blind to see -
 HAD SHE SAID NO, we would've never been set free.
 Thirty years of His Private Life -
 She was there for it all.
 HAD SHE SAID NO, Christ's life - we couldn't recall.
 Her YES to the Angel, what a BEAUTIFUL SOUND -
 HAD SHE SAID NO,
 the New Testament wouldn't be found.
 The WAY of the CROSS, THE CLIMB to CALVARY,
 HAD SHE SAID NO, NO SAVIOR for YOU and ME.
 From the Foot of the Manger to the Foot of the Cross -
 HAD SHE SAID NO, salvation would have been a loss.
 Should She be loved for what She has done -
 HAD SHE SAID NO,
 we would've never known God's Son

(by Samuel J. Distefano, with permission)

INSPIRATION, TRADITION, and SCRIPTURE

Technically, the word "inspiration" does not appear in Scripture. The term that is translated "inspiration" is *theopneustos*, but "inspiration" is not best translation of this term. "**God-breathed**" is, and even that term only appears in **2 Tim. 3:16**.

In Catholic theology "inspiration" is a technical term. An inspired book is one which has God as its primary author. Apostolic Scripture falls into this category because even though God wrote it through human agency, he chose the actual words of Apostolic Scripture.

Is Apostolic Tradition inspired? In one sense it is, but in another it isn't. When God initially revealed doctrines to the apostles he determined the form in which these teachings came to them, so the original giving was inspired. But God did not directly fix the way the apostles expressed these teachings to others. The apostles might express a single doctrine from God in a variety of ways. So while the original giving of Apostolic Tradition was inspired, the words in which it has been passed down to us are not inspired.

GOD'S "WORDS THEMSELVES" and GOD'S "VOICE ITSELF"

A helpful distinction is one Bible scholars make between the *ipsisima verba* and the *ipsisima vox* of a person. The *ipsisima verba* of someone are the very words he uses. The *ipsisima vox* of a person is the true voice of a person -- what he said, even if it is expressed in different words. For example, if **Father O'Reilly** came to me and said, "Please tell the audience the talk will be over at 9:30," then I would be giving you his *ipsisima verba* if I said, "**Father O'Reilly** says--quote--The talk will be over at 9:30--enquote."

But I would be speaking with his *ipsisima vox* if I said, "**Father O'Reilly** said we'll wrap up around half past nine." I would not be speaking his *ipsisima verba* because I did not use his exact words, but I would be speaking with his *ipsisima vox* because I accurately told you what he said, though I told it in a different way.

To apply this Apostolic Scripture and Tradition, we might say Apostolic Scripture gives us the *ipsisima verba* of God, while Apostolic Tradition gives us the *ipsisima vox* of God. Both reveal the word of God: one reveals it by using the exact words God determined; the other reveals it by expressing the same thing in other words.

WHY NEEDED IF NOT INSPIRED?

This is important because we often can't catch a person's meaning until hear the idea stated differently. This is the answer to the question of a person who might want to ask, "Why use Apostolic Tradition if Apostolic Scripture is inspired?" Because it gives us a second way in which God's thoughts are expressed, making them more comprehensible to us -- something we desperately need since Apostolic Scripture says God's thoughts are higher than our thoughts.

We also need it because the way in which God's very words themselves are expressed in Scripture is adapted to the situation of ancient cultures -- that of the ancient **Hebrews** and **Greeks** -- and as a result we need to have the thoughts of Scripture rephrased in a more contemporary manner. This is, for example, the basic purpose of a Bible commentary -- a rephrasing of the thoughts of Scripture in a way more understandable to people in our culture.

WHY TRUST IF NOT INSPIRED?

The fact that Apostolic Tradition is a second way in which God's teachings are expressed is also the answer to the question, "Why trust Apostolic Tradition if it isn't inspired?" Because things don't need to be inspired to be trustworthy, they just need to be true. Truth is necessary for trust, not inspiration.

When I get dressed in the morning I don't need a divinely inspired revelation telling me where my shoes are. I simply need to know the truth about where they are. So long as I know that, I can go ahead and get dressed. How much more then should I trust the authoritative Traditions of the apostles, since they express the teachings of God, though in different words.

In theology I don't have to have a truth stated in the very words of God before I believe it. I simply need to know God teaches it, regardless of how it is expressed. For example, on the doctrine of the Trinity I don't need the Bible to say, "God is a Trinity, that is, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are three Persons who are one God." If I did, I'd be in trouble because there is no direct statement of the Trinity in Apostolic Scripture.

All I need to know is that the doctrine is implied in Apostolic Scripture, even if the words themselves are not

used. On Apostolic Tradition, all I need to know is that something is an Apostolic Tradition, instead of a tradition of men. Once I know this, I can trust it.

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THE HOLY HOUR

I thank Thee Dear Lord for inviting me here.
I'm always so happy when I come near
Thee, in Thy Monstrance on the Altar of Love.
Would my soul could take flight to Heaven above.
Thy Glory unveiled, my soul's eyes to see
the beauty and love of the Most Holy Trinity.
God the Father's Love, my soul would share
the Holy Ghost, Thy Spirit, the Paraclete, there
my Heavenly Mother, Saint Joseph, the Angels and Saints,
too.
Many souls who in life I formerly knew.
Oh! What a glorious day that would be.
The beatific vision, all of Heaven unveiled to me.
Dear Blessed Trinity
I love Thee.

(by Samuel J. Distefano, with permission)

WHAT to EXPECT at the END of TIME

T.S. Eliot was wrong: It's going to end with a bang, not a whimper. As the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (CCC) explains: "God's triumph over the revolt of evil will take the form of the Last Judgment after the final cosmic upheaval of this passing world" (CCC 677).

Indeed, things will have been tumultuous for some time before the end comes. Among other things, there will be a tremendous persecution of the Church, which "will enter the glory of the kingdom only through [a] final Passover, when she will follow her Lord in his death and Resurrection" (ibid.). This will be a trial so fierce that the Church will be persecuted almost to the point of extinction, only to be rescued at the last minute by the Second Coming of Christ.

One of the most overlooked signs that the Second Coming is approaching is the corporate conversion of the **Jewish** people. This is something that Paul is very clear about. In **Romans 11**, he sketches a paradigm according to which, after the First Coming of Christ, the Jewish people as a body (through not every individual) rejected the **Messiah**, that the gospel might turn and bring salvation to the **Gentiles**. However, when "the full number of the Gentiles [has] come in," the gospel will turn back to the Jewish people and as a body (though not necessarily every individual) they will accept the **Messiah**.

Paul links this corporate conversion to the end of the world, for he mentions the resurrection of the dead: "**If**

their rejection means the reconciliation of the world, what will their acceptance mean about life from the dead?" (v. 15). So when we see massive numbers of Jewish conversions to Christ, that is a sign we are nearing the end.

In **2 Thessalonians 2**, Paul gives a number of other signs that the Second Coming is approaching. He writes because apparently some in the Thessalonian Church had received a fake Pauline epistle that said the day of the Lord had arrived. Thus, he told them **"not to be quickly shaken in mind or excited, either by spirit or by word, or by letter purporting to be from us, to the effect that the day of the Lord has come" (v.2).**

He then laid out a number of signs that would precede the end. The first was this **"Let no one deceive you in any way; for that day will not come, unless the rebellion comes first" (v.3a).**

The Greek for "the rebellion" here is *be apostasia*- better translated "the apostasy"- a distinct event consisting of a massive turning away from the Christian faith.

Paul speaks of it elsewhere as well. He tells us, **"Now the Spirit expressly says that in later times some will depart from the faith by giving heed to deceitful spirits and doctrines of demons" (1 Tim. 4:1). "For the time is coming when people will not endure sound teaching, but having itching ears they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own liking and will turn away from listening to the truth and wander into myths" (2 Tim. 4:3-4; cf. 3:1-5).**

Other **New Testament** writers also appear to refer to this great apostasy (**2 Pet. 3:3, Jude 18**), and the Lord himself speaks of it when he asks, **"When the Son of**

man comes, will he find faith on earth?" (Luke 18:8).

What will those who fall away from Christianity be falling away to? In the **New Testament**, the idea of falling away from Christianity would mean a return to either paganism or Judaism. The fact that the end-time the Jewish people will be converting to Christ indicates that it will not be **Judaism** for which many Christians leave. This suggests a new paganism will be their destination.

There may be some intermediate steps involved. In the apostasy, people may fall away to other religious options-atheism, agnosticism, the New Age movement, or even religions that don't yet exist-but they will not longer consider themselves Christians, and eventually a new form of paganism will develop and become dominant in Europe.

Why do I say that? Because of the next sign Paul mentions: the appearance of "the man of lawlessness": **"That day will not come, unless... the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of perdition."**

This individual is often identified with the Antichrist whom John talks about, as one who denies the incarnation of Christ (**2 John 7**). The identification is not completely certain, but it is the standard interpretation.

The man of lawlessness is often identified with the **"beast from the sea"** in **Revelations 13**. Now, the beast from the sea was one of the early Roman emperors--most likely Nero (see **"The Beast in Revelation," This Rock, Dec. 1998, 29**). That does not mean that there will not be a Nero-like individual at the end of time. I expect there will be. It will be one of those double fulfillment's I mentioned earlier.

There is good reason to link the future, emperor-like individual with Paul's man of lawlessness. Paul says this man will do something that some of the Roman

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emperors were known for: demand that others worship him as a god. He tells us the man of sin is one **“who opposes and exalts himself against every so-called god or object of worship” (v. 4a)**. That is why I identify the apostate of relations to come as a revived paganism: Worship of the head of state as a deity is a hallmark of paganism.

What the man of lawlessness will probably do is a lot like what the mad **Emperor Caligula** did in the first century: He proclaimed himself to have been re-born as a god in this life, comparing himself with Jupiter, the king of the gods. Yet he did not deny the existence of other, lesser gods. (He used to hold “conversations” with various Roman gods and had his sister **Drusilla** officially deified after her death, for example).

Later, when **Caligula** went mad and proclaimed himself a god, he completely miscalculated the passion of the **Jews** for monotheism and proposed putting an idol of himself in the **Temple at Jerusalem**--an act that would have certainly ignited a war. Fortunately, a delegation of **Jews** including **Philo** of **Alexandria** was able to dissuade him.

The fact that the man of lawlessness will exalt himself “against every so-called god” does not mean he will preach a new form of “me-monotheism.” It’s hard to get people to worship you as a god unless they have degraded religious notions, such as a belief in many, finite gods. This makes the idea of a deified human more thinkable (look at how **Mormons** have exploited that concept).

Among the things **Paul** says the man of lawlessness will do is to so exalt himself **“that he takes his seat in the temple of God, proclaiming himself to be God” (v. 4b)**. To a first-century **Jew** such as **Paul**, this could mean only one thing: The man of lawlessness will present himself at some point to be worshipped in the

Jewish temple at Jerusalem.

Many have tried to interpret “the temple of God” as the Church, but this is an anachronistic reading. We are obviously talking about a physical temple--not a mystical or spiritual one--because it is the kind of temple in which one can take a seat and exhibit oneself. Since Christians have no central physical temple (not even **Saint Peter’s Basilica** counts as that), and certainly didn’t have one in the first century, we must understand the phrase “the temple of God” as it would have been understood in the first-century: a reference to the **Jerusalem Temple**.

Why would **Jews** allow a pagan ruler to proclaim himself as God (or as “a god”--the **Greek** allows both readings) in their **Temple**? Who says they will have any choice in the matter? You see, this kind of thing has precedents.

First, **Antiochus Epiphanes**--a pagan conqueror trying to stamp out the **Jewish** religion--placed an idol of **Jupiter** on the alter in the **Jewish Temple** and sacrificed pigs to it. (This was one of the fulfillment’s of **Daniel’s “abomination of desolation,” 1 Macc. 1:54**, though not the only one; cf. **Mat. 24:15**.)

Later, in the first century, when the **Roman** emperor **Caligula** went mad and proclaimed himself a god, he proposed putting an idol of himself in the **Temple at Jerusalem**--an act that certainly would have ignited a war with the **Jews**. A delegation of **Jews**, including **Philo** of **Alexandria**, was able to dissuade him.

All of these are foreshadowing of what the man of sin will do when he arrives. But there is a complication: The **Temple** has been destroyed, just as Jesus had prophesied (**Matt. 24:1-2**). So it will have to be rebuilt before the man of lawlessness carries out his part in the final drama.

There is a further complication: Today the **Moslem Dome of the Rock** occupies the **Temple Mount in Jerusalem**. A

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war likely would start if **Israel** tried to tear down the **Dome** and build a temple, or even if it tried to build a new temple alongside the **Dome**.

How will the **Temple** be rebuilt? There is a fascinating clue: According to many of the Church Fathers (see *This Rock*, May 1995, 36-39), the Antichrist will be a political ruler who will enable the **Jewish** people to rebuild the **Temple**.

There's even a foreshadowing of that in history: The last pagan emperor, **Julian the Apostate**, wished to discourage Christianity and promote a return to paganism. However, as part of his program to try to lure people away from Christianity, he agreed to allow the Jews to rebuild the temple, hoping that Jewish Christians would apostatize and go back to worshipping at their ancestral temple.

All the preparations were made, the building supplies were assembled, and work began. Christians may have thought, "This is the end. **Julian** is the Antichrist, and the temple is going up." But then there was an earthquake and a fire, the plan came to nothing, and Julian died shortly afterward.

Something like that may happen in the future. It may take a leader as strong as a **Roman** emperor to allow the Jewish people to rebuild a temple without it being destroyed by opponents. And, after its completion, this leader may turn around and say, Okay, I let you rebuild your temple. Now worship me in it as a token of thanks."

Things will not be going swimmingly for the remaining Christians in the end-time ears, either. Those who do not give in to persecution and worship the man of lawlessness will be imprisoned and martyred. The last pope(s) will head the underground Church, just as **Peter** did in the first century. It will be this great persecution that will drive the Church almost to the point of extinction before Christ returns.

When Christ returns, he will make short work of the man of lawlessness. **Paul** tells us "**the Lord Jesus will slay him with the breath of his mouth and desire him by his appearing and his coming**" (2 **Thess. 2:8**). Where this will occur is also indicated in Scripture: **Israel**.

Right now--in the year 2000--we are in the millennium mentioned in **Revelation 20:1-10**, when the devil is bound in such a way that he cannot deceive the nations by preventing the spread of the gospel. However, at the end of the millennium he will be unloosed and again be able to deceive the nations, leading to the great apostasy (**Rev. 20:7-8a**).

When that happens, **John** tell us, he will "**deceive the nations which are at the four corners of the earth, that is, Gog and Magog, to gather them for battle; their number is like the sand of the sea. and they marched up over the broad**

earth and surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city; but fire came down from heaven and consumed them" (vv. 8b-9).

"**Gog and Magog**" are an allusion to **Ezekiel 38**, where **Gog** is the symbolic name of a conquering prince of land symbolically called **Magog**. In **Ezekiel**, **Gog** attacks **Israel** but is defeated. In **Revelation**, the allusion indicates that **Israel** will be attacked again by a foreign prince (likely the man of lawlessness) and his army. They will surround "the camp of the saints" (i.e., the Jewish Christians defending the area) and "the beloved city" (i.e., **Jerusalem**), and that is when Christ will return and destroy the invaders by the force of his coming. "**and the dead in Christ will rise first; then we who are alive, who are left, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air**" (1 **Thess. 4:16b-17**). Then the devil will be thrown into hell (**Rev 20:10**), the present heaven and earth will pass away (**v. 11**), the dead will be raised, (**vv. 12-13a**), and the final judgment will take place (**vv. 13b-15**).

(by James Akin, **THIS ROCK**, January 2000, with permission)

MANY PROPHECIES ALREADY HAVE BEEN FULFILLED

When interpreting prophecies in the Bible, one of the most common pitfall is failure to recognize when a prophecy already has been fulfilled. There are many such prophecies in the Bible, but we often think they are speaking of events yet to come.

When Jesus says in **Matthew 24:7** that "**there will be famines and earthquakes in various places,**" many people have interpreted him to mean that there would be a rise in the global number of earthquakes. But that isn't what Jesus said. He said that there would be earthquakes in various places--not all over the world, not in an increasing trend, just *some* earthquakes in *some* places. A few short, sharp shocks were all that was necessary to fulfill that prediction, which is part of Jesus' point: We shouldn't be concerned when we hear of such things, for "**all this is but the beginning of the birth-pangs,**" **"but the end is not yet"** (vv. 8,6).

In fact, the two most famous prophetic parts of the New Testament--the Olivet Discourse and the book of Revelation--are plagued by readers' tendencies to interpret them as referring to future events, when both have largely been fulfilled. I've had occasion before to write about their interpretation. If you want to read about the Olivet Discourse (so named because Jesus gave it on the Mount of Olives), see my piece "The Earthquake Generation" (*This Rock*, Feb. 1998, 12-17). If you want to read about Revelation, see "Hunt-ing the Whore of Babylon, I-II"

(*This Rock*, Sept. 1994, 21-24, Oct. 1994, 21-24). Here I will only summarize the results:

The Olivet Discourse and the book of Revelation are concerned principally with events in the first century leading up to the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70. However, both contain material that also applies to the end of time. In the Olivet Discourse, for example, **Matthew 25:31-46** applies unambiguously to the end of history. Likewise for **Revelation 20:11-21:8**. In both cases, though, most of the preceding material applies directly to events in the first century.

This is not so say that it does not also have an *indirect* application to the events near the Second Coming. One of the things you find in studying biblical prophecy is that certain patterns reoccur. I call them “prophetic archetypes.” Take the archetype of the Wicked King, a foreign persecutor of God’s people Israel, who is allowed to triumph over them for a time because of their sins. This scriptural archetype occurs repeatedly, whether in the person of **Pharaoh, Nebuchadnezzar, Caesar**, or the Antichrist.

I strongly suspect that, in the final run up to the end of time, many of the parts of the Olivet Discourse and book of **Revelation** that have been fulfilled already will repeat. So these passages that apply *directly* to events in the first century also will apply indirectly to events near the end of time.

(by James Akin, *THIS ROCK*, January 2000, with permission)

THE MAIL

Wouldn’t it be wonderful if my soul was like the mail.
Put a stamp on it and send it to a Holy Shrine without fail.
Going from country to country wouldn’t cost much.
With family and friends, I’d always be in touch.
I could jump in a new envelope to go on a trip.
Always praying the envelope will never rip.
And let my soul fall out to be lost forever.
With a rosary and brown scapular inside we’ll pray never,
Never write on my soul, please, RETURN TO SENDER.

(by Samuel J. Distefano, with permission)

PRAYER to SAINT ANTHONY for the HEALTH of an EXPECTANT MOTHER and HER UNBORN CHILD

Glorious Saint Anthony, you were blessed to hold the Infant Jesus in your arms. I come to you now on behalf of (mention name) who pleads for the health and safety of the child that God has graced her to conceive. Saint Anthony, guard this life God has created her to conceive. Saint Anthony, guard this life that God has created, and the mother God has

chosen for this child. Let your gentle hand, like that of a skilled physician, aid in her delivery so that this baby will know good health and lasting happiness. May her child be favored with the grace of holy baptism, and grow to love our Lord Jesus Christ above all else in this world.

Amen.

(from Capuchin Franciscan Friars, Union City, NJ.)

... ON LIBERALISM and ITS EFFECTS

We are now witnessing the terrible effects of Liberalism in religion, government, education, economics, etc. The vast majority of the people do not understand its philosophy, about which I wrote my thesis for my master of arts degree in 1942, when I was ordained to the Priesthood.

I knew what was coming upon the whole world. Liberalism (or Modernism) was condemned by **Pope Saint Pius X** in his “*Pascendi Dominici Gregis*” on July 3rd, 1907. At that time, His Holiness took steps to condemn the errors of the Modernists and to smoke them out of the Church by strong disciplines. He set down a law—the “Oath Against Modernism.” That meant that no candidate should henceforth be admitted to the Priesthood until he took the **Oath Against Modernism**, in the presence of his Bishop.

Sadly, succeeding Popes have lacked the vigilance of the great Saint. Thought to be extinct, modernism has actually only been slowed down, gradually progressing once more after the death of Pope Saint Pius X and coming into full bloom at the time of the **Second Vatican Council (1962-1965)**. As a symbol of the Liberals’ victory, the taking of the **Oath** was discarded in 1963.

Not surprisingly, the Modernists presently dominate not only the clergy, but also dioceses, monasteries, convents, universities, **Episcopal** conferences, educational departments, etc. You name it, and they control it. A priest such as I stands no chance to have a part in the “up-dated, liberated new church,” which Angels and Saints did not build. In it reigns nothing but chaos and confusion. The faithful no longer hear the voice of the Good Shepherd, Jesus Christ. There are discordant voices, punctuated with disobedience. Everywhere is heard the Luciferian cry: “I will not serve. I will do and believe as I please!” And that is Hell.

The Church had been warned previously—and by Her highest authorities—that the great crises we see in the Church and Priesthood would come. They were long in coming, but they came nevertheless. We now see the terrible effects that resulted from ignorance and disobedience.

On *September 19, 1846*—Just three months after **Venerable Pope Pius IX (1846-1878)** was raised to the **Chair of Peter**—the Blessed Virgin Mary appeared to two peasant children at **LaSalette, France**, and gave them a

frightening message. She bewailed the weak faith and sinfulness of Catholics, especially of the clergy, and the terrifying consequences that would befall the world in the near future unless they repented of their sinful ways.

Even though approved by the Pope and the Church, the message met with furious opposition from **Masonically**-controlled Bishops. It was suppressed to such a degree that today the average Catholic knows little or nothing about it. This message was an Apocalyptic warning from the Mother of God, Herself, concerning the very evils we now see multiplying daily before our eyes.

On *December 8, 1864*, **Pope Pius IX** issued his encyclical "**Quanta Cura**" accompanied by the **Syllabus of Errors**. His Holiness closed "**Quanta Cura**" with this stern command:

"In such great perversion of evil opinions, therefore, we, truly mindful of our Apostolic duty, and especially solicitous about our holy religion, about sound doctrine and the salvation of souls Divinely entrusted to us, and about the good of human society itself, have decided to lift our Apostolic voice again. And so all and each evil opinion and doctrine individually mentioned in the letter, by our Apostolic authority, we reject, proscribe and condemn: and we wish and command that they be considered as absolutely rejected, proscribed and condemned by all the sons of the Catholic Church."

On *April 20, 1884*, **Pope Leo XIII** issued his encyclical "**Humanum Genus**" in which His Holiness condemned **Freemasonry**. I shall present two key excerpts from it, which follow:

"The first warning of the danger (of **Freemasonry**) was given by **Clement XII** in the year 1738; his constitution was confirmed and renewed by **Benedict XIV**. **Pius VII** followed the same path; and **Leo XI** put together the acts and decrees of former Pontiffs on this subject, and ratified and confirmed then forever. In the same sense spoke **Pius VIII**, **Gregory XVI**, and many times over **Pius IX**"

We pray and beseech you, venerable brethren...earnestly to strive for the extirpation of this foul plague...we wish it to be your rule first of all to tear away the mask from **Freemasonry**, and to let it be seen as it really is; and by sermons and pastoral letters to instruct the people as to the artifices used by societies of this kind...and as to the depravity of their opinions and the wickedness of their acts...let no man think that he may for any reason whatsoever join the **Masonic Sect**, if he values his Catholic name and his eternal salvation."

Many years ago—about 45 years ago—I wrote extensively on **Freemasonry**, communism, **Zionism**, etc. Many protests against me were sent to the Chancery. The bishop then said to me: "Father, leave it to the 'experts.'" I asked, "How old must I be to be an 'expert?'" Since I did not receive a reply, I said to His Excellency: "Prove to me

where I am wrong. "We cannot," he replied. "But we do not want you to distribute your material."

His Excellency warned me that the **FBI** was on my trail. Even an official from the post office tried to stop my mail. I have not since then ceased to write and send out my articles by way of the post office. Whatever I write is submitted to the **Holy See**, and if there is anything against Catholic Faith and morals I shall, without hesitation, retract. I have sent many articles to the Holy See and Sacred Congregations. Thus far, I have not been reprimanded. In fact, I received letters from two Cardinals in **Rome**, who had nothing but good to write to me. They are presently retired.

I have a list of certain high-ranking churchmen in **Rome**, who are supposed to be members of **Masonic lodge** called "P12." Admittedly, I would find it very difficult to prove the charges. Yet, the large body of evidence and the relative silence of the accused lend credence to the accusations. For instance, in a letter to a certain archbishop in the **United States**, whose name appears on the list, I asked His Excellency whether or not he belongs to the **Freemasons**. To this day, I have received no reply, What, I ask, is the implication?

The fact that **Pope Leo's** strong condemnation of Masonic membership by Catholics has been recently toned down by the **Second Vatican Council** makes the claims all the more believable. After having been given a terrifying vision of the inexpressible evil that would befall the Church and the world through the work of **Satan** and his Demons, **Pope Leo XIII** drafted a prayer to be said at the end of every low Mass by the priests and the faithful, the world over.

The prayer ended with a petition begging the intercession of **Saint Michael** to "defend us in battle" and to "be our protection against the malice and snares of the Devil." The prayer was familiar to every Catholic. Later, the entire prayer was prescribed by **Pope Pius XI** for the conversion of **Russia**, for he was the first Pope to be fully informed of the **Fatima** Events of 1917. The prayer, however, was unfortunately dropped after **Vatican II**. What a sad day for the Church, and what a happy day for Satan!

Pope Saint Pius X succeeded **Pope Leo XIII**. This saintly Pontiff had the gift of prophecy, and was heavily burdened with the knowledge of the evil which everywhere beset the Church and which would violently assail Her after his death. In his first encyclical on *October 4, 1903*, his Holiness warned thus: "We are terrified beyond all else by the disastrous state of human society today... So extreme is the general perversion that all who consider these matters have a right to fear that we are experiencing the foretaste and beginning of the evils which are to come at the end of time—their first contact, as it were, with the world—and that in very truth the 'Son of Perdition,' of whom the Apostle speaks, has already arrived on Earth."

The reign of **Pope Saint Pius X** saw the early stages of the most deadly heresy ever to attack the Catholic faith. He named it "Modernism," and described it as "the synthesis of all heresies." Its target is the very heart of the Church—her doctrines, which are the deposit of Faith, and her clergy. It operates, as His Holiness pointed out, from within the Church. Modernist beliefs are imposed upon neophytes by an organized and methodical skepticism of thought regarding Sacred Scripture, theology, and Church history; this quietly introduced by the Heresiarchs into the seminaries and schools of the Church in the late 19th Century. The Modernists claim that Church doctrines must be tested by modern scholarship, i.e., according to modern standards, in order to determine their veracity.

Thus far, I have presented briefly what Liberal Modernism is; it is definitely operating with the Church today.

(by Reverend Andrew B. Horvath "THE MARYFAITHFUL" September-October, 1995,)

CAN'T YOU STOP and SAY HELLO?

Can't you stop and say hello?
I'm your God and I love you so
Can't you give me a minute of your day?
You watch TV for hours, you love to play.

I sit alone, very few come to me.
I'm the one who from problems can set you free.
I spent three hours on the cross out of love for you.
A minute once in a while is the least you can do.

They scourged me at the pillar, my flesh ripped away.
Can't you come for a minute to visit me and pray?
They kept me up all night, put a crown of thorns on my head
Can't you make a holy hour once in awhile, can't you get out of bed?

They placed a cross on my shoulders, it's load to bear.
Most of the time my Church is empty, I don't see you anywhere.
They nailed me to a cross, gave me vinegar and gaul to drink
I look for a visit from you, about my suffering, I guess you don't think.

They pierced my side with a lance, my heart opened wide
You pass my church often, do you forget I'm inside?
My priests have told you I love you, but you still don't know,
Because you never stop in to pray and just say "HELLO".

(by Samuel J. Distefano, with permission)

BLESSED LILIES

Many priests bless lilies for the Feast of Saint Anthony of Padua, June 13, as a tribute to the spotless purity of the "Saint of the whole world."

In the Franciscan Ritual, the purpose and the uses of the Blessed Lilies are well expressed in the principal prayer of the official blessing, which reads:

O God, Who art the Creator and Preserver of all mankind, the Lover of spotless purity, the Giver of all graces and of everlasting life: sanctify by Thy holy benediction these lilies, which in thanksgiving and in honor of Saint Anthony, Thy confessor and Doctor we humbly present to receive Thy blessing.

Pour down upon them, by the sacred sign of the cross, Thy heavenly dew, Thou who didst so kindly create them to gladden man by their beauty and fragrance, and to drive away all sickness; enrich them with such power that to whatsoever disease they may be applied, or in whatsoever homes and places they may be kept, or on whatsoever person they may be borne with devotion, they may, through the intercession of Thy servant Anthony, put to flight the evil one, preserve chastity, cure all sickness, and bring peace and grace to all who serve Thee. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

People often carry portions of the Blessed Lily about them, sewn in a small bag, in order to find relief in sickness, or to overcome temptations against the holy virtue of purity. You may use the Blessed Lily in any reverent way that faith and piety may suggest. Many surprising cures have been effected by the prayerful use of the Blessed Lily.

When using the lily you may recite any prayer to the Saint or say a prayer of your own in keeping with the purposes of the blessing as given in the official prayer printed above.

The Blessed Lily is not an infallible remedy. It is a sacramental; an article blessed by Mother Church, in order to enlist more readily the powerful assistance of the Wonder-Worker. But you must never forget that Saint Anthony asks only for such favors as are in accordance with the holy Will of God.

Behold the Cross of the Lord!

Begone ye enemy Powers!

The Lion of the tribe of Judah.

The Roof of David had Conquered!

Alleluia!

--Favorite Blessing of **Saint Anthony**
(**"THE MARYFAITHFUL" May/June, 1988 with permission**)

SACRED HEART

The second lecture, chronologically and conceptually prior to the others, was delivered in 1981 at the Sacred Heart

Congress in Toulouse. Cardinal Ratzinger sees the current eclipse of devotion to the Sacred Heart as instigated by the intellectual purism and classicism of the early liturgical movement. The dominance of head over heart is a major derangement of our era. It is obvious that unless the two collaborate in tandem, the head becomes a non-human despirited computer.

The modernist coup has ridden the liturgical movement's head to excess; not merely devotion to the Sacred Heart, but all traditional and popular devotions—primarily Marian piety—are to be banished. In this vacuum of the heart, ersatz enthusiasms have germinated. Cardinal Ratzinger credits Hugo Rahner for pioneering in efforts to restore Mariology and the cult of the Sacred Heart through his patristic research.

The Cardinal appreciates the encyclical *Haurietis Aquas* of Pius XII for indicating the elements of a new rationale for devotion to the Heart of Jesus, rooted both in Scripture and Tradition, and built on an anthropology and theology of bodily existence. Cardinal Ratzinger then displays the thesaurus of the biblical theology of “heart”.

This first lecture ends with the challenging sentence: “Christology is born of prayer or not at all.”

(Immaculata, Dec. 1984/Jan. 1985 taken from “THE MARYFAITHFUL” May/June 1988 with permission)

THE EUCHARIST and the SACRED HEART

Since the Most Blessed Sacrament is the sensible and permanent token of divine love, it is there the soul will find the Heart of Jesus; from His Eucharistic Heart she will learn to love. — Saint. Peter Julian Eymard

How could **Saint Peter Julian Eymard** have been the great modern apostle of the Eucharist without being at the same time an apostle of the Sacred Heart? For, are not the two devotions one in content and purpose — as he would explain in his sermons and writings, but even more by his example?

At the age of twelve he was already making night adoration in his home from eleven to midnight on Thursday, thus fulfilling the Sacred Heart's request to Saint Margaret Mary and exemplifying the truth that night adoration in the home leads to Holy Hours in church. **Peter Julian's** mother, we are told, was so edified when she thus discovered her boy in adoration that she did not have the heart to scold or disturb him.

“It was devotion to the Sacred Heart that saved me,” **Father Eymard** could say in later years. Oh, how much youngsters and grownups nowadays need devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus to be saved from the contagion of sin, to be rescued from the indifference and mediocrity of our times, and to be set on fire with love of God and of souls!

But only a person-to-Person, a heart-to-Heart, devotion can

thus transform souls into lovers and apostles—a devotion which does not stop at the image, but brings them to the very Heart and Person of Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament.

Like **Saint Pius X** after him, **Father Eymard** regretted the practice of those who upon entering a church, go and kneel in front of a statue of the Sacred Heart, instead of concentrating their prayerful attention on the Tabernacle where He is present in Person. And he would exhort in letters and sermons: “Find the Sacred Heart where it is, living, all-good, and all-merciful, in the Eucharist. Unfortunately that divine and loving Heart is not known and loved, even by many devout people, who play at any number of little devotions, good in themselves, but neglect the one devotion which ought to be the life and the end of all the others: the Heart of Jesus that gave us Calvary and the Eucharist.”

Mindful of the words of the Sacred Heart to **Saint Margaret Mary** — “I will reign through my Heart, in spite of Satan and his agents” — **Father Eymard** wanted to bring all hearts to the Heart of the Host. “On earth,” he would say, “all great and good things will be done only through the Sacred Heart. Why is this action of the Sacred Heart so necessary in our time? Here is my mind on the matter. It is because the great disease of souls in the world — I dare say within the cloister itself — is religious indifference...What is the cure? There is only one: the love of God. And where find this love? At its source in the Heart of Jesus. We must cast souls in the fire of the Sacred Heart. How do we do this? Tell them: ‘Jesus is there and He loves you!’ ‘What! He loves me, who am I so indifferent, so wretched?’ ‘Yes, He loves you!’”

It would be so much easier for Catholics to become convinced of this personal, infinite love of the Heart of Jesus for them, if they were only willing to spend Holy Hours with Him in Church or at home. But alas, many Catholics hardly get in touch with Him even on Sundays and forget about Him entirely for the rest of the week, absorbed as they are with their own interests, comfort and pleasure.

Saint Peter Julian Eymard tells us why we should have devotion to Our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament and make Holy Hours: “The reasons for which the feast of the Sacred Heart was instituted and the manner in which Jesus manifested His Heart teach us that we ought to know it in the Eucharist, and that we shall find it therein with all its love.” **Saint Margaret Mary** received the revelation of the Sacred Heart before the Blessed Sacrament exposed. Jesus manifested Himself to her in the Host, showing her His Heart and saying to her these adorable words, the most eloquent commentary on His presence in the Sacrament:

“ ‘Behold this Heart that has so loved men that it has spared nothing...and in return I receive from most men only ingratitude by their irreverences and sacrileges, and by the

coldness and contempt which they show to me in this Sacrament of Love.'

"The purpose of the feast of the Sacred Heart is to honor with more fervor and devotion the suffering love of Jesus Christ as He instituted the Sacrament of His Body and Blood. To enter into the spirit of the devotion to the Heart of Jesus, we must therefore honor the past sufferings of the Savior and make reparation for the ingratitude with which He is daily overwhelmed in the Eucharist." **Father Eymard**, you see, had not forgotten those other poignant words of the Sacred Heart of Jesus to **Saint Margaret Mary**: "I Have a burning thirst to be honored by men in the Blessed Sacrament and I hardly find anyone who strives, according to My desire to quench My thirst, by making some return."

He then asked her for two things: a Communion of reparation on the First Friday of every month, and a weekly holy hour every Thursday between eleven and twelve, in expiation for the sins of men.

Jesus can no longer suffer, it is true; but alas! Men can still be guilty towards Him of monstrous ingratitude. These ingratitude toward a God Who is present and living among us to win our love, are the greatest offense to the Heart of Jesus in the Most Blessed Sacrament....

In His agony He sought a consoler; on the Cross, He asked for someone to sympathize with His afflictions. Today, more than ever, we must make amends, a reparation of honor, to the adorable Heart of Jesus. Let us lavish our adoration and love on the Eucharist. To the Heart of Jesus living in the Most Blessed Sacrament be honor, praise, adoration, and kingly power for ever and ever!

(By Rev. Fr. Jules V. Simoneau, S.S.S. in *Immaculata*, Dec. 1984/Jan. 1985 taken from "THE MARYFAITHFUL" May/June, 1988 with permission)

PRESS BULLETIN 142, May 3, 2000.

WE CANNOT BUT SPEAK . . .

"We cannot but speak of what we have seen and heard. (Acts 4:20)" This sentence from Acts of the Apostles best describes the disposition, the experience, and the mission of the apostles after they met the Risen One. Prohibitions and threats had no effect whatsoever. They were so filled up and captivated by the event of his resurrection that they had to give their testimony.

That which is lacking to us Christians today is testimony for Jesus Christ. In reality that testimony is not even possible without being filled with and captivated by Jesus Christ. Perhaps it is also the reason that Our Lady keeps repeating in her messages: "Decide for God!" When our decision for God will be strong neither shall we be able but to speak what we have seen and heard."

Fr. Ivan Landeka

NUMBER OF COMMUNIONS AND CONCELEBRANTS

During April at the shrine of the Queen of Peace in **Medjugorje** 95,000 Holy Communion were distributed and there were 1536 concelebrations at Holy Mass by priests from home and abroad, that is, an average of 51 daily.

April is one of the months with the greatest number of pilgrims visiting.

Thus we recorded the visit of groups from: **Germany, Singapore, Latvia, France, Canada, Italy, Haiti, Argentina, Japan, Poland, Czech Republic, USA, Australia, Hungary, England, Ireland, Belgium, Holland, Mexico, Caribbean, Korea, Slovakia, Letonia, Spain, Indonesia, Slovenia** and, of course, **Croatia**.

MISSIONARY TRAVEL of FR. SLAVKO BARBARIC

At the beginning of April Fr. Slavko visited **Holland, Belgium** and **France**. Upon his return he gave the following impressions:

"The events in **Medjugorje**, which have for these 18 years and 10 months gathered a multitude of believers from the whole world, are transported like a blessed flame to every part of the world and continue to gather believers who wish to stay connected in prayer with each other and all together with **Medjugorje**. Therefore, from time to time the **Medjugorje** Franciscans go and pray with believers in their local churches and thus by their own presence help the spirit of fire enkindled in **Medjugorje** at Our Lady's hearth to burn all the more brightly. For that reason the two places chosen in **Belgium** are those where believers gather who carry in themselves the spirit of the **Medjugorje** messages. That is their two national shrines: **Banneux** and **Beauring**.

On April 7th, I visited our prisoners in the **Hague**. This was not my first visit with them at the **Hague**, but this time there was somehow a difference in my spirit than in previous visits. Previously there was always in my heart a great hope that the court will do justice and act worthily. In September of last year when I was with them, we were hoping that the trial would be in keeping with personal culpability, which the court obviously could not prove for some of them even at the end of four years. We were always worried about the trial being politicized, and there were good reasons for being afraid of that. But still we were hopeful?! But, the Tribunal showed its face. The **Croatian** people have been condemned in those good and noble men. And the sentences came down 45, 25, 15, 10 and 8 years.

In my spirit it was difficult for me to meet those men again, but on the other hand I rejoiced over the meeting because **Medjugorje** means very much for all of them. And when the first group voluntarily went to the Hague, they stopped

in **Medjugorje**, prayed and took courage under the patronage of the Queen of Peace. They never ever suspected that there was a different truth and justice for the great and for the small, for the powerful and for the weak. Nor did they suspect how very small they were and how small in the eyes of the great is the nation to which they belong and how it has no right to its own self defense, a thing the powerful in their sentences proclaim to be aggression!?! All these thoughts were in my heart while I passed through all those many prison doors and corridors. Waiting even for the last door to open, behind thick glass I beheld **General Blaskic** with lawyer **Nobilo** and two other men. Many documents are in front of them. **General Blaskic** immediately stood up and said to wait for him, that he wanted to be at the Holy Mass and go to confession and that he was coming as soon as he was finished with the lawyers. His demeanor, the expression on his face, the happy wave with his hand, freed me from those anxieties that were in my heart when I was thinking how am I going to meet him now, after the passing of an unjust sentence against him, a sentence that the **Croatian** people at every level clearly and loudly condemned as unjust! Passing through the last barrier, I silently greeted all those who were waiting in the area set apart for visiting. My spirit was all the more freed and rejoicing because I sensed: These dear men had lost neither the hope nor the will to fight to prove their innocence. They had accepted the sentences as a fact, aware that they are continuing to suffer for that same people for whom they were ready to lay down their lives in defense of their own homeland. In my heart arose the thought: We must not be allowed to forget these men, we have to be worthy of them, they must know that their sacrifice was not in vain. They asked about everything that was happening; everything is of interest to them. The conversation flowed spontaneously, and then they wanted confession and a personal talk. In each individual conversation I am a witness, I felt a strong faith, a deep hope, a love that forgives and heals. After confession we celebrated Holy mass and stayed on in pleasant conversation. There was a certain festive atmosphere. They all greeted everyone and wished everyone a Happy Easter. I promised them that we will not forget them.

And while the prison doors opened and closed at the clang of big keys, I wished profoundly that the sacrifice of these men be blessed and that everything turns out for the good. And that is just what the Easter message is.

On *April 8th* a day-long prayer program awaited us in the shrine of "The Virgin of the Poor" in **Banneux**. While we prayed the rosary led by the groups "Famille de **Medjugorje**", "Alleluiah", "Group de **Luxembourg**", "Nouvelles de **Medjugorje**" and "Koningin van de Vrede", the priests who came with their faithful were available for holy confession. Groups from **Luxembourg** and **Holland** were present. After my talk **Fr. Albert Franck** from

Luxembourg led in prayer for healing. Ten of them came for concelebration and the others continued to hear confessions up to the end of the evening program. **Medjugorje** with its spirituality has given many an incentive to prayer, celebration of mass and especially Eucharistic adoration. The Church is renewed in the spirit of prayer. From this encounter with "The Virgin of the Poor" it was again clearly seen that **Medjugorje** is alive and will live because Our Lady like a Mother has taken a deep hold on the hearts of her children that she tirelessly follows. This day also confirmed that.

The same day-long program awaited us on *April 9th*, but this time in **Paris** with the community of believers from the **Congo** in the chapel of **Saint Leo**. Gathered for the meeting were ten priests and about 500 of the faithful from the **Congo** and from **Paris**. The afternoon meeting continued in the nearby parish church: again prayer of the Rosary and confessions. About 1000 of the faithful gathered. Everything was festive, and especially the celebration of mass with a solemn entry into the church. For the offering of the gifts there was a solemn procession with the bread and wine and with fruits from the **Congo**. These people really know how to celebrate, they have time for prayer and for celebrating the mass. When they sang a song from which I understood only two words: *Mama Maria*, no one could have remained unaffected. I experienced a beautiful community in the diversity. Again Mary gathered us as her children around her son Jesus. After these meetings we departed grateful to God for all the beautiful encounters with the people who have accepted the messages of the Queen of Peace and stimulated by her messages wish to live more fundamentally to live their life with God. And personally grateful to the Queen of Peace, I returned on *April 10th* to **Medjugorje**.

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

PRESS BULLETIN 143, May 17, 2000.

CONVERSION

In the message of *April 25th* Our Lady directly calls for conversion. And not only that, she calls us to conversion in a completely concrete question. We are witnesses, namely, that material values are all the more quickly pressing into the background of the spiritual content of life. Those who have become dependent on the material hold that such a development is a completely normal process. Yet, there is an ever greater number of those who are experiencing the disturbing balance between the material and the spiritual uncomfortably and are regretting that condition. Among these latter are also we Christians. But, among us then again there is an ever greater number of those who are quite at peace with this condition. Our Lady is siding with Sacred Scripture which constantly calls us to conversion on all levels of life, and that in a very sensitive question of human

existence - that is, of the material and the spiritual.

On the correct evaluation of the one and the other depends the quality of religious, community and social life.

Fr. Ivan Landeka

N E W S

SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH ON THE VISIONARIES

As we have already written in **Bulletins 90 and 109**, scientific medical research was carried out on the visionaries of **Medjugorje** in 1998. Research that was already carried out on the one hand by a **French** group of experts in 1984 and on the other hand by an **Italian** group in 1985, was repeated on a still greater scale. The group of experts has promulgated two Protocols, one on *April 23, 1998* and the other on *December 12, 1998*. We published them in the **Press Bulletin**. Recently under the title **Vidioci iz Međugorja (The Visionaries of Medjugorje - A Psycho-physiological Research)** the results produced in the research were published in a special book, for now only in **Italian**. The head of the research group, **Dr. Andreas Resch**, professor of theology at the **Alphonsianum Papal University** in **Rome** and an expert in the field limits of science briefly condensed the results:

“The personnel submitted to the research were subjected to the various tests with full freedom and sincere collaboration.

The results of this psychological-diagnostic research show that:

After 17 years of apparitional experiences the personnel do not exhibit any kind of pathological symptoms, like trance interference, disassociative interference and loss of reality interference.

All the personnel subjected to testing, however, did exhibit symptoms that could be related to stress reactions provoked by increased exogenous and endogenous stimulation as a consequence of daily life routine.

From their personal answers it can be concluded that the initial and subsequent altered state of consciousness occurs due to their unordinary experiences, which they called and understood as a vision/apparition of the Mother of God and still understand it that way also now

All the psychiatric and psychological investigations which were used for the description of personal characteristics of the individual personnel cannot be published for reasons of protecting the privacy of the data.

The psycho-physical investigation was carried out on four states of consciousness:

- waking state;
- altered state of consciousness(hypnosis with investigation of the state of ecstasy);
- state of visualization of mental images;

-altered state of consciousness(defined as the ecstasy of apparition).

The purpose of these investigations was to establish whether the ecstatic/apparitional state which the Italian work group measured in 1985 is also present today or are changes shown. In addition it was desired to investigate potential coincidence/divergence with other states of consciousness such as guided visualization or hypnosis. The investigation carried out demonstrate that the ecstatic phenomenology can be compared to the one from 1985 with somewhat less intensity.

Hypnotic returning to the ecstatic state did not produce the phenomenology of spontaneous ecstasy and therefore it can be said that the spontaneous ecstatic state of apparitions were not states of hypnotic trance.”

The book **Vidioci iz Međugorja (The Visionaries of Medjugorje)** was published by **Resch Verlag Publishing House** of **Innsbruck**.

MAY IN MEDJUGORJE

In *May* there are more and more pilgrims in **Medjugorje** each day. Except for the seasonal celebrations, *May* is the month that many choose for pilgrimage to the Queen of Peace, since it is the month of special devotion toward the Blessed Virgin Mary. In this Jubilee year everything seems alive. There really are a lot of pilgrims from home and abroad. During pilgrimage to **Medjugorje** they pay special attention to the sacrament of reconciliation. Every evening several thousand faithful come for both the evening prayer program and for adoration. And even though those gathered in prayer are literally from all parts of the world, one feels that they understand each other.

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

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

I greet whole-heartedly all those who are trying to follow and live Mary's messages of Medjugorje. Before we reflect on what she has told us this month, let us first think back and consider what she said to us in the April message. She called us to conversion, that we work more on our own personal conversion, and that we are too concerned with the material things while too little with the spiritual things. She again asked us to pray until prayer becomes a joyful meeting with God. This is the primary condition for our discovering the purpose of life. She also suggested that we begin to reflect with joy upon eternal life. Concerning conversion, one must always repeat that when any one of us hears the word conversion we must very personally attend to this. It will mean something entirely different to each person. Still there are aspects of conversion that will mean the same thing for everyone. These are that, by way of conversion, we are called upon to fight constantly and untiringly against sin and against all that is evil, and in the

same way for all that is good.

When someone says that it does not pay to fight against what is bad or for all which is good, he is then opening all doors and windows of his life to what is evil and sinful. These will then destroy all life.

Every conversion is a personal conversion and all work is in the same way really personal. We should pray for the conversion of the others and Mary told us this in several of her messages. She tells us that we should also renew our work on our own personal conversion. I believe this word should touch Priests, parents and teachers, and all others who are in the position of raising young catechists. It can happen so easily to us when we are responsible for others that we expect conversion of them while we ourselves have neglected to attend to it ourselves.

This is why it is important that we remain very conscious about our own constant need for working on our own conversion. It is also possible to work on conversion when no-one else wishes to convert themselves. It is also possible to pray when no-one else wishes to pray. It is possible to fast when no-one else wishes to fast. It is so important to remember this and this then fits so well with the call or the warning that we are too concerned with the material things while too little for the spiritual things. In all this it means that we must search for and then find and keep a balance in our lives. Many people today have lost this balance in their lives in that they have concerned themselves too much with the material. Mary, as mother, teaches us and makes sure that we work on this balancing of our lives so that it may come into our lives. Prayer as a joyful meeting with God is possible because when we meet with a loving person, joy always enters our heart and because we know that God loves us immeasurably, every prayer should become a joyful meeting. Only one thing remains for us to do and that is that we pray for that grace every day.

When one meets God, then one has discovered the purpose of life. That is because every one of us yearns for peace, love, joy, trust, security, light, the way, and the truth. All these only God can give us and therefore those who meet with God have found the purpose of life. Many people today have remained without joy and without a purpose in life. The reason for this is clear -- they have distanced themselves from God. That is why, in order to find the purpose, one must again return and convert to God. For us it is equally important that we never forget to reflect on eternal life with joy. When one says 'I believe' eternal life is automatically included, but many people who say 'I believe' are in fact acting as though this is the only life that there is and that there is no other.

Among several Orders in the Catholic Church there existed the greeting among the brothers 'momento mori' and this means 'remember that you will die'; but at Easter time the greeting became 'momento vivere' -- 'remember that you wish to live'. This is our truth and our reality. We should

always be conscious that our lives here on earth pass by. This is no reason to panic because we all believe and know that we are all called to enter eternal life, eternal joy, eternal peace, and eternal love. We wish to do everything possible so that one day we will be worthy to be called into this eternal life. And for this we should also pray.

Mary's daily apparitions continue for 18 years and 11 months. We are now preparing for the 19th Anniversary of the apparitions. The three visionaries, Vicka, Marija and Ivan, are still having the daily apparitions, and at the moment Vicka and Marija are in Italy, while Ivan is here with his family. Ivan and Vicka are meeting with pilgrims every day, and are giving them their testimonies, just as Mirjana and Jacov are also occasionally doing the same, but less than the first two. Marija is in Italy and is coming here for the Anniversary with her family and Ivanka is living entirely withdrawn with her family.

There are many pilgrims in Medjugorje and right now we have Italians, Germans, Austrians, Swiss, English, Irish, Americans, Polish, Czechs, Slovaks, Russians, Romanians, and Koreans, while more and more are also coming from Lebanon and South American countries. Medjugorje is very much alive. As already mentioned, we are now preparing ourselves for the 19th Anniversary for which we are expecting a very great number of pilgrims. On June 24, the Vigil of the Anniversary itself, we traditionally have held our March for Peace from Humac to Medjugorje. At 6 a.m. we walk with the Holy Sacrament from the Franciscan Monastery at Humac and this takes from 3 1/2 to 4 hours. Over the years more and more people have taken part in this March for Peace and we invite all of you to come with us. Then the next event on our calendar is the Priests' Week that starts on June 30 and lasts until July 6 and for that many Priests will be here in order to get a course in Mary's School for Peace. I invite all of you as well as all prayer-groups to pray for all Priests. Last year there were 170 Priests here for that event while this year we are expecting more. Local families are offering their homes so that the attending Priests can be their guests. All Priests who wish to come should write to the Parish Office and will then be delegated to these families. But it is more important that we first of all pray for the Priests and most especially for all those who will be attending this special week.

I REJOICE WITH YOU

Mary rejoices and the visionaries have testified that Mary comes with joy. Mary rejoices. Mary is in Heaven where eternal joy awaits us and where there is no suffering -- not even a shadow of suffering. Mary lived her life in such a way that she was able to enter eternal joy and she suffered much during her life. She experienced the deepest of all possible sorrows, as any mother does who watches the death of her own child and then afterwards holds it in her own lap and then with a few friends carries it to its grave. She lived through the sorrow and the suffering in faith and

in love and it can be said that because of this she was able to enter into eternal peace, joy and love. She says

I REJOICE WITH YOU

and our question is whether we rejoice. We humans are created in such a way that one could say we are created for joy. We want, we search and we yearn for joy in our lives. But we must discern between true joy which comes from God and which creates and signifies a condition in our souls which can at the same time carry suffering and sorrow. Every person yearns for joy and there are only two ways to joy -- the way that Jesus shows us and the way that the world offers us. Many people take the way to joy that the world offers them. This is a temporary and very superficial way to frivolities that for instance drugs and alcohol offer them. At the end they remain sad, disillusioned, without a purpose for life and most of all without peace. True joy, as Jesus teaches us, comes from love that is ready to offer itself for the others, and that is ready to suffer. Therefore, it is so important for us to follow Mary's message of April when she tells us to reflect upon eternal life with joy. If we do that we will also carry our cross, our sufferings and even our death with joy when we know that this life does not end here, but continues in eternal joy and love. That is the reason for joy. That is why Jesus says: "When you have suffered, when one has said every evil thing about you, when one has done every evil thing to you, then be joyful because your names will have been written into the Book of Life." We may also be joyful when we suffer because we know that when we suffer God will take us into eternal joy.

Mary, one can say in human terms, is joyful also because she is able to see many fruits due to her apparitions. Many people have here again begun to pray and have discovered and experienced true peace and true love, and many people by way of the Sacrament of Confession have again been able to find the strength to forgive and to begin their lives anew with the others and with God. This is a reason for joy. Mary is joyful about every family that prays and about every prayer-group. And these are also reasons for our own joy.

AND IN THIS TIME OF GRACE I CALL YOU TO SPIRITUAL RENEWAL

Here we may think of two realities -- this Jubilee Year is certainly a time of grace, a time for reconciliation and forgiveness, a time of indulgence; but the second reality is the phenomenon of Medjugorje. It is a real time of grace for all those many people who here started their lives again with God, and this is the two-fold reason that we should think of a spiritual renewal. Every pilgrimage has the potential of becoming a spiritual renewal. When someone begins again to pray, to fast, to attend Holy Mass, to go to confession and to start to do good deeds based on his faith, then one can every time speak of a spiritual renewal of his life. It is also important to think very concretely about every pilgrimage, every meeting of a prayer-group, every

retreat as a spiritual renewal. I also invite all of us who are trying to follow Mary to very consciously pick one day a month to make a private retreat or every 6 months or once a year to attend some longer retreat. One way or another to choose a specific schedule which we consecrate solely to our spiritual lives. This will help us all on the path with Mary to Jesus.

PRAY ... THAT THE HOLY SPIRIT MAY COME TO DWELL IN YOU IN FULLNESS

In this message one can see clearly that Mary also accompanies the Liturgical Year. Soon the first Novena that the Church made will be upon us, and here it means Mary with the Apostles in what we have come to call Pentecost. After Jesus' Ascension, Mary and the Apostles were together in Jerusalem and were praying and were awaiting the Holy Spirit. On the 50th day they were filled with the Holy Spirit and were able to witness to those present in Jerusalem that Jesus arose and already that day many were baptized and so here the Church began quite concretely. This is why Mary is also asking us to pray that the Holy Spirit may come to dwell in us in fullness

SO THAT YOU MAY BE ABLE TO WITNESS IN JOY

... about Jesus who is arisen, and especially ...

TO ALL THOSE WHO ARE FAR FROM FAITH

The fullness of the Holy Spirit are really the works and the gifts of the Holy Spirit. With St. Paul we will see the works, the goodness, the mercy, the hope and the love and other gifts of the Holy Spirit. When this fullness of Spirit begins to dwell in us, then we really become new people and this is the real spiritual renewal. Mary especially wants us to give witness to those who are far from faith.

This call or this assignment that Mary is giving us comes together with her intention that she has been praying for with Mirjana since August 2, 1987, and that is for everyone who has not yet experienced God's love to do so. So giving witness to those who are still far from faith is in fact the same thing. Who is far from faith?

Those who are baptized, but who do not live their faith and are therein far from attending Holy Mass, Confession, Adoration and a Sacramental life with love. These are far from faith. We can only help those when we radically decide to live our own faith, and

ESPECIALLY ... PRAY FOR THE GIFTS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT SO THAT IN THE SPIRIT OF LOVE

This will become very clear to us when we think of St. Paul's letter to the Corinthians, Chapter 13, when he speaks about love. Then we will understand that only love remains while everything else passes away. Then we should also think about what Jesus says about love, and will know about two Commandments, to love God above all else with your whole heart and soul and with your whole life, and then your brother as you do yourself. Without love we are

unable to be Christians, unable to pray, unable to believe, unable to attend Holy Mass, and can simply not live with God. Mary wants us

**EVERY DAY AND IN EACH SITUATION, YOU MAY
BE CLOSER TO YOUR FELLOW-MAN**

... through this love which can only be God's gift and God's grace. This is really what is decisive in our faith and here it is mandatory to attend Mass, to pray and to fast. All this also has the particular purpose in that we through this sacramental life open ourselves to love and in so doing also to come closer to God as well as to the others around us. St. James also says: "Show me your acts of love and I will show you your faith." Faith without acts of love is really a dead faith. We may not forget that we meet God in prayer, in the Sacraments and in creation, but the special meeting with God is really in the loving meetings with other people. Only according to this will Jesus let us into His Heavenly Kingdom, or when we have lacked in love for the others we will be unable to enter it.

Every day and in every situation we should come to be nearer to our neighbors, and that is why we must really ask ourselves whether this is really the case. It would not be enough if we only prayed, went to Holy Mass, went to Confession and Adoration, but were not at the same time nearer to our brothers. Therefore the question is also very important for us -- Is it also this way with us? Or is there something that hinders us from coming nearer to people? If we have real love for God, then there should be nothing that hinders us from being nearer to people. If we have problems with our fellow-men, if they injure and insult us, if they are unjust to us, then these are all opportunities in which we can show the strength of our love. If the others' sins distance us from them, then it simply means that our love is not yet strong enough, and that we must simply pray more for the grace of being able to love. It is not difficult to admit that we all lack the love that brings us closer to the others. Therefore we must all pray for this ceaselessly and deeply.

**AND THAT IN WISDOM AND LOVE YOU MAY
OVERCOME EVERY DIFFICULTY**

I believe that we must really pray a lot for these two gifts -- love and wisdom. All of us, but especially those of us who are responsible in the Church -- the Pope, the Bishops, the Priests, the teachers and parents, and those who lead the Communities -- must pray all the time for these two gifts. This is because in God's love and God's wisdom, Mary says, we are able to overcome all difficulties, especially those difficulties which concern our teaching others which happen we lack the needed love and wisdom. How often have we made our decisions not in our love and wisdom, but rather in our anger, our nervousness, our aggressiveness, our jealousy, our selfishness or our pride? Or in our tendency of choosing the simplest way? If our decisions are made in these ways, then we risk that they are

the wrong decisions and that they then also injure the others and that from these wounds the negative, the resistance and the distrust again arise, and that the sins in this way multiply themselves. Only the wisdom that comes from God and the love that gives can help us overcome these difficulties in our decisions in our raising those for whom we are responsible. At the same time one must take very good care that before we expect something from or say something to the others, that we proof all this in wisdom and in love.

When today one speaks of disobedience and the many other problems in the family and in the Church, then this is only a sign that we are lacking in God's wisdom and love. Only in this wisdom and in this love can we begin to be renewed and to become true witnesses of love in these difficult times.

Of course we will be praying much for these gifts of the Holy Spirit, but then also in a very direct way we will ask for the gift of love and the gift of wisdom. In these times which are difficult, even though there never has been an easy time, we must especially be careful that we build our lives according to God and His light. And Mary, who is the very seat of all wisdom, will certainly also help us with this and accompany us.

**I AM WITH YOU AND I INTERCEDE FOR EACH OF
YOU BEFORE JESUS**

We are already preparing ourselves for the 19th Anniversary and we may also never forget that the phenomenon of Medjugorje cannot be explained without Mary's special presence among us. One must always say the "special presence" because of her apparitions here, because it also true that Mary was present here even before the apparitions. There is a statue in the Church here that was there already before the apparitions began, but the entire prayer movement and the entire phenomenon Medjugorje only started exactly on June 25, 1981. This phenomenon did not begin due to some charismatic or holy individual, but it was more like an explosion once the visionaries started telling us that they were seeing Mary. Many people since then have tried to explain things in different ways and without Mary, but their arguments have consistently failed. ONLY through Mary's special presence here can one come to understand what is happening in Medjugorje and why it is happening. We should be grateful for all this and the time now until the 19th Anniversary can renew us spiritually in that we perhaps reread all the messages and then again try to live them in our families, in our Communities and in our prayer-groups. We should also be grateful that Mary is speaking to us as a praying mother, as our intercessor and as our mediator. She prays for each of us to Jesus and it is this that simply must console us and also give us the strength on our path through this time in this world as it now is. It is filled with problems, conflicts, tensions, wars and other dangers, but we may always have hope that all of it will turn to the good

because Mary, our mighty intercessor before Jesus our Savior, is praying for us. So with these thoughts and with this message let us prepare ourselves well for the upcoming 19th Anniversary. Let us pray

God, our Father, and God of Life, God of Peace, God of Love, God of Truth, in the name of Your son Jesus Who out of His love for us gave His life, and with Mary, Mother of love, seat of truth, and Queen of Peace, we ask You, give us the true joy and give the courage to love and to suffer with love, and that in this suffering out of love and joy can be born which no-one will be able to take from us. We ask You, in this time of grace, give us, the parish, the visionaries and the whole Church true spiritual teaching. Fill us with the gifts of the Holy Spirit so that we, with joy, can witness Your love for us and in a special way we ask You on behalf of those who are far from faith. Give them the grace that they may recognize You, that they accept You, love You and trust You. Give the non-believers the experience of Your love for them, so that they can convert to You. Father, give us the gift of love and with the strength of Your Spirit cleanse our hearts, so that we can be near to every wish of Yours and to always come nearer to it than before. Remove from us all that which distances us from You and from the others. We give to You all situations in which we, through our sins, have distanced others from You, and we ask You for healing and for forgiveness. We also ask You for all the people who we meet that they, through us, may discover Your love. Give us, O Father, the gifts of wisdom and love, so that we may recognize, accept and do Your will. Give this wisdom and love to all parents and teachers, to all those responsible in the Church and in the world, so that all decisions are made in Your love and Your wisdom so that these may serve all of humanity. Give us the gifts of love and of wisdom, so that we become able to fight against all our sins and our bad habits, so that we may meet You in prayer in freedom and in love, and can meet all others with Your Divine love. Bless and heal all those who are far from Your wisdom and love, who have instead opened themselves to and follow the "wisdom" of this world, and who are trying to realize love and wisdom without You. Enlighten their hearts and souls so that they may convert to You. So that we, along with all others, may praise and adore You. So that every knee may bend in front of You. So that we, once we are all being lead by Your love and wisdom, may all reach Your Eternal Kingdom of Love and Peace. Amen.

Fra Slavko Barbaric
Medjugorje, May 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.

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.**

We will give you a good orientation, and make use of the gifts that God has given you. 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.

Thank you and God bless you,

Kathleen and Staff

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.

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

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 phone lines at **129 Deerfield Avenue**. When the ring through is active because no one is picking 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**.

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 a regular time for the **PFMC** and the planned program of **"Putting on the ARMOR of GOD."**

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, Rome and San Giovanni

Want to pilgrimage to **Medjugorje, Rome, San Giovanni Rotundo (Blessed Padre Pio)** and **Lanciano** 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, 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** and **Jordan** with a requested donation of **\$2899** to include all morning and evening meals, transportation, overnight accommodations and full spiritual program? We are planning to stay overnight in places that will provide an atmosphere for a year 2000 pilgrimage you will never forget. We currently have **40** seats available. **We are now taking applications.** If you are interested, please send your application and a **\$500** deposit to **Pilgrims of Faith Marian Center (PFMC)**, 61 Cooper Road, Voorhees, NJ 08043-4963.

Thanks for your assistance, we really need it.

Keith and Kathleen

CALENDARS:

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 **First Martyrs of Rome (30)**. Church calendar recognizes **Fathers Day (18)**.

In *July* the Church celebrates the Feasts of **Saints Thomas, Apostle (3)** and **James, Apostle (25)** and the Memorials of **Saints Elizabeth of Portugal (4)**, **Anthony Mary Zaccaria (5)**, **Maria Goretti (6)**, **Benedict, Abbot (11)**, **Henry (13)**, **Bonaventure (15)**, **Lawrence of Brindisi (21)**, **Mary Magdalene (22)**, **Joachim and Anne (26)**, **Martha (29)**, and **Ignatius of Loyola (31)** and **Blessed Junipero Serra (1)** and **Kateri Tekakwitha (14)** as well as **The Immaculate Heart of Mary (1)** and **Our Lady of Mount Carmel (16)**. Church calendar recognizes **Independence Day (4)**.

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**. Call (856) 768-9228 if you need directions or a map.

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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Thursday, 6/8/2000**

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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.