



The PILGRIM

Vol. 12, No. 10 Pilgrims of Faith Marian Center (PFMC)

October 2001

MESSAGE of 9/25/2001

Dear Children! Also today I call you to prayer, especially today when Satan wants war and hatred. I call you anew, little children: pray and fast that God may give you peace. Witness peace to every heart and be carriers of peace in this world without peace. I am with you and intercede before God for each of you. And you do not be afraid because the one who prays is not afraid of evil and has no hatred in the heart. Thank you for having responded to my call.

(Message claimed to be given by the Blessed Virgin Mary to Marija Pavlovic Lunetti. The Pilgrims of Faith Marian Center (PFMC) upholds the final decision of the Catholic Church as to the authenticity of this message to an alleged visionary from Medjugorje.)

A PRAYER



O God, deliver us, your people, from any spirit of resentment and anger. Deliver us from hatred and revenge.

Our country has suffered much, in the confusion, disruption and loss of lives. But we, O Lord, continue to not heed your warnings.

On one side, Lord, we condemn the workings of the evil ones who held such disregard for life. On the other side, we ourselves have such little regard for life. The babies continue to be aborted, the cloning continues, the partial birth abortions take the lives of fully developed babies, the elderly are deprived of life giving support, the materialism grows, and prayer is still condemned in our schools. Apathy has replaced direction and determination. Truth has been distorted, and immorality and darkness has crept within our walls. Our prayer is still not of the heart, Lord.

Lord, Our Lady has said that if we pray with the heart the chastisements may be mitigated or lessened. Show us, O Lord, this prayer of the heart. Comfort our sadness, worry, and fears.

Save this country that was formed under One God. Restore us our freedom. Allow us all to see that we can be dependent only upon You, and the Commandments You gave us to live by. And Lord, hear our prayers with Your deepest Mercy.
AMEN.

GOD REST in PEACE the SOUL of EDDIE SHEA

Our heartfelt thanks go out to Eddie for all the work he did to support the PFMC with video editing in 1990 and again in 1993. We are grateful to him for all that he did for us and for the Lord. Our prayers are with his family at the time of great loss. We pray that he is serving at the table of the Lord where he always wanted to be.

(Kathleen and Keith Werner)

REMEMBER SEPTEMBER 11, 2001

Dear God, bless America and keep September 11, 2001 in the minds of all for many years to come.

We need to communicate regularly with local and national media and politicians to keep them on track with prayer for those who suffer from terrorism.

We also need to work the issue of responsibility.

Everyone was appalled when thousands of people and millions of dollars of human creation were destroyed.

No one seems to be appalled when thousands of babies and millions of cells of God's creation are destroyed. Where is American responsibility? Where is the responsibility of each person in the world?

All the communication circuits show great concern over terrorism and its destruction and to a certain extent commitment to take care of those responsible.

We remember Pearl Harbor not so much because of being caught by surprise but because our commitment to responsibility and vigilance had become lax. Those

"The PILGRIM" for October 2001 is dedicated to "Our Lady, Tender Comforter." See page 3 for Table of Contents / "IN THIS ISSUE . . ."

with Internet access may want to visit:

<http://www.nationalreview.com/hanson/hanson092701.shtml>

which contains a newspaper article written by Edward R. Murrow on December 8, 1941. It ends with the following words:

And so it is with confidence today that this reporter assures the American people and the world that sobriety, maturity, and prudence — not bombs — are the watchwords on the home front. Remember — our enemies can only win if they make us answer their violence with more needless violence.

We must not forget what led up to September 11, 2001. We lost track of responsibility and commitment to vigilance. We became complacent to the value of human life.

Let's not let that happen again. Keep the pressure on our media and our government to keep preaching responsibility, commitment, vigilance, etc. for the good of all life.

(Keith Werner)

A MESSAGE from POPE JOHN PAUL II to the WORLD and the AMERICAN PEOPLE



I cannot begin this audience without expressing my profound sorrow at the terrorist attacks, which yesterday brought death and destruction to America, causing thousands of victims and injuring countless people.

To the President of the United States and to all American citizens, I express my heartfelt sorrow. In the face of such unspeakable horror we cannot but be deeply disturbed. I add my voice to all the voices raised in these hours to express indignant condemnation, and I strongly reiterate that the ways of violence will never lead to genuine solutions to humanity's problems.

Yesterday was a dark day in the history of humanity, a terrible affront to human dignity. After receiving the news, I followed with intense concern the developing situation, with heartfelt prayers to the Lord. How is it possible to commit acts of such savage cruelty? The

human heart has depths from which schemes of unheard-of ferocity sometimes emerge, capable of destroying in a moment the normal daily life of a people.

But faith comes to our aid at these times when words seem to fail. Christ's word is the only one that can give a response to the questions that trouble our spirit. Even if the forces of darkness appear to prevail, those who believe in God know that evil and death do not have the final say.

Christian hope is based on this truth; at this time our prayerful trust draws strength from it.

With deeply felt sympathy, I address myself to the beloved people of the United States in this moment of distress and consternation, when the courage of so many men and women of good will is being sorely tested. In a special way, I reach out to the families of the dead and the injured, and assure them of my spiritual closeness. I entrust to the mercy of the Most High the helpless victims of this tragedy, for whom I offered Mass this morning, invoking upon them eternal rest.

May God give courage to the survivors; may he sustain the rescue-workers and the many volunteers who are presently making an enormous effort to cope with such an immense emergency.

I ask you, dear brothers and sisters, to join me in prayer for them. Let us beg the Lord that the spiral of hatred and violence will not prevail. May the Blessed Virgin, Mother of Mercy, fill the hearts of all with wise thoughts and peaceful intentions.

Today, my heartfelt sympathy is with the American people, subjected yesterday to inhuman terrorist attacks, which have taken the lives of thousands of innocent human beings and caused unspeakable sorrow in the hearts of all men and women of good will. Yesterday was indeed a dark day in our history, an appalling offence against peace, terrible assault against human dignity.

I invite you all to join me in commending the victims of this shocking tragedy to Almighty God's eternal love. Let us implore his comfort upon the injured, the families involved, all who are doing their utmost to

The volunteer Board of Directors and Staff of the PFMC recognize and accept that the final authority regarding the alleged Marian apparitions, locutions and related messages at, and to the recipients from, Medjugorje, Bosnia-Herzegovina, as well as all other private revelations, rests with the Holy See, to whose judgment we willingly submit. We give total allegiance to our One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church and its Magisterium, particularly Our Holy Father, Pope John Paul II.

While those presenters who work with the PFMC are selected for their personal qualifications and commitment to the Church, their comments and presentations are those of individual Catholics and no endorsement by ecclesiastical authority is to be presumed.

(Pope John Paul II)

If you have ideas on areas of our Catholic Faith that you would like discussed, please drop us a note or call Kathleen at 856 768-9228.

Father Joseph Romanoski, Pastor of Sacred Heart Parish in South Amboy, NJ will be the Spiritual Director. This is the 12th year of Medjugorje pilgrimages for Keith and Kathleen. Each pilgrimage has been an experience of love and spiritual growth for each pilgrim.

We have been able to purchase a package pilgrimage for \$1499 plus \$70 taxes (double occupancy). Single rooms have a supplemental charge of \$299 and are encouraged for those who are smokers or have sleep difficulties. This includes round trip air on Alitalia between Newark and from Rome, Croatia Air between Rome and Split, housing in homes in Medjugorje for 8 nights, including all breakfasts and suppers, transfers, guides in Medjugorje, and an overnight in Rome with supper and departure breakfast. (Those who wish to stay in Rome longer, can obtain an extension.) An optional day excursion trip to the walled city of

Dubrovnik along the Adriatic or Dalmatian Coast with a stop in Slano is about \$30.

Reservations with final payments are still being processed. See the enclosed green information and reservation form. Please call 856 768-9228 for more information. We do accept Visa, MasterCard, and Discover for pilgrimage donations. Travel insurance is available and encouraged.

“I HAVE LOVED YOU WITH AN EVERLASTING LOVE” RETREAT CONFERENCE - MARCH 8, 9, and 10, 2002



Father Robert DeGrandis and Father John Hampsch will conduct the 11th Annual PFMC RETREAT CONFERENCE. It will be held at the Hilton Hotel, 2349 West Marlton Pike, Cherry Hill, NJ. This is a 14 floor hotel on NJ Highway 70 at Cuthbert Road near the Cooper River. This hotel is about four miles west where the PFMC RETREAT CONFERENCE was held for the past five years and that much closer to Philadelphia. NJ Transit bus routes stop at this hotel and it is not far from the Garden State Race Track stop on the AMTRAK route between Philadelphia and Atlantic City. The conference, food and room facilities are tremendous.

You have 2 steps to guarantee your room and a seat at this RETREAT CONFERENCE.

1. Please make your hotel room reservations NOW by calling 1-856-663-6666 or call 1-800-HILTONS. We have 300 rooms reserved and already almost 150 rooms are already booked. Rooms for 1 to 4 persons are \$89 per night with rollaway beds at a flat \$15 one-time set-up fee for the duration of your stay. The rooms are large and come with 1 King Size bed or two double beds. There are several entire floors of non-smoking rooms so make your desires known with your reservation. If we book 300 rooms before 2/8/02 they may open more of the over 400 rooms to us. We'd like to secure most of the hotel rooms for the RETREAT CONFERENCE so we can have a truly RETREAT environment.

2. Fill out the appropriate reservation form on the four-page information sheet within this issue of “The PILGRIM” or made available through prayer groups and parishes. Send the form with payment information

to book your RETREAT CONFERENCE reservation with the PFMC. We accept Visa, MasterCard and Discover credit cards as well as personal checks or money orders.

Please note that the four page information sheet provides reservation forms for the RETREAT CONFERENCE, the YOUTH TRACK which runs simultaneously with the RETREAT CONFERENCE, and the 3 DAY EXTENSION (3DX) to the RETREAT CONFERENCE.

Call 856 768-9228 if you need addition information.

DOROTHEA DeGRANDIS SUDOL - 3 DAY EXTENSION (3DX) “HEALING OF MEMORIES” - March 11, 12, and 13, 2002

Join Dorothea DeGrandis Suldo and her brother, Father Robert DeGrandis, S.S.J, for the 3-DAY EXTENSION (3DX) to the PFMC RETREAT CONFERENCE. This dynamic duo is such a gift to all that want to enter into Gods generous heart and ask for healing in their lives.

Make your reservations for your room at the HILTON and with the PFMC NOW. The process described above for the RETREAT CONFERENCE is followed for the 3DX with the only difference being use of either the 3DX registration form if only coming for the 3DX or showing the desire to be present for 6 days on the main RETREAT CONFERENCE registration form.

Dorothea was born in Lowell, MA. She has been involved in the Charismatic Renewal since August 15, 1970. She has served as a core Group Member in her home parish of Saint Michael's Roman Catholic Church in Lowell. During the early stages of renewal she held and led weekly prayer group meetings. From 1970 to 1977, Dorothea was involved in lay Witness Missions as a team member and also in “Faith at Work.” She is a member of the Association of Christian Therapists. Dorothea has given numerous workshops and seminars on Healing, Inner Healing and the Charismatic Gifts of the Holy Spirit. They were held in the Eastern United States (including New Jersey, Connecticut and New York), Alabama, Louisiana, Mississippi, South Dakota, Florida, Texas, Wisconsin, Indiana, California, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Ohio, Michigan, Canada, England,

Scotland, Australia, Hawaii, Puerto Rico and the West Indies.

She has also given Days of Renewal, Weekend Retreats and Leadership Training conferences. Dorothea has been a guest on many regional television and radio "talk shows." As the guest speaker she has spoken to "Women Aglow Chapters" throughout the country. She has been a main speaker at Regional Charismatic Conventions in Boise, Idaho; Wichita, Kansas; Great Falls, Montana and Memphis, Tennessee.

A gifted teacher as well as a dynamic and captivating speaker, she has produced many audio tapes and albums. She has written three books on her many experiences and one on her own inner healing experiences.

Dorothea leads her own Inner Healing Ministry. She has worked extensively and continues to work with her brother Father Robert DeGrandis, S.S.J., in his Healing Ministry. We have had them work together at previous PFMC annual RETREAT CONFERENCE events and look forward to this 3DX.

JUST ONE QUESTION

NOW that the President has called us to prayer.

NOW that Congress has called us to prayer.

NOW that our Governor has called us to prayer.

NOW that the city Mayor has called us to prayer.

NOW that the "liberal" media and
most other branches of our American society
have called us to prayer.

AND NOW that our churches are assembling in
special prayer.

"Honorable" Justices of the Supreme Court,

I have only one question:

Would it be okay to pray in our schools??

An American Citizen

NEWS from around the WORLD and the VATICAN

Pope John Paul II today accepted the diplomatic credentials of a new American ambassador, James Nicholson, and observed, "You begin your mission at a moment of immense tragedy for your country."

"I pray that this inhuman act will awaken in the hearts of all the world's peoples a firm resolve to reject the ways of violence, to combat everything that sows hatred and division within the human family," the Holy Father continued.

The new US ambassador to the Holy See, a former national chairman of the Republican Party, had his first formal meeting with the Pontiff on Thursday, at the Pope's summer residence in Castelgandolfo.

In his remarks, Pope John Paul II focused first on the sufferings of America's terror victims, assuring the ambassador that he would continue to pray for those victims, their families, and their nation. Then the Pope went on to speak about the dangers of materialism in the West in general and the US in particular. "Underlying your nation's commitment to freedom, self-determination, and equal opportunity are universal truths inherited from its religious roots," the Pope observed. Those truths in turn point toward some clear principles, he continued, citing "respect for the sanctity of life and for the dignity of each person."

Today America has a special responsibility as a world leader, the Pope said. "In seizing the available opportunities, vision and generosity are necessary, especially on the part of those who have been blessed with freedom, wealth, and an abundance of resources." However, that leadership cannot be properly exercised in a moral vacuum. The Pontiff pointed to the "spiritual roots of the crisis which the Western democracies are experiencing, a crisis

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Joseph Szolack, as well as many of Mary's other beloved priests from

the Philadelphia and Newark Archdioceses as well as the Camden,

Harrisburg, Metuchen, Norwich, Pittsburgh, Scranton, Trenton and

Wilmington Dioceses. Father Hartman is reviewing every issue.

Father Joseph Szolack, szolack@camdendiocese.org, Vocations

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OFFICE HELP, ASSEMBLY, LABELS and MAILING: Too many
wonderful pilgrims and volunteers to mention them all by name.

characterized by the advance of a materialistic, utilitarian, and ultimately dehumanized world view which is tragically detached from the moral foundations of Western civilizations.”

“Never has it been more urgent to reinvigorate the moral vision and resolve essential to maintaining a just a free society,” the Pope said. In his response, Ambassador Nicholson thanked the Pope for his strong words of condemnation after the terror attack on New York and Washington, and for his promise of prayers and solidarity. These, he said, were “a comfort for all Americans.” Nicholson also reported that President Bush had been “profoundly moved” by his July meeting with the Holy Father.

The US ambassador promised that the American government would continue to work closely with the Holy See in the quest for peace and development, especially in the Middle East, in Africa, and in the Balkans.

VATICAN, Sep 13, 01 (CWNews.com)

VATICAN UNITED NATIONS REPRESENTATIVE CALLS FOR WORLDWIDE COMMITMENT TO PEACE - NEW YORK

The Vatican's representative at the United Nations has said that the struggle against terrorism is impeded because “too many countries take the liberty of turning away, attending to their own interests.”

Speaking to the Vatican's FIDES news service just hours after the attack, Archbishop Renato Martino said that acts of violence will continue until there is a genuine worldwide commitment to the search for peace.

Archbishop Martino who serves as “permanent observer” at the UN on behalf of the Vatican told FIDES that in the face of international terrorism, “No one can stand and watch. Sooner or later every country must be involved.” He added: “We do not know how long the United Nations will remain inactive.”

The Archbishop, who was on his way to the opening meeting of the General Assembly when the planes struck, said that he had seen the collapse of the World Trade Center towers, and also observed the generous reaction of volunteer relief workers. The people of New York “soon began to compete in solidarity” by

donating blood and searching for survivors, he remarked.

The Vatican representative said that an international response to terrorism must seek to eliminate the motivations for such activities. He pointed out: “Terrorists are people who are desperate; they feel have nothing to lose. They see no future, so they are ready to kill and to be killed.”

(Sep 13, 01 (FIDES/CWNews.com))

AMERICA TURNS TO PRAYER - BOSTON

Following the “acts of war” on Tuesday that crashed four airliners and demolished the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, Americans, both the powerful and ordinary, turned to prayer for consolation and as one of the few actions they could take. In addition, stories of spiritual heroism from the site of the disasters also pour in.

Port Authority of New York sources told the Newsmax.com that fire and police officials had put out and immediate, urgent call for Catholic priests, and several responded.

Firefighters and police entering in or in close proximity to the buildings were granted general absolution and last rites, the sources said. They added that the priests told them that the police and firemen clearly understood their deaths were imminent as they continued their rescue efforts.

In cities across the country, in virtually every church, mosque, and synagogue and in public spaces impromptu religious services were being organized. President George W. Bush has called for a National Day of Mourning on Friday and urged all Americans to take their lunch hour to go to the house of worship of their choice to offer their prayers for victims, relatives, and rescue workers.

Rabbi Harold Kushner, author of “When Bad Things Happen to Good People,” said tragedies gain religious meaning only in how people respond to them. “We should do what can to help the afflicted,” Kushner said. “We pray for the strength not to give up on the

Father Michael Baxter, a professor of Catholic moral theology at the University of Notre Dame in South Bend, Indiana, hoped people would take time to reflect as the country recovers from the attack. “God

is acting in all human events, somehow mysteriously, and is acting in this, maybe to bring about a kind of national repentance," he said.

Many religious communities are also engaging in the corporal acts of mercy as well as the spiritual. In New York, churches are organizing to provide food and other respite to people stranded in the city. In Wichita, Kansas, church groups are helping to house stranded airline passengers. Students at the University of Texas held a candlelight vigil.

Archbishop Alexander Brunett of Seattle told an interreligious prayer service on Wednesday night, "People of God, tonight we have been reminded that God has many names. God's people are everywhere. They are all of humanity."

(Sep 13, 01 CWNews.com)

BRITISH RELIGIOUS LEADERS UNITE AGAINST "EVIL DEEDS" - LONDON

British faith leaders of all traditions have joined forces to express their horror at Tuesday's attacks on the United States.

In a joint statement issued last night, Catholics, Protestants, Muslims, and Jews said, "We believe that it is vital, amid so much anguish and suffering, to nourish all that we hold in common and to resist all that would drive us apart."

The statement is signed by Cardinal Cormac Murphy-O'Connor, Anglican Archbishop George Carey, Chief Rabbi Jonathan Sacks, and the head of the Muslim college, Dr. Zaki Badawi.

The statement says, "Our hearts go out to the people of America and all those who grieve and mourn. We pray for them and with them. We remember the dead, the bereaved, the injured, and the missing, and all those working to save life."

It continued, "We and all people of good faith and good will -- whatever their religious, ethnic, or racial background -- are appalled by these terrible attacks. Such evil deeds have no place in the world we seek to share."

Cardinal Murphy-O'Connor celebrated a Mass at Westminster Cathedral yesterday for those killed in the attacks.

A three minute silence will be held across Europe tomorrow in memory of those killed in America. It will begin at 11 AM British time.

(Sep 13, 01 CWNews.com)

NATIONAL DAY OF MOURNING PLANNED IN IRELAND - DUBLIN

The Irish bishops' conference announced on Thursday that Friday will be a National Day of Mourning in Ireland, as declared by the Irish government.

A statement from the four archbishops of Ireland -- Sean Brady of Armagh, Dermot Clifford of Cashel and Emly, Michael Neary of Tuam, and Cardinal Desmond Connell of Dublin said, "At this time of great sadness and distress we invite everyone to continue to pray for the victims and their families, and for the people of the United States." They also asked that all who can do so to attend Mass or other religious services.

Cardinal Connell has also expressed his sympathy to US Ambassador to Ireland Richard Egan and said he had sent letters to American cardinals. As part of the Day of Mourning, a prayer was to be held at the Dublin cathedral on Thursday evening for young people, many of whom have traveled in the US for summer work or holidays.

On Friday, President Mary McAleese and Prime Minister Bertie Ahern were scheduled to attend an ecumenical service at the cathedral. In addition, the cardinal asked all 200 parishes of the diocese organize Masses or prayer services at the same time as that ecumenical service. Holy Masses were also being planned for celebration all around Ireland on Friday

(Sep 13, 01 CWNews.com)

TOP ARGENTINEAN LEADERS JOIN IN MASS PRAYER FOR US VICTIMS - BUENOS AIRES

Argentinean President Fernando de la Rúa, as well as other top government officials joined a mass ecumenical prayer for the US victims of terror attacks staged at the Plaza de la Republica the largest square in Buenos Aires on Wednesday. Thousand of Argentines gathered in a prayer vigil convoked by

Cardinal Jorge Bergoglio of Buenos Aires, as well as Evangelical, Orthodox, Jewish, and Muslim leaders.

Among the some 30,000 Argentines gathered in the cold evening to pray for the victims of the terrorist attacks in the US and their relatives, in addition to President de la Rúa, were Buenos Aires Governor Carlos Ruckauf, Mayor Anibal Ibarra, former President Raul Alfonsín, most of the government's ministers, and 50 congressmen from different political parties.

During the prayer service, Cardinal Bergoglio said: "Father, as one people and as your children, we ask you for peace. Remove violence from human hearts and make us understand we are all watchers of our brothers and sisters around the world."

The cardinal then prayed the prayer of Saint Francis of Assisi. Rabbi Ari Stocman then read Psalms 48 and 85, and the prayer vigil ended with the closing remarks from Evangelical pastor Ruben Gutierrez and the Anglican Bishop David Leake

(Sep 13, 01 (CWNews.com))

ISLAMIC-CATHOLIC GROUP CONDEMNS ATTACK - VATICAN

The Joint Islamic-Catholic Liaison Committee, operating under the aegis of the Vatican, has released a statement condemning Tuesday's terror attack on the United States.

The statement -- signed by Dr. Hamid Ahmad al-Rifaie of the International Islamic Forum and Bishop Michael Fitzgerald of the Pontifical Council for Inter-Religious Dialogue also expressed "our great sorrow" over the tragedy, and insisted that "such acts of violence are not the way to bring peace to the world."

(Sep 13, 01 CWNews.com)

UNITED NATIONS EXPLICITLY DEMANDS ABORTION RIGHTS in NEPAL - GENEVA

In one of the most explicit demands for abortion legalization ever issued by a United Nations committee, on August 31, the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR) issued

its Concluding Observations of the Committee on Nepal.

While the United Nations frequently suggests it does not promote abortions in countries where the practice is illegal, the official UN report of the CESCR concluding observations, fully released only in the past few days, demonstrates the opposite.

The UN report states, "The Committee urges the State party to take remedial action to address the problems of clandestine abortions, unwanted pregnancies, and the high rate of maternal mortality. In this regard, the Committee urges the State party to reinforce reproductive and sexual health programs, in particular in rural areas, and to allow abortion when pregnancies are life threatening or a result of rape or incest."

The United Nations is overstepping its bounds in this case even by its own definition. The CESCR, which was set up to review how the rights enshrined in the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) are protected, acted outside its jurisdiction since abortion is not even mentioned in the ICESCR.

The United Nations code phrase for abortion, "reproductive health services," is not mentioned in the document either. Moreover, Nepal's report to the committee does not mention abortion.

In Nepal, which signed on to the ICESCR in May 1991, the right to life of unborn children is protected by law. UN committees have in recent years been increasingly showing that they have no regard whatever for the sanctity or value of unborn human life in member states.

(Sep 13, 01 CWNews.com/LSN.ca)

A QUESTION for OUR READERS

After reading the above news, how is it that so many people are praying, holding prayer vigils, and are worried about teaching our children of the evils of killing.

Yet here we stand in this unified praying country with a ban on teaching prayer in our schools, and we continue to think that we are not killing by abortion and stem cell research?

God Bless this country. We must look at what we are promoting, what we are condemning and what we ourselves are allowing by not speaking up due to apathy.

We must look at all aspects of what we as individuals are doing to stop the killing and hate.

We must look at what in our world we are handing over to our children and grandchildren. What will they say or teach to their children?

And, to God for when our time is up, what will we have to account for as to what we actively did in our lives to stop the killing?

(Editor)

DEAR FATHER

Dear Father, please hear our prayer
Please ease the pain; our hearts repair.

So many lost their lives today
Smoke filled the air, our sky turned gray
Horrendous acts of lust and greed
Free us from this pain we plead.
Please guide us with your tender touch
We need you God, You are our crutch.
The acts of evil displayed this day
Caused fear, hate and much dismay.
These acts cannot be justified
As we watched and saw the planes collide.
Our country, they tried to destroy
Did it give them pleasure? Did they enjoy?
The bloodshed caused on September 11
Do they now feel they'll go to heaven?
Please, Dear God, show them there're wrong
That our country is much too strong
Let them know "In God We Trust"
And what they've done is so unjust.
We'll fly our flags; We proudly stand
In this free country, our great land.
Bless America, Oh Father, we pray
The flags that wave on this sad day.

(Ruth Ann Mahaffey Sept 11, 2001)

BENEVOLENT MOTHER

A armor of saintly knights
Of old Heroine of countless stories untold
You to whom nations seek support
Draw us to your bosom and give us comfort

Constant companion of afflicted souls
Ever ready guide to reach spiritual goals
Protect us from the enemy below

Defeat his efforts to gain followers in tow

O spotless herald from heaven above
Mother of our Saviour, the one we love
Graciously assist us to please
Our Lord Strengthen our resolve
to earn our reward

(shalom@yahoogroups.com)

THANKING GOD

One way to thank God is by using the gifts He gave us for His greater glory. Please remember the Pilgrims of Faith Marian Center (PFMC) when you write your Will.

Your gift will help the PFMC lead more people to Jesus Christ through His Blessed Mother, Mary.

Remember us monthly by placing your petitions in the envelope provided, and slipping in a check, as Mother Angelica says "put us between your phone bill and the electric bill." It will help us to pay for the printing and mailing of "The PILGRIM" periodical and for the operating expenses of the PFMC.

Thank you

BLESSED PADRE PIO – ANOTHER MIRACLE

The Holy See will soon recognize the validity of a miracle attributed to the intercession of Blessed Padre Pio, thereby clearing the way for the canonization of the Italian stigmatist, according to a forthcoming magazine report.

The Italian monthly Famiglia Cristiana, in an article due to appear September 9, says that the canonization of the Capuchin monk, could take place early in 2002.

The miracle involves a 7-year-old Italian boy who was stricken with acute meningitis in January of last year, and rushed to the hospital founded by Padre Pio himself at San Giovanni Rotondo. Doctors described the boy's condition as hopeless, but after his mother organized a prayer vigil in Padre Pio's old monastery cell, the boy's condition inexplicably improved until he effected a complete recovery.

Matthew, the young boy who is the focus of the case, reports that while he was in a coma, Padre Pio appeared to him, saying, "Don't worry; you will get

Blessed Padre Pio, who died in 1968, gained a worldwide reputation for his sanctity, his dedication as a confessor, and his numerous miracles.

(Roberta Marziani, VATICAN, 9-5-01 CWNNews.com)

SAINT FRANCIS PREACHES TO: THE BIRDS

Father Francis and his companions were making a trip through the Spoleto Valley near the town of Bevagna. Suddenly, Francis spotted a great number of birds of all varieties. There were doves, crows and all sorts of birds. Swept up in the moment, Francis left his friends in the road and ran after the birds, who patiently waited for him. He greeted them in his usual way, expecting them to scurry off into the air as he spoke. But they moved not.

Filled with awe, he asked them if they would stay awhile and listen to the Word of God. He said to them: "My brother and sister birds, you should praise your Creator and always love him: He gave you feathers for clothes, wings to fly and all other things that you need. It is God who made you noble among all creatures, making your home in thin, pure air. Without sowing or reaping, you receive God's guidance and protection."

At this the birds began to spread their wings, stretch their necks and gaze at Francis, rejoicing and praising God in a wonderful way according to their nature. Francis then walked right through the middle of them, turned around and came back, touching their heads and bodies with his tunic.

Then he gave them his blessing, making the sign of the cross over them. At that they flew off and Francis, rejoicing and giving thanks to God, went on his way.

Later, Francis wondered aloud to his companions why he had never preached to birds before. And from that day on, Francis made it his habit to solicitously invoke all birds, all animals and reptiles to praise and love their Creator. And many times during Francis' life there were remarkable events of Francis speaking to the animals. There was even a time when Saint Francis quieted a flock of noisy birds that were interrupting a religious ceremony! Much to the wonder of all present, the birds remained quiet until Francis' sermon was complete.

RABBITS and FISH

One day a brother brought a rabbit who had been caught in a trap to Saint Francis. Francis advised the rabbit to be more alert in the future, then released the rabbit from the trap and set it on the ground to go its way. But the rabbit hopped back up onto Francis' lap, desiring to be close to the saint.

Francis took the rabbit a few steps into the woods and set it down. But it followed Francis back to his seat and hopped on his lap again! Finally Francis asked one of his fellow friars to take the rabbit far into the woods and let it go. That worked. This type of thing happened repeatedly to Francis—which he saw as an opportunity to praise the glory of God. If the simplest creatures could be so endowed with God's wonder, how much the more so we humans!

Fish were also known to obey Francis. Whenever a fish was caught and Francis was nearby, he would return the fish to the water, warning it not to be caught again. On several occasions the fish would linger awhile near the boat, listening to Francis preach,

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until he gave them permission to leave. Then they would swim off. In every work of art, as Saint Francis called all creation, he would praise the artist, our loving Creator.

THE WOLF

Perhaps the most famous story of Saint Francis is when he tamed the wolf that was terrorizing the people of Gubbio. While Francis was staying in that town he learned of a wolf so ravenous that it was not only killing and eating animals, but people, too. The people took up arms and went after it, but those who encountered the wolf perished at its sharp teeth. Villagers became afraid to leave the city walls.

Francis had pity on the people and decided to go out and meet the wolf. He was desperately warned by the people, but he insisted that God would take care of him. A brave friar and several peasants accompanied Francis outside the city gate. But soon the peasants lost heart and said they would go no farther.

Francis and his companion began to walk on. Suddenly the wolf, jaws agape, charged out of the woods at the couple. Francis made the Sign of the Cross toward it. The power of God caused the wolf to slow down and to close its mouth.

Francis called out: "Come to me, Brother Wolf. In the name of Christ, I order you not to hurt anyone." At that moment the wolf lowered its head and lay down at Saint Francis' feet, meek as a lamb.

Saint Francis explained to the wolf that he had been terrorizing the people, killing not only animals, but humans who are made in the image of God. "Brother Wolf," said Francis, "I want to make peace between you and the people of Gubbio. They will harm you no more and you must no longer harm them. All past crimes are to be forgiven."

The wolf showed its assent by moving its body and nodding its head. Then to the absolute surprise of the gathering crowd, Francis asked the wolf to make a pledge. As Saint Francis extended his hand to receive the pledge, so the wolf extended its front paw and placed it into the saint's hand. Then Francis commanded the wolf to follow him into town to make a peace pact with the townspeople. The wolf meekly followed Saint Francis.

By the time they got to the town square, everyone was there to witness the miracle. With the wolf at his side, Francis gave the town a sermon on the wondrous and fearful love of God, calling them to repent from all their sins. Then he offered the townspeople peace, on

behalf of the wolf. The townspeople promised in a loud voice to feed the wolf. Then Francis asked the wolf if he would live in peace under those terms. He bowed his head and twisted his body in a way that convinced everyone he accepted the pact. Then once again the wolf placed its paw in Francis' hand as a sign of the pact.

From that day on the people kept the pact they had made. The wolf lived for two years among the townspeople, going from door to door for food. It hurt no one and no one hurt it. Even the dogs did not bark at it. When the wolf finally died of old age, the people of Gubbio were sad. The wolf's peaceful ways had been a living reminder to them of the wonders, patience, virtues and holiness of Saint Francis. It had been a living symbol of the power and providence of the living God.

(Taken from www.justcatholic.org by John Bookser Feister, editor of AmericanCatholic.org, managing editor of [Catholic Update](http://CatholicUpdate) and an assistant editor of [Saint Anthony Messenger](http://SaintAnthonyMessenger))

VATICAN SCHOLARS PREPARE to REWRITE the BIBLE

Vatican scholars are preparing to rewrite the Bible by incorporating revelations contained in ancient scrolls discovered beside the Dead Sea in Palestine.

A team of theologians and historians will gather in Italy later this month to start the potentially explosive task of inserting new details about the life and times of Jesus Christ. The influence of radical Jewish groups who wanted to overthrow Roman rule is likely to be included in the new Bible, bolstering those who interpret Christ as a revolutionary who fought political

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oppression.

The Bible is based mostly on manuscripts written centuries after Christ lived, but the Dead Sea scrolls, found at Qumran by shepherds in 1947, have been dated to the decades before and after his crucifixion. The 800 documents, written by the Essenes, a Jewish sect, date from 170 BC to AD 68, and chronicle the turbulence of the Roman occupation of Judea.

Gianluigi Boschi, a Dominican priest and Vatican biblical scholar, told La Stampa, a Turin, Italy, daily newspaper, that an international commission of scholars had been given the green light to update the Bible by culling material from the scrolls. The initiative will be officially announced at a conference at the University of Modena on Sept. 26, 2001.

Martyn Percy, a canon doctor at Sheffield University, welcomed the initiative but suggested the results may be less than dramatic. "There has never been a settled, definitive version of the Bible, it has been an evolving book which has gone through many translations."

(La Stampa)

RUN through the RAIN

She had been shopping with her Mom in Wal-Mart. She must have been 6 years old, this beautiful brown haired, freckle-faced image of innocence.

It was pouring outside. The kind of rain that gushes over the top of rain gutters, so much in a hurry to hit the Earth it has no time to flow down the spout.

We all stood there under the awning and just inside the door of the Wal-Mart. We waited, some patiently, others irritated because nature messed up their hurried day.

I am always mesmerized by rainfall. I get lost in the sound and sight of the heavens washing away the dirt and dust of the world.

Memories of running, splashing so carefree as a child come pouring in as a welcome reprieve from the worries of my day. Her voice was so sweet as it broke the hypnotic trance we were all caught in.

"Mom, let's run through the rain," she said.

"What?" Mom asked.

"Let's run through the rain!" She repeated.

"No, honey. We'll wait until it slows down a bit," Mom replied.

This young child waited about another minute and repeated:

"Mom, Let's run through the rain."

"We'll get soaked if we do," Mom said.

"No, we won't, Mom. That's not what you said this morning," the young girl said as she tugged at her Mom's arm.

"This morning? When did I say we could run through the rain and not get wet?"

"Don't you remember? When you were talking to daddy about his cancer, you said, 'If God can get us through this, He can get us through anything!'"

The entire crowd stopped dead silent. I swear you couldn't hear anything but the rain. We all stood silently. No one came or left in the next few minutes. Mom paused and thought for a moment about what she would say.

Now some would laugh it off and scold her for being silly. Some might even ignore what was said. But this was a moment of affirmation in a young child's life. A time when innocent trust can be nurtured so that it will bloom into faith.

"Honey, you are absolutely right. Let's run through the rain. If God let's us get wet, well maybe we just needed washing," Mom said.

Then off they ran. We all stood watching, smiling and laughing as they darted past the cars and yes, through the puddles. They held their shopping bags over their heads just in case. They got soaked. But they were followed by a few who screamed and laughed like children all the way to their cars.

And yes, I did. I ran. I got wet. I needed washing. Circumstances or people can take away your material possessions, they can take away your money, and they can take away your health. But no one can ever take away your precious memories.

So, don't forget to make time and take the opportunities to make memories every day!

I HOPE YOU STILL TAKE THE TIME TO RUN THROUGH THE RAIN.

(Bernadette 7/15/01)

REFLECTION on the MESSAGE of AUGUST 25, 2001

WALKING on the PATHS of HOLINESS

Dear children! Today I call all of you to decide for holiness. May for you, little children, always in your thoughts and in each situation holiness be in the first place, in work and in speech. In this way, you will also put it into practice; little by little, step-by-step, prayer and a decision for holiness will enter into your family. Be real with yourselves and do not bind yourselves to material things but to God. And do not forget, little children, that your life is as passing as a flower. Thank you for having responded to my call.

The messages of Our Lady allow us to see her desire, the love of the Mother who desires to accompany her children on the paths of life. We can see that she lives, breathes and walks with us. In the message of July, she calls us to rest in God, because only God gives us rest. It is not prayer as such, but God, whom we find in prayer. Prayer is not the goal, but a way to reach the goal, which Our Lady wants us to take to heart. There are prayers, in which God cannot enter, because the entrance door is closed and locked. It is closed, because our heart is closed. A formalistic and superficial prayer, done out of duty and not out of love, is tiring, because God is not there. This is why our Mother calls us to the prayer of the heart, with love and with the desire to meet God who makes us healthy, pure and strong, able to carry our days and our burdens joyfully throughout our lives.

Mary calls us to holiness. God alone is holy. He is thrice holy. We are not worthy to approach Him, to come near Him and be in His presence. But He has proved and confirmed with His life that we can come to Him without fear. Jesus lived in such a way that no one had to fear Him or dread Him. We come to Him not because we are good, holy, pious and devout but because we need Him as dry and waterless earth needs the rain. We receive Jesus in Holy Communion not because we are worthy to receive Him, but because we need Him in order to survive.

Our part is to decide for holiness, and God's part is to make us holy, according to the words of Jesus: "Without me you can do nothing." What we can do is to decide: God cannot and will not decide for us. He

cannot give us freedom, faith, trust and love by force. He can help us only when we ask for it. He asks us as He asked the blind man from the Gospel: "What do you want me to do for you?" Jesus wants to hear our answer, He wants to hear our heart speak, He wants to hear our decision, the cry of our soul after Him, so that – day after day – we may become more like unto Him.

Usually, we have a distorted image of saints: we think they are strange, difficult and eccentric. Yet only saints were completely healthy and the most normal people of the world. People were longing for them, because in them they discovered the face of God. People sought them and longed for them. Also today, people cry out for God, seek God, seek those who will tell them that God exists, that He is deeply interested in the destiny of men and their lives. To decide for God is not something cheap, but demanding. God does not demand us to give Him little pieces of the time, which is left over in our day, but much more. He demands a bit of our heart, a bit of our love, a bit of enthusiasm for Him and His Word. Just as God needs Mary, the Mother of His Son Jesus, He needs you to give a smile to someone, He needs you to defend someone who is unjustly accused, He needs you to bandage a wound of someone who is injured. He needs you to tell people that you have nothing against them and wants you to resist any bad-mouthing. Also today, God wants you to look beyond the surface, to look with the heart, because everybody desires love, desires to meet people who do not look for their personal interests, their personal advantage, but God's advantage and God's desires.

Do have the courage to be considered as abnormal in this world, so that the world may seek you and long for you, who had the courage to walk on the path of God, because He needs just you: you who have the courage to believe, the courage to pray when everyone is cursing, the courage to believe when

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everyone is doubting and despairing.

Let us be real, let us be true with ourselves. Look and see that you do not hold your life in your hand, that you are not the master of your life as much as you try, as much as you work, as much as you acquire richness... You can not preserve your earthly life. You are here to spend your life: not in vain but wisely, as Jesus and Our Lady invite us in this message. If the grain of wheat does not die, it cannot bring fruit; but if it dies, it bears fruit a hundredfold. Your life can flourish again independently of your age, independently of illness or old age that may have bound you on your bed. Accept your situation, your life and people whom God has put on your way. Thank God from the heart even for unpleasant things, knowing that He has the solution, that He knows why it is this way – and already you have entered into the space of confidence and peace. Stand at the side of God, rely on Him as on a rock, a solid foundation where you cannot be threatened nor condemned by this world. You cannot cheat your soul: it seeks God. Seek Him where He dwells. Seek Him in your heart, seek Him in the community of the faithful who gathers for Eucharist and the listening of His Word, seek Him in the Gospel, seek Him in every person, whom you like or dislike. Wherever you go, God is there. Let Him open your eyes for new horizons of life, of trust and of peace.

And to you, Mary, I pray: as you gave birth to Jesus, give birth to each one of us, give us birth to a new life. May your words, O Mary, feed us with confidence that God is on our side that He intervenes and cares for us.

Fr Ljubo Kurtovic, Medjugorje, 26th of August 2001

FAMILY CORNER

IT'S NOT FAIR

I can still see myself carefully recounting jellybeans into five same-size baskets. It didn't matter because on Easter morning I was bound to hear how James had gotten three more red ones and was therefore more loved. The sibling battle cry, "It's not fair!" is heard in every household where two or more children reside. It's even in the Bible (perhaps not in those exact words), with Jesus telling us how an all-loving parent responds.

In the story of the Prodigal Son we find an older brother angry over the attention shown his sibling. The

resentful brother accuses the father of never rewarding his faithfulness. The father listens to the complaint but hears and responds to the real issue. He does not enter into a debate about parties or even faithfulness. He simply reassures his son of his love and tells him why his brother is taking center stage at this time.

Parenting experts agree with the father in the parable. In her book, *Loving Each One Best*, Nancy Samalin offers points for parents to consider: Listen to your children's real need, usually an unspoken desire to feel special, loved best. Rather than argue, assure them of your love with words or a hug. Help them understand that equal treatment is not always best. Remind them that occasionally one child takes center stage because of a special need or cause for celebration but that, in time, the others have their turn.

Ms. Samalin suggests not offering the sage advice, "Life isn't fair." It's better that children understand that fair doesn't mean equal. That was the lesson the older brother needed to learn. It's something we all need to remember. No matter what life offers, we are all special in God's eyes and all loved equally.

(By Judith Dunlap- everydaycatholic.org)

HEAVEN

Heaven – one of the most beautiful words we can say.

When we talk about Heaven we do not mean so much the heavens –the astrological space in which the stars move, but rather, the mysterious place where there are all the lovely things we cannot find on earth.

For us, Heaven is an enormous area reigned over by freedom, love, life and happiness.

The word Heaven suggests elevation and loftiness and can be found everywhere that our eternal and unchangeable ideals exist.

When we are able to find a little peace and serenity, we feel that heaven is within us or is reflected within us.

When we are happy, it feels as though we had put out a finger and touched Heaven.

God lives in heaven. Heaven is therefore, above all else, the home of God and His children.

How lucky those children are! And we are God's children. We can go there, we should go there. We only need to want to.

You are free to choose. Heaven will not be your home if you do not wish it and you reject God's love.

But if you do want it and, as a consequence you behave as a child of God, you can already feel the loftiness of Heaven within you.

If faith and love guide your life, then God is with you from now on and He wants you with Him forever, in His home in Heaven.

(Fr. Gabriele Adani, Medjugorje Torino anno IX n. 32)

MAMIE and the EUCHARIST

There are no saints without the Eucharist. But the Eucharist, locked away in so many tabernacles, is lacking saints to go to adore It.

Mamie had a deep eucharistic life. I was a qualified witness to its exterior practices. As for its interior nature, some signs would sometimes escape that revealed its intensity. To penetrate into Mamie's Eucharistic life is to penetrate into a relationship of intimacy in which *the initiative was always God's*. Mamie received from the Lord the finest power of observation, an exquisite sensitivity to everything that is good, beautiful, true. Naturally, there is nothing surprising in the fact that this gift she received should lead her always towards Jesus Christ our Lord. Her contemplative power, her so rich mystical life, were hardly perceptible to anyone other than those who were close to her. By this I don't mean physical closeness so much as, above all, the closeness of the faith.

Whenever we went of a journey it was always to some shrine or sanctuary of Our Lady or of some saint: other times we would head off to visit monasteries or convents filled with spirituality, such a Saint Joseph's of Avila and the Incarnation: Caleruega, birthplace of Saint Dominic of Guzmán: El Palancar (Cáceres), sanctified by Saint Peter of Alcantara; the monastery of Discalced Carmelites of Segovia where the remains of Saint John of the Cross lie; Covadonga; El Pilar, Lourdes, Fatima, Rue du Bac, Beauraing, Banneux, Halls, Santiago de Compostela, Montserrat, Saint Peter's in the Vatican, Holy Mary the Major, the Basilica of Saint Francis of Assisi, Fontebralda (the house of Saint Catherine of Siena)...In all of these places, when we visited them before my ordination, we would attend the eucharistic celebration together with great devotion. After my ordination, she attended with supreme recollection.

I especially recall several celebrations in which Mamie seemed to live the Eucharist intensely, mystically, in rapture. We once went together to **Torreciudad (Barbastro-Huesca)**. This Sanctuary stands out for its sober beauty, its nobility, its majesty in the midst of a pre-Pyrenean landscape.

There were lots of people. Mamie was on the front bench. Everyone was wearing their Sunday best. It was a beautiful morning. The organ delightfully caressed our senses. The beauty of an intoxicating liturgy. The steps led high up to a marble altar adorned with flowers and six immense candelabras, **an atmosphere of faith. Recollection, fervor and devotion palpable in the air.** A zenithal light that illuminated everything with a faint light added the finishing touch to an atmosphere that invited the heart to elevate towards God. The moment of the Preface came. And then the Sanctus. Sung. Solemnly. Beyond time. Cadences of the eternal. The canon began and the invocation of the Holy Spirit to sanctify the offerings. **Mamie, recollected in prayer, was watching every movement, every gesture of the priest.** It seemed that she saw nothing around her. Her gaze is fixed on the priest who pronounces the words of consecration and with supreme unction raises the sacred Host above his head for the adoration of the faithful. **Mamie shudders. She does not take her eyes from the white Bread of the angels.** Afterwards, when the priest makes the genuflection in adoration, she, with her crucifix in her hands, without leaning on the bench, makes a deep bow of reverence from her kneeling position. **The adoration is exceedingly profound.**

Then immediately follow the words of consecration over the chalice, as the priest raised it up, Mamie's face trembles with emotion. Two big tears spring from her eyes and then more. Mamie was crying.

I followed the whole ceremony by her side in deep recollection, because I knew that I was in the presence of a mysterious relationship between her and the Lord.

She told me that when the priest raised the chalice for adoration, it was filled with blood that spilled over on to the altar. She told me that it was the Blood of Jesus Christ which also signified the martyrdom that many or those present would have to undergo. This did not mean-I suppose, and I commented along these lines with her-only those who were physically present, but also those who participated in the same ideal. Wherever they were.

It is certain that there can be no saints without the Eucharist. But to celebrate the Eucharist means to participate in the destiny of the Saint of all saints: martyrdom.

In a few simple lines I cannot possibly exhaust Mamie's intense eucharistic life. This simple sketch that I have just given is to help you, dear reader, intensely to live your relationship with Jesus Christ present in the Eucharist.

**(Father Rafael Alonso Reymundo, Home of the Mother
101 July – August 2001)**

THE EUCHARIST: A FORETASTE of HEAVEN

Every time we celebrate the Eucharist we reach out for heaven. At the end of every preface at Mass, "we join the angels and the saints as they sing their unending hymn of praise." In Eucharistic Prayer I we pray that God's angel may take our sacrifice to his altar in heaven. In Eucharistic Prayer III we pray that Christ will "enable us to share in the inheritance of God's saints." Elsewhere the Church's liturgy speaks of the Eucharist as a pledge (or foretaste) of the glory to come (i.e., of heaven).

WHAT IS HEAVEN, ANYWAY?

To understand the connection of the Eucharist with heaven, we have to have a clear concept of what heaven is. It is an important element in our faith, but it seems to mean different things to different people. For many, heaven suggests harps and little angels and lots of singing, and is a place which, on reflection, is not particularly attractive. Some wonder if it might not turn out to be rather boring.

For those of a more religious cast of mind, heaven is the dwelling place of God and the angels, where all those who are redeemed will ultimately receive their eternal reward. Virtuous people can look forward to "going to heaven."

In the New Testament, several images speak of the ultimate happiness that we associate with heaven. Jesus speaks of the kingdom of heaven (Matthew 4:17), of seeing God (Matthew 5:8) and of entering into the joy of the Lord (Matthew 25:21-23). The Letter to the Hebrews promises Christians that they will enter into God's rest (4:9-11).

Theologians over the centuries have reflected on what revelation has taught us about "Heaven." They see it

as a state of ultimate, final and full happiness. This does not mean numberless ice-cream cones and puppy dogs, but rather the healthy and permanent satisfaction of our deepest needs. Because only God can fully satisfy all human needs, final happiness necessarily involves communion or togetherness with God.

FINAL STAGE of NEARNESS

Heaven is not so much a place where God puts good people as it is a state, a situation in which those who know and love God and share his life through grace reach the final stage of nearness to him. In heaven God gives himself to the beloved in the fullest and most definitive way. (Similarly, hell is not a place where God puts bad people. Hell is a state in which people are unable to accept and enjoy the only thing that remains for them after this earthly life: the love and respect of God.)

There is a social dimension to heaven, too. Primarily there is the presence of the Trinity. By God's grace the citizens of heaven share in the knowledge and love of Father, Son and Holy Spirit. But there is also the loving community of the blessed in Heaven with each other. Just as God's goodness and generosity were expressed for us on earth through the women and men whose lives touched ours, so also those in Heaven find joy and fulfillment in knowing and being with others who are enjoying the presence of God.

Occasionally we experience little *hors d'oeuvres* for heaven in our earthly life, experiences that give us some idea of what final and full happiness must be like. The extended experience of love that is part of marriage or friendship reflects the lasting relationship with God that will be the cornerstone of our Heavenly happiness. The sense of awe that we feel sometimes at sunrise or sunset or in great music is something like what our awareness of God in heaven will evoke in us. What we feel at the end of a memorable liturgical occasion—where everybody has been singing and praying together, sharing the joy of being in the company of the risen Christ—is a sample, though provisional and pale, of what we can expect from heaven.

But the most persistent, recurrent and habitual foretaste of Heaven that God has provided for us is the Eucharist.

The Eucharist is both *sacrament* and *sacrifice*, an encounter with Christ that we experience and an action of his that becomes present for us. Both aspects

of the Eucharist have profound resonances with the realities of heaven.

EUCHARIST: SACRAMENT

The Eucharist as sacrament is a personal encounter with the risen Christ that comes about through our reception of Jesus, body and blood, soul and divinity, under the appearance of bread and wine. It's important to remember that our reception of Jesus Christ in the sacrament of the Eucharist is not just a matter of his being with us for a few minutes after we receive Communion, as if he were dropping in for a little visit. The reception of the Eucharist is a dynamic event that has several purposes and several effects, each of which also has a dimension that connects us with heaven.

First of all, Holy Communion increases and energizes and strengthens the life of Christ in us. Our whole relationship with God depends on the life of Christ in us, on what we call grace. Without grace, we are out of touch with God, on our own to sink or swim as best we can with energies and capabilities that are simply insufficient for the challenges we face. Moreover, grace is what qualifies us for heaven, what makes us capable of the contact with God that provides our eternal happiness. The food of the Eucharist is a source of life and energy for our spirits just as material food is a source of life and energy for our bodies. It makes us grow in grace and thus grow in our aptitude for heaven.

Secondly, since this life of Christ in us is a relationship, it is capable of growth and development, just as any friendship is. Each time we receive Holy Communion, we deepen our friendship with the risen Christ. We increase our resistance to everything that would keep us apart from Christ. In this way, too, we become more qualified to participate in the joy and fulfillment of heaven.

Next, because the Eucharist unites us more closely to Christ, it also unites us more closely to all those who are at one with him. The Eucharist is the one bread that makes us all into one body, the Body of Christ which is the Church. This is the Body that will take its final form in heaven, when all those who shared the life of Christ will be together with him forever. The deeper our participation in the Church, the deeper will be our sharing in the life of heaven.

Finally, because the life and ministry of Christ and of the Church are extended to all men and women, our increased participation in that life through holy Communion also makes us capable of increased love

and care for our brothers and sisters, especially those in need. Because we are like Christ through faith and the sacraments, we are called to behave like Christ. Because we are members of the Church, we are called to take part in its mission. Behaving in a Christlike way and participating in the Church's mission contribute to our readiness to share the heavenly blessedness God promises us.

But the Eucharist is not just a sacrament. It is also a sacrifice.

EUCHARIST: SACRIFICE

The Eucharist as sacrifice joins us with Jesus' death on the cross. The significance of the cross does not lie in the brutal reality of Christ's suffering and death, as if the Father's justice could be appeased by the painfulness of what his Son experienced. No, the significance of the cross lies in its expression of the love of Christ for his Father, of his faithfulness from the first instant of his human existence. He persisted in love and faithfulness throughout his early, hidden life in Nazareth, throughout the efforts and frustrations of his public ministry, even to the point of accepting death as a criminal rather than backing away from his mission. In his sacrifice of himself on the cross—but also throughout his whole life—he was submitting his human will to that of his heavenly Father. Jesus gave obedience to God to make up for the disobedience of all of humankind. This brought about our redemption. In his faithfulness and love is our salvation.

But his faithfulness and love are not over yet. The self-giving of Jesus, the submission of his human will to the loving will of his heavenly Father, still continues in heaven. It's not as if Jesus had a role to perform in a kind of stage drama and, now that the drama is over, he can take off his makeup and forget about the role. Jesus is still a human being, though with a risen and glorified humanity, and his dedication and obedience and love toward his Father still continue in heaven. Our redemption, our salvation, is still going on because Christ continues to intercede for us, to love us, to express through his human will the obedience of all humankind.

CENTERPIECE

The centerpiece of heaven (at least as concerns its human citizens) is Christ the king and redeemer, now and forever sitting at the right hand of the Father, representing humanity, mediating between us and the Father, offering himself even as he did during his earthly life. He is our way of access to the Father and

the channel through which the Father's love reaches us. We have a claim on heaven because his sacrifice of himself has made up for our sinfulness and has made us like him and continues to do so.

But this centerpiece of heaven, this sacred, eternally ongoing event, is not just something that continues way off outside the realms of earth. It is also an action that is part of our life of faith each day. Whenever the eucharistic sacrifice is celebrated, the sacrifice of Christ is renewed. It is not that Jesus suffers again and dies again another time, but that the faithfulness, love, dedication and obedience that Jesus expressed through his acceptance of death on the cross and now expresses in heaven becomes present to this group of Christian believers, in this place, at this time. The celebration of the Eucharist serves to put the followers of Jesus from every time and place into contact with his one sacrifice. Their needs, their sufferings, their joys, their frustrations, their desires, their successes are now associated with his sacrifice. The life of each believer (and of each group of believers) is changed and deepened and sanctified to the extent that it is associated with the sacrificial life and death of the risen and living Christ, risen from the dead and living in heaven.

The suffering and death of Jesus in time at the end of his earthly life are the core that enables us to understand the meaning of his whole life. Christ's ongoing offering of himself in heaven gives force and validity to human salvation. Our sharing in the sacrifice of Christ through the Eucharist here and now connects us both to his original offering long ago as well as to his ongoing eternal sacrifice in heaven. It is a memorial of the past and a preview of our heavenly future.

The Eucharist, both as sacrament and as sacrifice, orients us toward heaven and makes us ready for it. We can learn what lies in store for us there only to the extent that we are attentive to the Eucharist here.

(by Archbishop Daniel E. Pilarczyk Archbishop of Cincinnati. His most recent book is [Believing Catholic](#))

PRAY the ROSARY!

“For our struggle is not with flesh and blood, but with principalities, with the powers, with the rulers of this present darkness...” Ephesians 6:12

I am convinced of it. There is no doubt about it. My husband and I are raising children in a country that, without God, is going absolutely berserk! I logged

The PILGRIM

onto the Internet this morning. There I read that supermodels are getting \$50,000 to donate their eggs to those in need of one in order to create a baby; and there I faced a survey asking whether, given the choice – we are a country proud of “choices” after all – I would like to purchase the egg of a Nobel prize winner or the egg of a supermodel; or, as a nice “religious” touch, the egg of someone of my “ethnic or religious origin.” Stop the train!

God, how much evil can we take? I almost screamed. Evil has struck our country with a vengeance that is at times overwhelming, alarming, suffocating. And yet, in this surmounting evil, never have I felt the need for, or presence of, our Savior more. For “...where sin increased, grace abounded all the more” (Romans 5:20).

I refuse to be afraid. Jesus commanded us not to be afraid: “Be Not Afraid,” he has repeatedly said since the start of his Pontificate in Saint Peter’s Square. But without Christ, that’s exactly what I’d be! Without Jesus, I’d be drop-dead afraid. And I’d be petrified for our kids! In America, we are fast approaching the point where we could put Sodom and Gomorrah to shame. And we all know what God did with them!

And there in the midst of our hedonistic culture is Mary: our ever-present Mother, the Mother of all mankind, the Mother of every aborted child, the Mother of every mother who is in need of a mother herself. There is Mary, with her pure and immaculate heart, offering her consolation, her protection, to those who faithfully say her simple prayer of the Rosary. She has come from heaven down to earth many times asking that we “Pray the Rosary. “ On October 13, 1917, at Fatima, a crowd of 70,000 people saw God’s miracle of the sun spinning, plummeting towards the earth, hovering at the treetops, then going back into the heavens. During this “Miracle of the Sun,” Mary spoke important messages to the children of Fatima: “Pray the Rosary” she asked; ever-warning of chastisement if we failed to stop the sin by which our Heavenly Father was so much offended.

It is our own Pope John Paul II who said, in [Crossing the Threshold of Hope](#) that: “...if victory comes it will be brought by Mary. Christ will conquer through her, because He wants the Church’s victories now and in the future to be linked to her. “

The Rosary is not just a way to peace and conversion of heart. The Rosary is not just a way to grow closer

to Jesus, and our Heavenly Father. The Rosary is not just a way to better understand Scripture, our own sinfulness and the redemption of Christ. The Rosary is a weapon. It is a weapon that makes the enemy squirm, with both hands chained behind his back. Spiritual wars cannot be won by anything but spiritual means. "Pray the Rosary," our loving, ever-protective, ever-watchful Mother whispers in the small, still silence of our souls; time and time again.

As the curtain on this century draws to a close, may be all take from our drawers, the tiny beads which may have too-long-ago been sentimentally tucked away. May we, as Catholics, as individuals, as families, as groups, at last join in this prayer meant to unite the Church and crush Satan. May we all stop, and take the time, make the time, to "Pray the Rosary," as our Mother in heaven has so gently, yet so urgently, asked us to do. And through this simple prayer, as we say "yes" to the Mother who so eagerly said "yes" to God, may the next millennium truly usher in a new springtime of grace, healing and evangelization; a springtime of peace, hope and love, which, until now, the world has never known.

(by **Mary Anne Moresco**)

ON-LINE CALENDAR and ROSARY

How often have you wanted to find a copy of last Sunday's readings or today's liturgy?

While surfing the Internet or Web we found a lot of neat stuff from the following index.

<http://www.easterbrooks.com/personal/calendar/index.html>

This included an on-line Rosary: <http://www.easterbrooks.com/personal/calendar/rosary.html>

INVOKE the GREAT SAINT MICHAEL the ARCHANGEL

Dear Saint Michael, your name means, "Who is like God?" and it indicates that you remained faithful when others rebelled against God.

Help police officers in our day who strive to stem the rebellion and evil that are rampant on all sides. Keep

them faithful to their God as well as to their country and their fellow human beings. Amen.

God, with great wisdom You direct the ministry of Angels and men. Grant that those who always minister to You in heaven may defend us during our life on earth. Amen.

FOR PROTECTION AGAINST EVIL and DANGER

Dear Saint Michael, the Archangel, protect us, both body and soul from the Evil One, his followers and anyone who would approach us with malicious intent.

Protect us, our bodies, and our cars, as we travel about in our daily activities.

Protect us, our bodies, our home, our property and possessions during times of storm, from all dangers of lightning, high winds, hail and flood waters. Amen.

CHAPLET of SAINT MICHAEL

O God, come to my assistance. O Lord, make haste to help me. Glory be to the Father, etc.

(Say one Our Father and three Hail Mary's after each of the following nine salutations in honor of the nine Choirs of Angels)

1. By the intercession of Saint Michael and the celestial Choir of Seraphim may the Lord make us worthy to burn with the fire of perfect charity. Amen.

2. By the intercession of Saint Michael and the celestial Choir of Cherubim may the Lord grant us the grace to leave the ways of sin and run in the paths of Christian perfection. Amen.

3. By the intercession of Saint Michael and the celestial Choir of Thrones may the Lord infuse into our hearts a true and sincere spirit of humility. Amen.

4. By the intercession of Saint Michael and the celestial Choir of Dominions may the Lord give us grace to govern our senses and overcome any unruly passions. Amen.

5. By the intercession of Saint Michael and the celestial Choir of Powers may the Lord protect our souls against the snares and temptations of the devil. Amen.

6. By the intercession of Saint Michael and the celestial Choir of Virtues may the Lord preserve us from evil and falling into temptation. Amen.

7. By the intercession of Saint Michael and the celestial Choir of Principalities may God fill our souls with a true spirit of obedience. Amen.

8. By the intercession of Saint Michael and the celestial Choir of Archangels may the Lord give us perseverance in faith and in all good works in order that we may attain the glory of Heaven. Amen.

9. By the intercession of Saint Michael and the celestial Choir of Angels may the Lord grant us to be protected by them in this mortal life and conducted in the life to come to Heaven. Amen.

Say one Our Father in honor of each of the following leading Angels: Saint Michael, Saint Gabriel, Saint Raphael and our Guardian Angel.

Concluding prayers

O glorious prince Saint Michael, chief and commander of the heavenly hosts, guardian of souls, vanquisher of rebel spirits, servant in the house of the Divine King and our admirable conductor, you who shine with excellence and superhuman virtue deliver us from all evil, who turn to you with confidence and enable us by your gracious protection to serve God more and more faithfully every day.

Pray for us, O glorious Saint Michael, Prince of the Church of Jesus Christ, that we may be made worthy of His promises.

Almighty and Everlasting God, Who, by a prodigy of goodness and a merciful desire for the salvation of all men, has appointed the most glorious Archangel Saint Michael Prince of Your Church, make us worthy, we ask You, to be delivered from all our enemies, that none of them may harass us at the hour of death, but that we may be conducted by him into Your Presence. This we ask through the merits of Jesus Christ Our Lord. Amen.

A POWERFUL PRAYER AGAINST EVIL

(make the Sign of the Cross when you see the symbol)

Most glorious Prince of the Heavenly Armies, Saint Michael the Archangel, defend us in "our battle against principalities and powers, against the rulers of this world of darkness, against the spirits of wickedness in the high places". Come to the assistance of men whom God has created to His likeness and whom He has redeemed at a great price from the tyranny of the devil. Holy Church venerates thee as her guardian and protector; to thee, the Lord has

entrusted the souls of the redeemed to be led into heaven. Pray therefore the God of Peace to crush Satan beneath our feet, that he may no longer retain men captive and do injury to the Church. Offer our prayers to the Most High, that without delay they may draw His mercy down upon us; take hold of "the dragon, the old serpent, which is the devil and Satan." bind him and cast him into the bottomless pit " so that he may no longer seduce the nations."

PRAYER of EXORCISM

In the name of Jesus Christ, our God and Lord, strengthened by the intercession of the Immaculate Virgin Mary, Mother of God, of Blessed Michael the Archangel, of the Blessed Apostles Peter and Paul and all the Saints, we confidently undertake to repulse the attacks and deceits of the devil.

Psalm 67: God arises; His enemies are scattered and those who hate Him flee before Him.

As smoke is driven away, so are they driven; as wax melts before the fire, so the wicked perish at the presence of God.

Behold the Cross of the Lord, flee bands of enemies.

He has conquered, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the offspring of David.

May thy mercy, Lord, descend upon us.

We drive you from us, whoever you may be, unclean spirits, all satanic powers, all infernal invaders, all wicked legions, assemblies and sects; in the name and by the power of Our Lord Jesus Christ may you be snatched away and driven from the Church of God and from the souls made to the image and likeness of God and redeemed by the Precious Blood of the Divine Lamb.

Most cunning serpent, you shall no more dare to deceive the human race, persecute the Church, torment God's elect and sift them as wheat.

The Most High God commands you, He with whom, in your great insolence, you still claim to be equal; "He who wants all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth".

God the Father commands you. God the Holy Ghost commands you.

Christ, God's word made flesh, commands you

He who came down from heaven to save our race out done through your envy, "humbled Himself, becoming obedient even unto death". He who has built His

Church on the firm rock and declared that the gates of hell shall not prevail against Her, because He will dwell with Her "all days even to the end of the world" The sacred Sign of the Cross commands you, + as does also the power of the mysteries of the Christian Faith.

The Glorious Mother of God, the Virgin Mary, commands you; She who by her humility and from the first moment of her Immaculate Conception, crushed your proud head.

The Faith of the Holy Apostles Peter and Paul and of the other Apostles commands you.

The blood of the Martyrs and the pious intercession of all the saints command you.

Thus, cursed dragon, and you, diabolical legions, we adjure you by the living God, by the true God, by the holy God, by the God, Who so loved the world that He gave up His only son, that every soul believing in Him might not perish, but have life everlasting"; stop deceiving human creatures and pouring out to them the poison of eternal damnation; stop harming the Church and hindering her liberty.

Begone, Satan, inventor and master of all deceit, enemy of man's salvation. Give place to Christ in Whom you have found none of your works; give place to the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church acquitted by Christ at the price of His Blood.

Stoop beneath the all-powerful Hand of God; tremble and flee when we invoke the Holy and terrible Name of Jesus, this Name which caused hell to tremble, this Name to which the Virtues, Powers and Dominations of heaven are humble submissives, this Name which the Cherubim and Seraphim praise unceasingly repeating; "Holy, Holy, Holy, is the Lord, the God of Armies."

V. O Lord, hear my prayer

R/. And let my cry come unto Thee

V. May the Lord be with thee

R/. And with thy spirit.

Let us pray: God of heaven, God of earth, God of Angels, God of Archangels, God of Patriarchs, God of prophets, God of Apostles, God of Martyrs, God of Confessors, God of Virgins, God who has power to give life after death and rest after work, because there is no other God than Thee and there can be no other, for Thou art the Creator of all things, visible and invisible, of whose reign there shall be no end, we humbly prostrate ourselves before Thy glorious

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Majesty and we beseech thee to deliver us by Thy power from all the tyranny of the infernal spirits, from their snares, their lies and their furious wickedness; deign, O lord, to grant us thy powerful protection and to keep us safe and sound. We beseech Thee through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

From the snares of the devil, deliver us, O Lord.

That Thy Church may serve Thee in peace and liberty, we beseech Thee to hear us.

That Thou may crush down all enemies of Thy Church, we beseech Thee to hear us.

St Michael, the Archangel, defend us in battle. Be our protection against the wickedness and snares of the devil. May God rebuke him, we humbly pray. And do thou, O Prince of the Heavenly Hosts, by the power of God, cast into hell Satan and all his evil spirits that roam about the world seeking the ruin of souls. Amen.

(Praycard Publications)

VOCATIONS DEPARTMENT

HOW VOCATIONS HAPPEN

Y oung people today have to deal with the secularization of our society and a culture that's counter to so many of the values of Jesus. They have to wend their way through this maze if they are to hear the voice of Christ above all the din that surrounds them and make some decisions about their faith.

I'm finding an increasing number of young people who are searching for religious values. They are hungry for spirituality. They have opened up to a call from many voices at the parish level, school level, and in youth ministry. We have many more youngsters now doing weekend retreats. We're blessed here to have 17 Catholic high schools. The vocation's office runs summer camps for the sixth—through eighth grade boys. The lay group, Pro Sanctity Movement, has Camp Fun and Faith for the girls. So we are in contact with a lot of our young people, and we are constantly promoting vocations.

They are more open to vocations now than young people were 10 or 15 years ago. They can hear the voice of the Lord calling them. Then they will respond—provided they have support in their journey of faith from the Catholic community and their own peer group.

Then, you just have to ask them, “What is the Lord saying to you? What does He want you to do with your life?” If you ask that question, and make sure that it’s presented in different ways and from different segments of the Church, then I think they are going to hear it.

So, despite the secularity, young people have a hunger for the Lord. A lot to them have been influenced by Pope John Paul II in these marvelous World Youth Day gatherings he’s conducted around the world. He tells them, “Be not afraid! Respond to Jesus. Live the values of Jesus.” They hear that. He’s a hero to them.

Despite the culture in which we live, I think there’s a positive climate for discipleship and for vocations among young people. In my opinion, there are as many vocations—proportionally—today to the priesthood and consecrated life as there were in past centuries. The Lord continues to call.

But you have to help people with vocations and encourage them. When they run into people they think may be called they have to support that call.

There’s no shortage of vocations to the priesthood and religious life in the Church. If there is a shortage of them then there’s something wrong in that community, something that isn’t happening. It means either that people are not really serious about praying for vocations or that vocations are not being supported, encouraged, nurtured, and brought along. It means that the local church isn’t together, that people aren’t in unity with the Holy Father and with the magisterial teaching of the Church. It means that the basic orthodoxy of the Church isn’t promoted and supported.

There’s no shortage of vocations. Sometimes there is a shortage of people *encouraging* vocations.

SEVEN SIGNS of a VOCATION

- You find yourself drawn to the Eucharist and enjoy its celebration.
- You find the Lord calling you to a deeper walk with Him, to a deeper spirituality.
- You find yourself enjoying prayer and enjoying coming together with others for prayer.
- You are attracted to your parish and parish life and drawn to participate in retreats and missions.
- You get satisfaction from being involved in various kinds of outreach ministries and have a

willingness to help the poor and people who need support and help.

- You respond when people say to you such things as, “Have you ever thought about being a priest?” Or, “Have you thought about living a consecrated life?” Or, Do you believe those who may tell you, ‘You have some great gifts for the Church, you love people, and are willing to serve them?’
- You think about service to others for a lifetime in a supporting, loving community.

It’s a combination of signs. But there are a lot that need to be identified, and somebody has to do that. Most people respond to a vocation because they are called by somebody. Somebody helps identify the call.

FRUITS for the FAMILY

The foundation of all vocations is prayer—people praying together and encouraging families to do so. It is really essential that there be prayer in the home, that parents be anxious for vocations, and the families attend the Eucharist together on the weekend. Together, these reinforce the faith of their children.

One of the problems today is smaller families. As a result, parents are more reluctant now to encourage vocations because they want grandkids. To them you have to say that the Church depends of priest. Without priest you cannot have the Eucharist. The call to the priesthood is a very important part of Catholic life, and you have to support that. If you don’t then you have a death wish for the Church and for the sacraments of the Church. Therefore, you have to be clear about the obligation that everyone has to support vocations. You have to encourage parents to be positive about priests and the consecrated life. If parents are negative about their parish priests then the kids pick up on that. Parents also need to pray that one of their children will respond to the call. When parents do then a change begins to take place.

I’m encouraging adoration of the Blessed Sacrament in parishes because we find that when people will spend time with the Eucharistic Presence of our Lord something begins to happen, in the parish and in the homes.

For parents it takes a combination of prayer, response to the invitation of Jesus to be part of his mission, and a positive attitude towards the priesthood and the consecrated life. When that happens, then young people, instead of being discouraged from vocations,

become encouraged and are more willing to seek them out because they have support in that search.

In this there are fruits for the family as well as the Church. The Lord blesses families that are positive about the Church and vocations. Family solidarity is built up, even when young people do not respond to the call to religious vocation. The very effort strengthens a family's spirituality. And these young people end up as more committed Catholics who will form families that are Catholic leaders in the future. As all of them are strengthened, so is the Church.

FOR THOSE CALLED ELSEWHERE

Those who are serious about a call to Catholic married life, a sacramental life, face a lot of public pressure against the permanency of marriage and against having families.

How does the Lord call you to respond to His call and to resist society's pressure?

Centuries ago, Francis de Sales taught that everyone is called to holiness, that whatever your walk in life you have to be people of prayer and people of faith. Holiness is simply God's life in us, a response to the Lord's call—to holiness and to be Eucharistic people. If you receive the Eucharist in faith it's bound to have an effect in you. That effect is the holiness of Christ inside of you.

Everybody is called to a life of holiness. *Everybody*. That means that when you respond to the call of the Lord in your prayer you recognize your union with Him, you find yourself thinking more like Him, and responding to others as He does.

Most Rev. Elden Curtiss, Archbishop of Omaha

NAZARETH HOUSE

A place of discernment and formation for men aspiring to priesthood in the Roman Catholic Church, Nazareth House is located on the campus of Camden Catholic High School in Cherry Hill. The Diocese of Camden has begun a new formation program to help young men investigate whether God is calling them to priestly formation.

The mission of Nazareth House is to assist young men between the ages of 18-35 in the discernment and development of the seeds of a priestly vocation. The staff will provide them with the foundation for seminary theologate formation, through a shared community life of prayer and worship; human, spiritual

and intellectual development; and pastoral service. It now houses the Office of Vocations.

FOR MORE INFORMATION or APPLICATION MATERIALS, CONTACT:

Father Joseph Szolack, szolack@camdendiocese.org,
Director of Vocations, Diocese of Camden,
Nazareth House,
300 Cuthbert Boulevard,
Cherry Hill, NJ 08002
(856) 910-4930 or FAX: (856) 662-8917
or visit: <http://www.beapriest.org>

SUPPORT ETERNAL WORD TELEVISION NETWORK (EWTN)

If you enjoy the programming on EWTN Radio and Television, please send in regular and sacrificial contributions. EWTN Radio can be heard locally on AM 1570 from Doylestown, PA.

For whatever reason, Mother Angelica has had to make special appeals for support. We need to have a healthy and communicating EWTN.

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. See the four-page order form enclosed in past issues or loaded on the Internet Web Site, <http://www.geocities.com/pilgrimsfaith>, for a partial listing of items that can be obtained from the PFMC through donations. If you wish to order, please fill out your order request, make out a check or complete the information for use of a credit card and mail to PFMC, 61 Cooper Road, Voorhees, NJ 08043-4896.

If you do not have an order form, call us at 856-768-9228 with a FAX number or mailing address and we will send you an order form. If you know what you want and we carry it, you can order over the telephone using your credit card. We take DISCOVER (NOVUS), MASTER CARD (Cirrus) or VISA (PLUS) Charge Cards.

Please come and see the PFMC. We know you will enjoy what you see and find a way of helping out.

Thank you and God bless you,

Kathleen and the Volunteer Staff

DONATIONS by CHARGE CARD ACCEPTED



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

BLESSED OIL

Bottles of oil blessed at Holy Mass in Saint James, Medjugorje and then carried to Vicka's house to be present in the room during an alleged apparition are available from the PFMC. Volunteers transfer the oil to small bottles for you or members of 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. If you no longer have these articles or never received them, you may request copies from the PFMC.

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.

BULLETIN NOTICES for *PFMC* AREA EVENTS

Would you be so kind as to copy or cut out one or more of following BULLETIN NOTICES and take them to your Pastor and / or Parish Bulletin Coordinator? Ask your Pastor and / or Parish Bulletin Coordinator to publish these notices to support the events for which you have an interest. It does wonders when a parishioner asks for a bulletin notice as compared to the thousands of requests that come in from outside the parish.

Thanks for your assistance, we really need and appreciate it.

THURSDAY 2:15 PM to 2:45 PM "Put on the Armor of God" RADIO PROGRAM on WTMR, AM-800

Kathleen and Keith Werner host a weekly program with In His Sign (HIS) Radio Network <http://www.inhissign.com>. This half-hour is sponsored by the Pilgrims of Faith Marian Center (PFMC), A Religious Association, Inc. There is prayer, scripture, discussion of Ephesians 6: 11-17 and, following announcements, call-in time, discussion with callers, healing prayer and summary. The call-in number is 856 962-8178.

JUST MEDJUGORJE with OVERNIGHT in ROME, NOVEMBER 9 to 18, 2001

Kathleen is the Pilgrims of Faith Marian Center (PFMC) Pilgrimage Coordinator for this pilgrimage. Father Joseph Romanoski, Pastor of Sacred Heart Parish in South Amboy, NJ is the Spiritual Director. This is a pilgrimage for those who want the ultimate in spending quiet time just in Medjugorje. The family home and pilgrim house is one block from Saint James Church. You will have an English speaking guide, private transfer bus, and a full spiritual experience. Your 7 days will be spent visiting the visionaries, daily Holy Mass, Confessions, climbing Apparition Hill, and climbing Cross Mountain. Because this is the more quiet time of the year in Medjugorje, you will find plenty of time to spend in quiet meditation, and enjoy the presence of Our Lady.

We will fly on Alitalia to and from Rome, Italy, and transfer to Croatia Air to and from Split or Dubrovnik, Croatia. Transfer to Medjugorje, Bosnia-Herzegovina is by guided motor coach. On return we hope to fly out of Dubrovnik on November 17 and spend the night in Rome. Supper will be in a local restaurant near the hotel.

COST: \$1499 (Double Occupancy) INCLUSIVE.
All taxes, both Croatian and Italian, are included.

Call 856-768-9228 for an information sheet with reservation forms.

2002 RETREAT CONFERENCE

The Pilgrims of Faith Marian Center (PFMC) has moved its 2002 RETREAT CONFERENCE (2002 RC) to the Hilton Hotel, Cherry Hill, NJ.

The 2000 RC theme is "I HAVE LOVED YOU WITH AN EVERLASTING LOVE" (Jeremiah 31:3).

Father John Hampsch, C.M.F. and Father Robert DeGrandis, S.S.J. so enjoyed working together with us that they have already agreed to work together to give us a dynamic 2002 RC. They will speak on "Healing and Suffering in our Faith."

The featured speaker on Saturday night will be Michael H. Brown; author of "Final Hour" "Trumpet of Gabriel" and many other exceptionally well researched books on the signs of the times.

Father Michael Semana, founder of the World of Hope Foundation, will return for a concert Saturday evening as well as his very generous work with the youth and young adults in the Youth Track (YT).

The dates are Friday through Sunday, March 8th, 9th, and 10th, 2002, with a 3-Day Extension (3DX) on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday, March 11th, 12th, and 13th, 2002. The Metuchen Diocese Charismatic Music Group "REFUGE" will be back to provide the weekend music. Al Barbarino has agreed to EMCEE for the Weekend and to provide background music for the 3DX. Other musicians including "VOYAGE" and Devin Riley have been invited.

Father Robert DeGrandis and his sister Dorothea DeGrandis Sudol will share the seminars and workshops of the 3DX on "Healing of Memories - Inner Healing."

Rooms may be booked at the \$89 rate for both the 2002 RC and 3DX as well as up to 7 days before or after the events. This rate and availability of additional rooms expires on 2/8/2002.

The regular room rate is currently \$119 per room per night and will probably go up by March of 2002.

For Hotel reservations please call NOW: 1-800-HILTONS or locally 856-665-6666.

Call 856-768-9228 for an information sheet with reservation forms.

Kathleen as well as all the PPMC Volunteer Staff

RETREATS for HEALING the AFTERMATH of an ABORTION

If you are suffering from the aftermath of an abortion, experience the healing love of Jesus on a Rachel's Vineyard Retreat on the weekend of October 12, 13, and 14, 2001. This retreat is held in Darby, Pennsylvania, which is located just outside of Philadelphia.

For more information, visit www.rachelsvineyard.org or call Mary Alice toll free at 1-877-HOPE 4. All requests are strictly confidential.

PRESS BULLETIN 166, 9/26/2001

BLESSING

The notion of blessing is one of the oldest notions we can find in the history and the practice of religious life.

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God blesses Adam and Eve; he blesses the seventh day (Genesis 1,28; 2,3); Noah receives God's blessing (Genesis 9,1) and the history of salvation begins in fact with the blessing, which Abraham receives from God (Genesis 9,1).

Aaron's blessing (Numbers 6,22), which will later be spread thanks to Saint Francis, is one of the oldest biblical texts discovered until now. Psalms are filled with blessings, unceasingly blessing God's deeds. Jesus blesses (children, bread and wine, his apostles), he blesses His Father and transmits blessings to his apostles.

In the life of the Church, blessing is very important: it concerns first of all human beings, and then objects. To bless a person always means to pray, that in his or her life the act of salvation may be realized, which has already been accomplished in Christ. Jesus Christ and knowledge of Christ is the greatest blessing of God.

In Our Lady's messages, blessing is mentioned more than 70 times, and concerns for the most part human beings.

Since the most ancient times, the Church also knows the blessing of objects. However, we have to be very vigilant about it, and explain clearly the significance of such a blessing, as well as the significance of objects, which are blessed. According to liturgical and pastoral instructions of the Church, the blessing of objects concerns first and foremost the persons, which make use of them in their quest of God. Blessed objects inspire persons to follow Jesus Christ and to live the Gospel. It is important to keep this in mind, to bless the objects in this spirit, and to use them for this purpose.

Father Ivan Landeka

NUMBER of COMMUNIONS and NUMBER of CONCELEBRANTS

During the month of August, 180,000 received Holy Communion and 4,490 priests from the country and from abroad concelebrated Holy Mass in Medjugorje. Pilgrims included:

MONSIGNOR ANTOUN HAMID MOURANI, RETIRED MARONITE ARCHBISHOP of DAMASCUS (SYRIA)



August 6 to 13, 2001, Monsignor Antoun Hamid Mourani, retired Maronite Archbishop of Damascus (Syria), came for a private visit to Medjugorje. He arrived with four priests from Lebanon and a group of Lebanese pilgrims.

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MONSIGNOR JEAN-CLAUDE REMBANGA, BISHOP of BAMBARI (CENTRAL AFRICA)



Monsignor Jean-Claude Rembanga, bishop of Bambari (Central Africa) is these days in Medjugorje on private pilgrimage. He joined a group of French pilgrims who came from Paris.

His diocese counts more than 100.000 Catholics spread on more than 173.000 m2. Only 20 priests are at their service. Mgr. Jean-Claude Rembanga came to Medjugorje "to ask Our Lady to help my diocese, according to the will of God".

A BENEDICTINE ABBOT



In the beginning of September, Father Nicolaas de Wolf, a Benedictine monk from Nederland who came seven times to Medjugorje as spiritual councillor of pilgrim groups, came again to Medjugorje.

In his country, he accompanied the friends of Medjugorje who are spreading Our Lady's message of peace. When we asked him why he is coming to Medjugorje, he answered simply: "Because of the Queen of Peace. I believe in the apparitions." When we asked him what Our Lady brings to his country, he answered with a smile: "She is the Queen of Peace!"

ITALIAN BISHOP

Monsignor Mario Cecchini, Bishop of Fano (Ancona, Italy), extraordinary professor at the Lateran Pontifical University in Rome, spent two days in private visit in Medjugorje. On the feast of the Assumption of Mary, he presided Holy Mass in Italian language.

During his stay in Medjugorje, Monsignor Cecchini spent many hours in the confessional, at the service of

Italian speaking pilgrims, and left the shrine with very positive impressions.



A MARBLE STATUE of the QUEEN of PEACE on APPARITION HILL

On the feast of the Nativity of the Virgin Mary, September 8th 2001, after the prayer of the Rosary with parishioners and pilgrims, the statue of the Queen of Peace was inaugurated and blessed on the Apparition Hill. The

1.6 meter high white marble statue is a work of Dino
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Felici from Avenza-Carrara (Italy). The same artist sculpted in 1987 the statue of the Queen of Peace, which was placed in front of the parish church.

The statue placed on the Apparition Hill is a gift of



South Korean pilgrims who wanted to express their gratitude for all the graces receives through Our Lady's intercession.

All the preparatory works for the putting

up of the statue of the Queen of Peace were done by the inhabitants of Bijakovici.

FEAST of the EXALTATION of the HOLY CROSS

On the feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross, celebrated in Medjugorje on first Sunday after the feast of the Nativity of the Virgin Mary, thousands of pilgrims from Croatian regions and from abroad gathered in the Shrine of the Queen of Peace.



As a visible sign of the eternal light shining from the Cross, the whole week before the feast, the cross on Krizevac was illuminated, reminding of its significance and preparing parishioners and pilgrims for this feast. 50 priests concelebrated the solemn Holy Mass on Krizevac, presided by Father Mika Stojic, parish priest from Citluk.

For those who could not climb the Krizevac, there was a solemn Holy Mass celebrated in the parish church at 12 am. It was presided by Father Svetozar Kraljevic and concelebrated by more than 40 priests.

The evening Holy Mass, celebrated at the outside altar and concelebrated by 55 priests, was presided by Father Ljubo Kurtovic.



A NEW PARISH PRIEST for MEDJUGORJE

Father Ivan Sesar, who took over the parish in August 2000, has been elected Vicar of the Franciscan province of the Assumption of Mary. The government

of the Hercegovinian Franciscan Province decided to set him free of parish responsibilities and to entrust to him other duties, vital for the Province. Father Ivan will also be in charge of the education of young candidates to Franciscan life.

Father Miljenko Stojic, former director of the Information Centre “Mir” Medjugorje, has been appointed secretary of the Franciscan Province. The new Director of the Information Center is Father Mario Knezovic, born on November 3, 1973. In 2000/2001, he was parish administrator in the parish of Saint Peter and Paul in Mostar.



The new Parish Priest of Medjugorje is Father Branko Radoš. He was born on March 28, 1967 in Crvenice, Tomislavgrad. He attained his baccalaureate in the Franciscan classical lyceum in Visoko. He received the Franciscan habit in 1986 in Humac. He studied theology in Sarajevo, Zagreb and Graz (Austria). He was ordained priest on July 10, 1994. He served as Parish Vicar in Široki Brijeg for four years. Since August 1998, he serves in the parish of Medjugorje. In June 2001, he was elected to the Council of the Hercegovinian Franciscan Province.



The Government of the Province has decided that Father Drago Vujevic, born on March 1st, 1970, who spent his year of deaconate in Medjugorje, remains in the parish as vicar. Father Drago was ordained priest on June 29th, 2001.

We thank all the priests who are leaving for all the good they have done, and wish a hearty welcome to those who arrive, including them in our prayers.

OUR CONDOLENCES

Deeply affected by great disorders and tragic events we offer our sympathies to all our pilgrims from USA and to all American citizens.

In our prayers in Medjugorje we ask for the intercession of Queen of Peace so that the Peace of Jesus Christ may enter in every heart and in the entire world.

We pray that the Love of God heal all wounds, console the sorrowful and accept all deceased innocent victims into everlasting peace.

PRAYER PROGRAMME at the SHRINE

Beginning with Monday, September 10th, 2001, the prayer of the Rosary in the Parish church will begin at 5 PM, and Holy Mass at 6 PM. Eucharistic adoration on Wednesday and Saturday will begin at 9 PM. Rosary on the Apparition Hill and the Way of the Cross on the Krizevac will begin at 3 PM.

<http://www.medjugorje.hr/ulazakenstipe.htm>

REFLECTION on the MESSAGE of 9/25/01

Today, the whole world is in a big crisis: economical, material, social, and especially political. Our Lady knows it, and as a true mother, she takes care of her children. She wants our good, and this is why – in the last message – she calls us to pray for peace.

Prayer is one of the principal messages of Our Lady, so often repeated, because through prayer, man decides for God and puts God in the centre of his life. Our Lady repeats it so often for only one reason: we have not yet completely answered to her call to conversion, to peace and to prayer. Prayer prepares man to open up to God and to allow the Holy Spirit to act in him. This is the first condition for building new heavens and new earth, where peace will reign.

The message of peace resounds strongly from Medjugorje, stronger then from any other place in the world, and with a voice stronger than other voices. This peace is incomparably richer than any other peace, because its substance is God Himself. It touches the root of the heart of man and permeates the whole person. Peace, which has not germinated in the heart of man, cannot germinate anywhere. The same: peace, which has not its root in God, cannot exist.

“Who prays is not afraid of evil and has no hatred in the heart” – says Our Lady to all of us. Her voice is stronger than the strength of the strong and the weakness of the weak. By the power of her voice have fallen many walls of Jericho, which encircled this world. Let us answer to her call of love, in order to become participants in the creation of new heavens and new earth, where the place of honour shall belong to the sons and daughters of God, to those who belong totally to God and who are totally consecrated to Him.

**Fra Danko Perutina,
Medjugorje, September 26, 2001**

CALENDARS:

In *October*, the Church celebrates the Feasts of *Saint Luke, Evangelist (18)* and the Memorials of *Saints Thérèse of the Child Jesus (1), Francis of Assisi (4), Bruno (6), John Leonardi (9), Denis and Companions (9), Teresa of Jesus (15), Hedwig (16), Margaret Mary Alacoque (16), Ignatius of Antioch (17), Isaac Jogues, John de Brébeuf and Companions (19), Paul of the Cross (20), John of Capistrano (23), Anthony Mary Claret (24)* as well as *The Guardian Angels (2)* and *Blessed Marie-Rose Durocher (6)*. Church calendars show **Columbus Day (8)**.

In *November*, the Church celebrates the Solemnities of *ALL SAINTS (1), ALL SOULS (2), CHRIST the KING (22)*, the Feasts of the *Dedication of Saint John Lateran Basilica in Rome (9)* and *Saint Andrew the Apostle (30)*, and Memorials of *Saints Martin de Porres (3), Pope Leo the Great (10), Josaphat (12), Frances Xavier Cabrini (13), Albert the Great (15), Gertrude the Great (16), Margaret of Scotland (16), Elizabeth of Hungary (17), Rose Philippine Duchesne (18), Cecilia (22), Columban (23), Pope Clement I (23), Andrew Dung-Lac and Companions (24)* as well as *Blessed Miguel Augustin Pro (23)*, and the *Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary (21)*. Church calendars recognize **Veterans Day (12 [observed])** and **Thanksgiving Day (22)**.

AROUND the PFMC AREA

Please review the announcement on page 11 and the Bulletin Notices on pages 24 and 25. We need help in getting information into your Parish Bulletin.

For additional information, call the PFMC at (856) 768-9228. Please leave your area code with your

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phone number so that we may return your call. You may FAX your questions to (856)-768-9428.

PFMC PRESENTATIONS

Kathleen and Keith desire to participate in Altar Rosary Society, Legion of Mary, or other parish prayer group meetings with witness, and/or videotape or slide presentations, followed by a question and answer session. The experiences and continuation of the PFMC ministries for Our Lady in this time of manifestation of Our Lord's mercy and graces are shared at is no cost. Free will offerings are accepted. This is especially true for books, tapes, and religious articles, when they are made available in displays at the presentation sites just like they are at the PFMC which operates like a church book rack. Recipients are asked to donate at or above the suggested value on each article. Call the PFMC at (856) 768-9228.

INTERNET

Surf for the PFMC presence on the Internet at:

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

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

Send us interesting web sites and e-mails:

PFMCkmw@home.com

