



The PILGRIM

Vol. 12, No. 6 Pilgrims of Faith Marian Center (PFMC)

June 2001

MESSAGE of 5/25/2001

Dear Children! At this time of grace, I call you to prayer. Little children, you work much but without God's blessing. Bless and seek the wisdom of the Holy Spirit to lead you at this time so that you may comprehend and live in the grace of this time. Convert, little children, and kneel in the silence of your hearts. Put God in the center of your being so that, in that way, you can witness in joy the beauty that God continually gives in your life. Thank you for having responded to my call.

(A copy of a message claimed to be given by the Blessed Virgin Mary to Marija Pavlovic Lunetti on May 25, 2001. The Pilgrims of Faith Marian Center (PFMC) upholds the final decision of the Catholic Church as to the authenticity of this Medjugorje message.)

A PRAYER



O Lord, You are the Fountain of Mercy, the Christ, King of Glory and Co eternal with the Father. You have conquered death and opened for us the Heavenly realms. You are the judge to come.

Wash away our impurities - our persistent and repetitious sins. Grant us a fervent and pure confession with complete reparation for our sins. We so desire to do what is right and what will be meritorious for us.

Give us the grace to act without impulse, and to not turn from those things we think are burdensome. Give us the gift of perseverance.

Our hope is in You, O Lord, and we praise Your Holy name now and forever. AMEN.

(Kathleen prays from the heart for each issue.)

PRE-PILGRIMAGE GATHERING

Those going on the July pilgrimage to Lourdes and their loved ones will gather about 1 PM at the Epiphany House of the Pilgrims of Faith Marian Center (PFMC) on Sunday, 1 July 2001. This gathering is to share additional information about the pilgrimage and to allow pilgrims to meet each other.

A pot-luck picnic atmosphere is supported by each

pilgrim bringing a favorite food (bucket of chicken) or casserole or salad or desert to share along with meat to grill if desired. The PFMC will provide soft drinks, paper products and condiments.

Last minute sign up for this pilgrimage is still possible with full payment pending seat availability on the flights. Call Kathleen at 856 768-9228

PFMC ANNUAL MEETING and POT-LUCK PICNIC / COOKOUT

We will have the annual corporate meeting required in the PFMC by laws on the first Sunday in August. In the year 2001, this falls on the August 5th. This is a significant date to many of us who have followed Marian apparitions. Our Lady has told many visionaries that August 5th is her birthday. She also gave the request for the building of Saint Mary Major Basilica in Rome with a promise that on this date there would be by snow on the site that day. She apparently convinced her Son, Jesus, to honor her in this way with a miracle that day.

We will not have snow at 61 Cooper but we will have another of our great pot luck picnics / cookouts. Come and see the new addition to Epiphany House. Enjoy the facilities and camaraderie with other members of the PFMC. Bring pictures and albums to share and rekindle pilgrimage memories.

Divine Mercy and Rosary in the side lawn starting at 3 PM. The grills will be hot from NOON until ?

Bring the family, friends and neighbors.

"The PILGRIM" for June 2001 is dedicated to "Mary, Rose of Charity." See page 3 for Table of Contents / "IN THIS ISSUE . . ."

WEEKEND of PRAYER with WORKSHOPS on INTERCESSORY and CONTEMPLATIVE PRAYER



In our busy lives, we need to “Be still and know that I am God” (Ps. 46:10), to be renewed and refreshed in the Lord, to rest in Him, and to receive Him as Our Lady did! Jesus tells his apostles in Mark 6:31, “Come by yourselves to an out-of-the-way place and rest awhile”. And He says this to us as well: Am I experiencing God's love for me in my prayer? Am I learning to listen for and discern His voice in my life every day? Can I pray the Scriptures and be lifted to higher levels of prayer, to joy, to intimacy with God?

Come and join us for this weekend of prayer and teaching in the comfortable surroundings of the Upper Room at the PFMC Epiphany House.

DATES: Saturday, September 15, 2001 and Sunday September 16, 2001

TIME: 8:30 AM – 4:30 PM each day.

The donation for the retreat is \$35 per person and includes light lunch and refreshments for both days.

Saturday or Sunday Only: \$20 per person.

Husband and Wife: \$55 per couple.

Bring your Bible and a notebook. Come with an open heart to receive THE MORE that God wants you to have. There will be workshops, teaching, silence, prayer, and sharing.

We have invited a good friend, Jean O'Neil, to facilitate this very special prayer weekend. Jean is experienced in intercessory and contemplative prayer. She has facilitated many workshops and weekends of prayer. She is an excellent teacher. Jean brings much to bear from her years of prayer and study in the “deserts of life.”

Please PRE-REGISTER in advance with a check by mail or call us at 856-768-9228, Monday through Friday, 11 AM – 4 PM, for Visa, MasterCard, or Discover credit card registration.

JULY and AUGUST ISSUE of “The PILGRIM” COMBINED

The June Anniversary messages and July messages will appear in a combined July and August issue of “The PILGRIM” to be worked during the first and second week of August 2001. Please mark your calendar with significant dates from this issue as you will not have a reminder in July.

“DEFENDING YOUR FAITH” RETURNS in OCTOBER

The summer brings our “Defending Your Faith” program to a rest. De an Pulcini has promised to return again in the fall beginning Wednesday, October 10, 2001. We cannot thank him enough for the profound teachings he has shared with us this year.

If you are interested in joining us this fall, please mark your Wednesdays starting October 10, 2001 to come to the Upper Room of Epiphany House, 61 Cooper Road, Voorhees, NJ 08043.

Please consider a love offering of \$5 per night to cover PFMC expenses. However, no one will ever be turned away if they cannot afford an offering. Please come, you will never regret it and you will become a better and stronger person in Christ and His Church.

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

PILGRIMAGE to MEDJUGORJE - NOVEMBER 9 through 19, 2001

Keith and Kathleen will be the coordinators on this very spiritual and meditative pilgrimage to Medjugorje. Father Joseph Romanoski, Pastor of Sacred Heart Parish in South Amboy, NJ will be the Spiritual Director. The pilgrimage cost is \$1499. Final names will be needed by September 1, 2001. Please call us for information and reservations.

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.

CONTINUE to RECEIVE “*The PILGRIM*”

Your name and address and phone on the enclosed slip. Put in your petitions to be carried on pilgrimage this summer. “The PILGRIM” is expensive to reproduce and mail. We do not know if you get it unless we hear from you once a year.

Will you consider remembering us with a monthly tithe or donation? It will certainly help with the expenses of printing and mailing “The PILGRIM” as well as PFMC expenses. We thank all those who have sent in donations this year. You make Our Lady’s work possible. God bless you and thank you.

JOIN FATHER HAMPSCH, FATHER DeGRANDIS, and MICHAEL BROWN for the 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 100 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

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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. 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

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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.

NEEDED for the CENTER

We have need of a new or like new rug (any color) approximately 12' wide x 20' long. We also need 1-2 display cases.

If anyone can donate money for these, or knows where we can get these articles, please call Kathleen or Vincent at 856 768-9228.

LANDSCAPE ENGINEER / SITE PLANNER NEEDED

Landscape Engineer / Site Planner needed to draw Lup plans for a 15' x 15' concrete pad with footings for a grotto for a stature of Our Lady. We need help in the submission of side yard zoning permit and construction permit requests to Voorhees Township. We have a 5-foot painted concrete statue of Our Lady of Lourdes already donated and waiting at the concrete statuary. We have a donation for the construction of the grotto. We need to get started on this project and had planned to include it with our plans for a Rosary Garden and Stations of the Cross.

SUPPORT ETERNAL WORD TELEVISION NETWORK (EWTN)

If you enjoy the programming on EWTN, please send in regular and sacrificial contributions.

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

EUCCHARIST and CONFESSION

By sacramentally renewing the redemptive sacrifice, the Eucharist is intended to apply to the men of today the reconciliation achieved once and for all by Christ for mankind of every era. The words that

the priest pronounces at the moment of the consecration of the wine more directly express this efficacy, insofar as they state that the blood of Christ, made present on the altar, was shed for the multitude of men “that sins may be forgiven.” These are *efficacious* words: every Eucharistic consecration obtains an effect of remission of sins for the world and thus contributes to the reconciliation of sinful mankind with God. The sacrifice offered in the Eucharist is not, in fact, a mere sacrifice of praise; *it is an expiatory or “propitiatory” sacrifice*, as the council of Trent declared (DS 1753), since in it is renewed the sacrifice of the cross itself, in which Christ made expiation for everyone and merited the forgiveness of the faults of mankind.

Those who participate in the Eucharistic Sacrifice receive a special grace of forgiveness and reconciliation. Uniting themselves to the offering of Christ, they can more abundantly receive the fruit of the immolation that He made of Himself on the cross.

Nevertheless, the principal fruit of the Eucharistic sacrament is not the remission of sins of those who participate in it. For that purpose another sacrament *has been expressly instituted by Jesus Christ*. After his resurrection, the risen Savior said to his disciples: “Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive men’s sins, they are forgiven them; if you hold them bound, they are held bound” (Jn. 20:22-23). To those to whom He entrusts the priestly ministry He gives the power of forgiving all sins: divine forgiveness will be accorded in the Church by the ministers of the Church. The Eucharist cannot replace the sacrament of forgiveness and reconciliation, which keeps its proper value, while remaining in close connection with the sacrifice of the altar.

Dispositions incompatible with the Eucharist

In the Eucharist there is a special necessity for purity, which Jesus expressly emphasized at the Last Supper. When He began to wash the disciples’ feet, He certainly wanted to give them a lesson in humble service, because with that gesture he responded to the dispute that has arisen among them as to who was the greatest (cf. Lk. 22:24). But while He enlightened them about the way of humility, inviting them by his example to set out courageously on this way, He further intended to make them understand that, for the Eucharistic meal, there was also a purity of heart necessary which only He, the Savior, was able to give. He then acknowledged this purity in the Twelve,

except for one among them: “You are cleansed, though not all” (Jn. 13:10). The one who was preparing to betray Him could not participate in the banquet except with hypocritical sentiments. The evangelist tells us that, from the moment that Judas received the morsel given by Christ, “Satan entered his

Jn. 13:27). *In order to receive into oneself the grace of the Eucharistic food, certain dispositions of soul are required, in the absence of which the meal risks being changed into a betrayal.*

Saint Paul, witness of certain divisions that scandalously emerged during the Eucharistic banquet in Corinth, issued a warning intended for the reflection of not only those faithful, but of many other Christians: “Whoever eats the bread and drinks the cup of the Lord unworthily sins against the body and blood of the Lord. A man should examine himself first; only then should he eat of the bread and drink of the cup. He who eats and drinks without recognizing the body eats and drinks a judgment of himself” (1 Cor. 11:27-29).

Before approaching the Eucharistic table, the Christian is therefore called to examine himself to see if his dispositions permit him to receive communion worthily. Of course, in a certain sense, no one is worthy to receive as nourishment the body of Christ, and those who take part in the Eucharist confess, at the moment of Communion, that they are not worthy to receive the Lord into themselves. But the unworthiness of which Saint Paul speaks means

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something else: it refers to interior dispositions that are incompatible with the Eucharistic banquet, because they are opposed to welcoming Christ.

Frequent Confession

To better assure the faithful about the absence of such negative dispositions, the liturgy provides a penitential preparation at the beginning of the Eucharistic celebration: that participants acknowledge that they are sinners and implore divine forgiveness. Even if they habitually live in the Lord's friendship, they are aware of their faults and imperfections and of their need for divine mercy. They wish to present themselves at the Eucharist with the greatest purity.

This penitential preparation would therefore be insufficient for those who have a mortal sin on their conscience. Recourse to the Sacrament of Reconciliation is therefore necessary in order to approach Eucharistic Communion worthily.

The Church hopes, nevertheless, that even beyond this case of necessity Christians will have recourse to the sacrament of forgiveness with reasonable frequency in order to foster in themselves even better dispositions. The penitential preparation at the beginning of every celebration must not therefore render the sacrament of forgiveness useless, but it must rather revive in the participants the awareness of an ever greater need for purity, and with that, have them increasingly feel the value of the grace of the sacrament. The Sacrament of Reconciliation is not reserved only for those who commit serious sins. It was instituted for the remission of all sins, and the grace that flows from it has a special efficacy of purification and support in the effort of amendment and progress. It is an irreplaceable sacrament in Christian life; it cannot be disregarded or neglected if one wants the seed of divine life to mature in the Christian and produce all the desired fruits.

(Pope John Paul II, June 15, 1983, Saint Peter Square, Rome. Reprinted from *L'Osservatore Romano*.)

WHAT IF

What if, GOD couldn't take the time to bless us today because we couldn't take the time to thank Him yesterday?

What if GOD decided to stop leading us tomorrow because we didn't follow Him today?

What if, we never saw another flower bloom because

we grumbled when GOD sent the Rain?

What if GOD didn't walk with us today because we failed to recognize it as His day?

What if, GOD took away the Bible tomorrow because we would not read it today?

What if, GOD took away His message because we failed to listen to the messenger?

What if, GOD didn't send His only begotten Son because He wanted us to be prepared to pay the price for sin.

What if, the door of the church was closed because we did not open the door of our heart?

What if, GOD stopped loving and caring for us because we failed to love and care for others?

What if, GOD would not hear us today because we would not listen to Him?

What if, GOD answered our prayers the way we answer His call to service?

What if, GOD met our needs the way we give Him our lives?

(Marie Corbett)

THE GARDEN WAY of the ROSARY

In the 12th century Saint Bernard spoke of the Blessed Virgin Mary as "The rose of charity, the lily of chastity, the violet of humility and the golden gillyflower of heaven", and in the 13th Saint Francis of Assisi was reported to have taken care not to step on even the least flower, as it was a symbol of Mary, "The Flower of the Field"; but it is not known just when the Marian and other Christian symbolical flower names actually became widespread in the oral traditions of the European countryside.

The earliest record we have found of a flower named for Mary is "Seint Mary gouldes" ("Saint Mary's Golds") included in a 1373 recipe as one ingredient of a potion sent to 'distroie the pestilence.'

We do know that Marian flower symbols must have been prevalent in Catholic culture by the 16th century because of the many Christian names given to Latin American flowers following the travels there of Spanish and Portuguese missionaries – such as the naming of the American marigold (*Tagetes*) from its perceived resemblance to the European Marygold (*Calendula*), and also the naming of the American

Passion Flower (*Passiflora*) from its parts seen to recall Christ's lash, crown of thorns, nails of the Cross, and other instruments of his Passion symbolized individually by various European flowers.

Also, in the 16th century, illustrations incorporating symbolic flowers were found, for meditation, in French and Flemish Books of Hours. From this we conclude that flower symbols of Our Lady probably had become prevalent in the countryside by the 15th century.

It was also in the 15th century that the practice was adopted of meditating on selected Mysteries of Mary's life while praying the Aves of the Rosary. The praying of Hail Marys using prayer beads was introduced as a popular outgrowth of the praying of the 150 Psalms of the Psalter for the souls of the deceased reported from the 8th century. For wider use, the lengthy monastic praying of the psalms was simplified by the 12th century through the praying in their place of 150 or 50 Our Fathers, on "Paternoster beads; and, then, in the 13th, by the praying of 150 or 50 Hail Marys in Mary's praise in the "Psalter of Our Lady".

With the addition, by the 15th century, of the meditations on Mary's Mysteries, the Rosary, now prayed for general intentions, was widely promulgated in its present form through the zeal of Blessed Alan de la Roche, (c.1428-1475) .

The name "Rosary", meaning a garland or bouquet of roses, was given to the Psalter of Our Lady as a consequence of "an early legend which after traveling all over Europe, penetrating even to Abyssinia, connected this name with a story of Our Lady, who was seen taking rosebuds from the lips of a young monk when he was reciting Hail Marys and to weave them into a garland which she placed upon her head.

"A German metrical version of this story is still extant dating from the thirteenth century." (Catholic Encyclopedia (1912) Vol 13, p.187). Alan de la Roche attributed the praying of the Rosary for pressing community concerns to Saint Dominic, who was said by legend to have had a private revelation by Mary requesting this, and the practice soon became universal in the Church.

Although scholars have found no support for the revelation of the Rosary in the writings or contemporary records of Saint Dominic, this concern is now largely academic following upon Mary's appearance at Lourdes and Fatima exhorting the praying of the Rosary, in each instance holding a string of Rosary beads in her hands. The observation by

those with spiritual vision of flower "pneums" issuing and rising heavenwards from the lips of persons praying the vocal Paters and Aves of the Rosary is evidently reflected in the original Communion Verse for the Mass for feast the Rosary of Mary (October 7th), established in 1573,:

Send forth flowers as the Lily, and yield a fragrance,
And bring forth leaves in grace, and praise with
canticles, and bless the Lord in his works." Sirach
39:13-14 (Ecclesiasticus 39:18-19)

The Rosary prayer pneumas, originally uttered in Mary's praises and seen as woven by her into a garland and placed on her head, are now envisaged also as petitionary prayers passing through the hands of Mary Mediatrix and. With enhancement and embellishment by her, "making our prayers hers", transported by angels to Christ and the Trinity, through whom they are graced with blessings, and then, again through her hands, returned to earth as a response of grace to the petitions prayed for. This is represented in the heavenly tableau of Mary's appearance at Knock in Ireland with her hands in special channeling position.

In the Mary Garden we have found it fitting to place the reflections quickened by the Flowers of Our Lady in the context of the fifteen mysteries of the Rosary; and to conclude the mental **Knock Mary Garden Grotto** Prayer engendered by them with the petition of the closing prayers of the Rosary, "that while meditating these mysteries of the Blessed Virgin Mary we may imitate what they contain and obtain what they promise, through Christ Our Lord. Amen"

As the three Aves at the beginning of the Rosary are employed to place the five mysteries about to be meditated on for the day in the context of the full fifteen Joyful, Sorrowful and Glorious Mysteries, so, on entering the Mary Garden, and before considering the individual symbolism of the flowers, we similarly dispose ourselves to this full meditative context as we

HOLY MASS TIMES

If you ever think you will miss Holy Mass because you don't know the times of Holy Mass in the area that you are located, call 1-800-MASS-TIMES or 1-800-627-7846.

If you have access to the Internet and don't already have it book marked, type in the Uniform Resource Locator (URL) www.masstimes.org in the white box near the top of your browser.

reflect how all white flowers symbolize the Joyful Mysteries, red and purple flowers the Sorrowful Mysteries, and yellow and gold flowers the Glorious Mysteries.

Then, as we draw closer to the flowers we are reminded by their beauty of the beauty of Mary's holiness as "Flower of flowers" (Chaucer); and by their spotless, translucent purity of her immaculate spiritual purity through which she was open to the fullness of grace – bestowed in accordance with God's desire, will and plan for all creation, and especially for humans created to this end in the divine image and likeness, to share, show forth and participate in to the fullest the divine goodness and creating, saving, and sanctifying action.

Finally, as we behold each flower we reflect and meditate on the particular mystery or aspect of Mary's life it symbolizes (see the accompanying article, "[Flower Theology](#)." – praying that we may imitate excellences and holiness mirrored by it, and then, through her sure petitions, intercession and mediation, obtain the graces it promises, as shown forth in all fullness in her. It is fitting that the religious flower symbolism of nature and that of the Rosary are reunited at Knock, where the Mary Garden planted at the Blessed Sacrament Chapel in 1983 is believed to be the first established at a national Marian Shrine, and following upon which the entire grounds have been planted with flowers, making the whole shrine, as it were, a Marian Meadow.

(John S. Stokes Jr., <http://www.catholic.pages.com>)

EUCCHARIST and ITS EFFECTS

The Holy Eucharist is the profound sacrament of the Church, the profound expression of God's love for His people. In this sacrament, we have the ultimate expression of the mutual expression of love between God and man. God, by giving us Himself in the Eucharist, gives Himself to us in a way which is total, and which places Himself completely at our disposal.

It is a form of limited consecration to us, and through this He asks us to give ourselves to Him completely, to fully consecrate ourselves to Him.

By being consumed by us, He gives us Life. This desire on His part for mutual love and self-giving is the essence of the Eucharist, for in giving Himself to us, He gives us not just eternal life but a share in His

Divine Life. It is the Eucharist which is the heart of the Mystical Body.

If the Eucharist is a sacrament of Love, it is necessarily a sacrament of union. As Boylan says (1), "All love demands union; the more ardent the love, the more complete the union it seeks. The love of our Lord for us is no exception."

It is through the operation of the Eucharist that He brings us to union with Himself, and it is through the Eucharist that He communicates to us His Divine Life, His Divine nature. We see this desire for union in the married state. The greater the love, the greater the desire for union, and in the union there springs forth life.

So, too, with God. The married state is a prefigure of the union we anticipate with God. Saint Paul, in 1 Cor 6:16, calls marriage the symbol and shadow of the still more intimate union of Christ with His Church. Since we are His Church, the Mystical Body, it is a union of God with us that Saint Paul refers or rather a union of us with God. If we look at the prayer of Jesus at the Last Supper, as told by Saint John, when Jesus instituted the Eucharist, it is a prayer of union.

It is no coincidence that Our Lord gave us this prayer at the very ceremony at which He gave us the means to effect this union. We also see that Our Lord has continued His love of contradiction with the Eucharist. When He chose His disciples, He told them they would be fishers of men. These fishermen knew well that when they fish, the fish are alive and, when caught, they die. When they fish for men, the men are spiritually dead, and in being caught they receive eternal Life.

In the Eucharist we have a similar contradiction. Ordinary food is consumed and becomes that which consumes it. In the Eucharist, we consume God and become that which we consume. Jesus did not merely become one of us, suffer human hardship, and die for us. He loves us with such a complete and infinite love that He wants us completely united with Him. He wants to give of Himself to us over and over through the Eucharist so that more and more we may share in Him; that more and more, as Jesus said (2), "... they may all be one; even as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You, that they also may be in Us.

The glory which You have given me I have given to them, that they may be one even as we are One." To do this, He provided us with this most perfect means of unity – the Eucharist. This infinite Gift, this Most Perfect of all possible gifts, comes to us in the most

humble way possible. Through the action of the priest, simple unleavened bread, and simple wine, each become the Body and Blood, Soul and Divinity of the living and triumphant Jesus Christ, the same Jesus Christ Who defeated Satan and conquered death. Through the action of the priest, Jesus has given us this most profound sacrament, this most unimposing means to share in His Divine Life, this most astonishing gift of Himself as our most precious of all possible foods.

He has given us the ultimate gift of His Love. There is nothing else in all of creation that can compare with this gift. It is Divinely unique. Not only has Our Lord given us this gift of the Eucharist, He has told us, in this prayer at the Last Supper, the effects of the Eucharist. It is stated in such simple terms, and yet has such profound meaning. We shall abide in Him, and He shall abide in us.

We shall be united with Jesus in the most intimate of all possible ways. He shall give us His Life, just as His Life was given to Him by the Father. Boylan tells us that the results of reception of the Eucharist can be considered in three ways: union with Christ, spiritual nutrition, and its special signification with the Passion of Christ (3).

With regard to the first effect, union with Christ, Saint Paul tells us in 1 Cor 10:16-17, that we do in fact receive the Body and Blood of Jesus. He refers to it specifically as communion, not as participation. For Saint Paul, it is a common union of God and man. Saint John Chrysostom says, referring to Saint Paul, that we do not just participate with Christ in receiving communion, we unite with Him.

This union is not mere metaphor; it is reality. A reality that calls forth from us the three theological virtues of faith, hope, and love. Boylan also tells us (4) that when we receive the Eucharist, mindful of what is taking place, we should take this opportunity to give Him our heartfelt thanks for the privilege of receiving him, recognize our need for His love and express our love for Him, to request the grace to love Him more, request the grace to conform our lives to His will for us, and offer ourselves to Him for Him to make of us that which He wants us to be.

As our spiritual food, when we receive the Eucharist we participate in the enigma whereby we become that which we consume, instead of that which we consume becoming us. It is by means of the Eucharist that the Mystical Body is put into effect, for it is through the Eucharist and the effect of its transforming union of us

with Christ that we become full members of this Mystical Body. In Baptism we receive that which is essential and sufficient for our salvation. In the Eucharist, we receive that which is essential for the perfection of the Mystical Body and our individual perfection as Christians (5).

If we consider again the words of Christ in John 6:57, “He that eats My Flesh and drinks My Blood, abides in Me and I in him”, we see a profound expression of His love for us. If we love another, we desire to be identified with that other. We speak of a married couple as if it is a single thing. We do not refer to married people so much as individuals as two people who have become as one.

We use common expressions like, “we think this or that”, or “we don’t feel this or that”. It is a unity of being without a loss of individual identity. This expression of Jesus’ love for us reported in John tells of His desire to be united with us in a most intimate, and eternal, way. He could only express this desire if He also had the love which calls it forth. He gave us all of Himself on the Cross for the sake of this unity, and continues to give of Himself every day in the Eucharistic sacrifice of the Mass.

The power of the Eucharist is also expressed by Boylan when he tells us, quoting Saint Thomas Aquinas, that “There is nothing in our selves or in our past that one Communion cannot more than repair – if we have but enough faith! Listen to Saint Thomas: ‘This sacrament contains in itself Christ crucified (Christum passum). Whence, whatever is the effect of the Passion of Our Lord, all that is likewise the effect

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of this sacrament.”

As Boylan so aptly puts it, “whatever our sins have done to us, the Holy Communion can repair; and whatever our sins have done to God, the Mass – which is part of the Eucharist – can restore.” This means we must have unlimited confidence in God’s love for us and His willingness to do whatever He can to bring us to Himself. The only thing He needs from us is our willingness, our submission of our free will to His will for us. There is nothing He will not do for us, for He is our Saviour in every sense of the word. He places Himself at our disposal, and in return asks only our cooperation. And he even gives us what we need to do this, for it is such a contradiction with reason that it takes His grace to help us realize this extent of His love, this self-gift of His in the Eucharist. If you believe, you have received His grace as His free gift.

The effects of the Eucharist are like the effects of food for our body. Food sustains life, and the Eucharist sustains the life of the soul. It gives us the grace we need to deny ourselves and to live for Christ, to live for our Life. The more love we have for Christ, the less self-love we have. The more we love God, the more we can resist temptation, and so the Eucharist strengthens us spiritually. Thus, the Eucharist has the effect of bringing to life the virtues in us so that we can live the life of Christ in us. But just as ordinary food can be effected only when properly digested, so, too, the Eucharist can only produce its good effects when we are properly disposed to receive it.

The Eucharist is a sacrament of Life, and so we must be spiritually living to have its effects. If we are spiritually dead, we must first receive the sacrament of spiritual resurrection, the sacrament of Reconciliation, so that which is dead is brought back to life. Then, having received life, we can receive Divine union.

Boylan tells us, again quoting Saint Thomas Aquinas, that all the sacraments receive their power from the Passion of Christ, but “the Eucharist is ‘the perfect sacrament of the Passion’ for it contains Christ and the whole power of His Passion.”

It is thus through the Eucharist that we can receive the effect of the transforming union with Christ. We can have all this if we but surrender our will to that of Christ. To do so is our greatest accomplishment. To do otherwise is our greatest tragedy.

(Jim Dobbins)

PAINTING a PRAYER

The Angelus is a prayer practice rich in doctrine and devotion.

This prayer commemorates the mystery of the Incarnation, the Son of God becoming the son of Mary for our salvation, the union of the divine nature with human nature. The Angelus takes its name from its first word in the Latin version.

In praying the Angelus we recite three versicles and responses with a Hail Mary after each set, another versicle and response, and then a concluding prayer.

Traditionally, this was done while the local church bell tolled at 6 AM, 12 NOON and 6 PM. Older people will recall this experience.

The Angelus traces its beginnings to the 13th century. In that era bells were often inscribed with the Angelic Salutation. Before the Second Vatican council liturgical renewal the concluding prayer was the Post communion Prayer for Masses of Our lady in Advent; but now it is the Opening Prayer for the Fourth Sunday of Advent.

Although the origin of the Angelus is obscure, it is certain that the morning, midday and evening practice of praying the Angelus did not develop simultaneously. By the 16th century, the various customs were unified. The morning prayer was recited to commemorate Christ’s resurrection: at noon, Christ’s passion; and in the evening, to recall the Incarnation, since Saint Bonaventure taught that the angel Gabriel’s visit to Mary came at evening.

Since the 15th century to the present day, the Angelus prayer has been recommended by many Popes. In our time Pope Paul VI expounded at some length on the value of the Angelus in the last section of his apostolic exhortation on proper devotion to Mary, “*Marialis Cultus* (1974)”

Even before I began school, I remember our parish church bell recalling the angel Gabriel’s Annunciation to Mary of the Incarnation. Then, in the third grade Sister M. Beneventua, O.P., taught us to pray the Angelus. From that time I listened carefully to the ringing of the church bell for the Angelus – three tolls for each of the invocations and nine for the concluding prayer.

Later in my education, I was introduced to the renowned painting by Jean-Francois Millet entitled “The Angelus.” The famous painting depicts a young man and a young woman standing in a field. They are

farmers. He holds his cap reverently as he stands with head bowed. She, in a white cap and long blue apron over her dress, clasps her hands as a prayerful look sets her face. They pause in prayer near the end of the workday.

At the woman's feet is a basket of potatoes, and at her far side rests a wheelbarrow full of empty sacks. At the side of the man is a pitchfork spiked upright in the ground. The breaking clouds are blushed with light as birds flit in the twilight. The viewer can almost hear the bells ringing from the spire of the church in the distant right of the painting.

The artist was born in 1814 in Gruchy, a hamlet 10 miles west of Cherbourg in northwest France. This inland area off the rugged coast was a countryside of undulating downs beyond the moors.

Jean-Louis, the painter's father, possessed real artistic talent, though all his life was spent tilling the fields. He loved music and directed the village choir; he studied the forms of trees and plants; he made clay models when time permitted.

Jean-Francois absorbed his father's appreciation for beauty and art. In his father he found an exemplar to emulate. Jean-Francois also was impressed by his parents' piety and devotion.

As a boy, Jean-Francois traced prints from the family Bible and then tried freehand. From the beginning, his parents and parish priests recognized that he was extraordinary. The priests were careful to educate him the best they could in mythology, Greek, Latin, as well as in translation of Shakespeare, John Milton and Robert Burns. All this time Jean-Francois was at home working on the family farm. He became a man of culture with the heart of a peasant. Later he declared of himself, "A peasant I was born and a peasant I will die."

His parents realized he must go to Cherbourg to study art. It was at this point that Jean-Francois' lifelong work as an artist began. Later in Paris, he fine-tuned his painting skills for 12 years.

Because he disliked Paris and city life, he was delighted to return to the country. Barbizon became his home until the time of his death in 1875.

It was in 1859 that he painted "The Angelus." Vivid were his memories of the Angelus bell ringing while peasants were still working at twilight. Often had he seen his father standing, bareheaded, cap in hand, and his mother, with bowed head and folded hands, at the sound of the evening Angelus bell.

Millet recorded that impression to show the quiet peace of twilight, the rosy glow of sunset engulfing the fields, the church bells filling the evening air and the devout attitude of the peasants. Surely, he succeeded.

When his agent, Sensier, first saw the picture on Millet's easel, the painter turned to him and asked, "Well what do you think of it?"

"It is the Angelus," replied Sensier.

"Yes" Millet said with satisfaction. "Can you hear the

Millet believed he had painted a great picture, but his genius was not recognized and acknowledged until after his death. In 1889, 14 years after his death Millet's painting of "The Angelus" was put up for auction, after the person who had bought the painting from Millet had died.

Prior to the auction the French government asked Antonin Proust, Director of Fine Arts, to buy the painting to keep it in France. Bidding was frantic in the crowded gallery the morning of the auction, mainly between Proust and two American dealers. When the sale was almost settled, two more Americans arrived and new bidding continued. Finally, Proust offered 533,000 francs, about \$94,000.

A pause occurred in the bidding. Then the gavel fell, and "the Angelus" was declared the property of France. The people in attendance were elated.

However, the French government declined to ratify the purchase for so large a sum. "The Angelus" went to the next highest bidder, an American agent. Customhouse officials made the duty exorbitant, almost \$12,000. But they agreed to waive the claim on condition that the picture remains only six months in America. Another Frenchman, M. Chauchard, bought the painting upon its return to France.

Eventually, "The Angelus" found its way into the Louvre Museum in Paris. Today, we can still enjoy Jean-Francois Millet's masterpiece in the Louvre.

(with permission by Brother Samaha S.M., a Marianist for 50 years, taught in high school and adult education in the US and Lebanon. Retired at Villa Saint Joseph in Cupertino, CA, he volunteers at the Marian Library / International Marian Research Institute, University of Dayton. Catholic Answer, May / June 2000)

THE ANGELUS

P: The Angel of the Lord declared unto Mary.

R: And she conceived of the Holy Spirit. Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee. Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus. Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death. Amen.

P: Behold the handmaid of the Lord.

R: Be it done unto me according to thy word. Hail Mary.

P: And the Word was made flesh.

R: And dwelt among us. Hail Mary.

P: Pray for us, O holy Mother of God.

R: That we may be made worth of the promises of Christ.

Let us pray. Pour forth, we beseech Thee, O Lord, Thy grace into our hearts; that we, to whom the Incarnation of Christ, Thy Son, was made known by the message of an angel, may by His Passion and Cross be brought to the glory of His resurrection. Through the same Christ, our Lord. Amen.

(The Catholic Answer, May/June 2000, Volume 14/#2)

GOD'S ALPHABET

A lthough things are not perfect
B ecause of trial or pain
C ontinue in thanksgiving
D o not begin to blame
E ven when the times are hard
F ierce winds are bound to blow
G od is forever able
H old on to what you know
I magine life without His love
J oy would cease to be
K eep thanking Him for all the things
L ove imparts to thee
M ove out of "Camp Complaining"
N o weapon that is known
O n earth can yield the power
P raise can do alone
Q uit looking at the future
R edeem the time at hand
S tart every day with worship
T o "thank" is a
U ntil we see Him coming
V ictorious in the sky

The PILGRIM

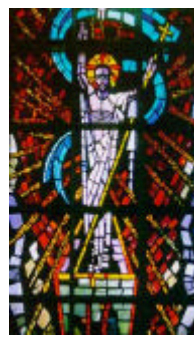
W e'll run the race with gratitude
X alting God most high
Y es, there'll be good times and bad, but...
Z ion waits in glory...where none are ever sad!

The shortest distance between a problem and a solution is the distance between your knees and the floor. The one who kneels to the Lord can stand up to anything.

(Bernadette – Internet)

VOCATIONS DEPARTMENT

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>

THE HOME of the MOTHER of ALL HUMANITY, MOTHER of the YOUTH

What is the Home of the Mother?

The Home of the Mother is a spiritual family of public and private Associations of the Faithful that are united by a commonality of purpose, that being their three

missions of Defense of the Eucharist, Defense of the Honor of our Lady, especially in the Privilege of her Virginity, and the Conquest of the Youth for Christ.

It consists of:

The Servant Brothers of the Home of the Mother An order for men with the current designation of “Public Association of the Faithful, Religious Institute in Formation”. It currently has seven professed members and four candidates. It is based in the Diocese of Cuenca, Spain.

The Servant Sisters of the Home of the Mother An order for women with the current designation of “Public Association of the Faithful, Religious Institute in Formation”. It currently has twenty professed members and seventeen in formation. There are communities in the Dioceses of Cuenca and Cantabria (Spain).

The Home of the Mother of the Youth An Association for Young Christians.

The male branch is under the direction of the General Superior of the Servant Brothers and the female branch is under the direction of the General Superior of the Servant Sisters. It has hundreds of members in many countries throughout the world including Spain, Ireland, U.S.A., Mexico, and many more.

Friends of the Home of the Mother. The Friends of the Home of the Mother (FHM) is a lay association dependent on the General Superior of the Servant Brothers. It is made up of those who wish to participate in the spirit of the Home, but are not required to take on any specific commitments. It has over two thousand members throughout the world.

Communities of Adults of the Home of the Mother The Communities of Adults of the Home of the Mother (CAHM) is a lay association dependent on the General Superior of the Servant Brothers. The CAHM is for Friends of the Home who wish to participate in the spirit and activities of the Home in a more active way by making commitments to apply the three missions to every part of their life.

A Timeline of the Development of the Home:

July 29th, 1982: The association for young Christians is founded under the name of “Home of the Mother of the Youth” in its female branch, at the tomb of Saint Peter in Rome, as a sign of fidelity to the Papacy. There were six girls who made their promises of

commitment, Among these there were three who went on to become co-founders of the Servant Sisters.

January 23rd, 1983: The Private Cultural Foundation for the promotion of religious interests is legally approved. One of the purposes of this foundation is the building of the Sanctuary to Our Blessed Mother of Mount Carmel.

December 27th, 1983: Holy Year of the Redemption. The male branch of the Home of the Mother of the Youth is founded, again before Saint Peter's tomb in the Vatican. Of the seven boys who made this commitment, Father Felix is already priest and co-founder of the Servant Brothers.

February 20th, 1984: The magazine H.M. begins the spreading of the news of the Home and of the Church. After all this time we thank Our Mother for the great apostolic fruits that this magazine has brought to so many souls.

September 22nd, 1984: Returning from a pilgrimage to various sanctuaries around Europe, the congregation of the Servant Sisters was founded in Toledo city. The first three to make their commitments were Mother Ana (now Mother Superior), Sister Reme (now Master of Novices), and Sister Conchi (now Superior in the mission of Belmonte).

September, 1989: Mother Ana, Sister Reme and Sister Conchi make their first three-year vows of chastity, poverty and obedience in Nazareth, the Holy Land, before Father Jeremias R. Pastrana, Diocesan Delegate for Religious Sisters of Active Life.

September 8th, 1990: The Servant Brothers of The Home of the Mother is founded. Félix López and Juan Gomez make their first commitments as Servants of The Home of the Mother in Zurita, Cantabria.

1991: The Centre for the young, “Carmen María”, was founded in Barcenilla, Santander.

August 4th, 1994: Elizabeth Van Keerbergen, better known to all of us as Mamie, died in Santander after much suffering, which she offered for priests and for the Home. This extraordinary woman was a vital support to Father Rafael during all the 20 difficult years of foundation. Thank you Mamie, pray for us.

November 26th, 1994: At last the official approval arrives. The Bishop of Cuenca, Monsignor José Guerra Campos approved the Servants of the Home (the Brothers) as a “Public Association of Faithful, Religious Institute in Formation”. We were granted as

our headquarters the 17th Century Monastery of Saint Michael of the Victories in Priego, in the province of Cuenca.

December 8th, 1994: The Servants of the Home (Sisters) are also approved, and they established a Convent in Priego.

1995: The Servant Sisters inaugurate a student residence and are entrusted with the apostolic activities of the parish of Saint Fernando.

December 25th, 1995: The "Community of Adults of the Home of the Mother" is founded as a lay association dependent upon the General Superior of the Servant Brothers. At Christmas Mass the first two members, José María Huerta and Felicidad Martín, make their promises in the parish church of Priego.

1996: The Community of Belmonte, Cuenca, is founded. The Sisters were entrusted with the apostolic work of the parish and the management of an institution for abandoned girls.

November 1996: The Home's first visit to Ireland. This trip was made by Father Raphael Alonso, José María Huerta, and other members of the Home. They spoke in Derry, Monaghan, Dublin, and Cork, and were warmly received. The lay movement in Ireland was started at that time and now has over seven hundred members.

November 1997: The first trip to the United States. Father Félix López and José María Huerta visited New York, New Jersey, Tennessee, Florida, and more. They started the lay movement there, which now has over one thousand members.

1999: First trip to England and Scotland. The lay movement there was started at this time and now has more than three hundred members. The places that were visited include London, Manchester, and Glasgow.

2000: The Home of the Mother TV and radio projects are embarked upon

Established Communities

The Servant Brothers

Monastery of San Miguel de las Victorias (Cuenca) Novitiate of the Servant Brothers. The monastery is also used for pastoral activities and monthly meetings with members of the lay movements. *Address: Convento de S. Miguel de las Victorias. Priego. 16800-Cuenca. Spain.*

Burgos Seminary for the Servant Brothers. This is where the Brothers who are still studying for the priesthood spend most of their time during the school year. There are currently six living there. *Address: C/ Aparicio y Ruiz, 12 - 3. 09003-Burgos. Spain.*

The Servant Sisters

Zurita Novitiate for the Servant Sisters. This is also a temporal residence for Servant Sisters of other communities and the home of the H.M. and H.M. for Children magazines. *Address: Barrio de San Juliá, 30. 39479-Zurita. Cantabria. Spain.*

Belmonte Foundation "Moreno Baillo" Belmonte. There are always at least four sisters here who's main task is to take care of abandoned girls. Among other things, they also do parish work, teach catechesis, and organize pilgrimages and sports activities. *Address: C/ Lucas Parra, 13. Belmonte. 16640-Cuenca. Spain.*

Priego Geriatric Home. The home is staffed by at least four sisters who take care of the elderly as well as assist in the local parish. *Address: Subida al Convento, s/n. Priego. 16800-Cuenca. Spain.*

Cuenca Community of the Servant Sisters of the Home of the Mother. A community of at least four Sisters who help in the parish of San Fernando. They also give spiritual support to their student residency in Cuenca and help in all the other projects of the Home. *Address: C/ Hermanos Becerril, No 18. 16004-Cuenca. Spain.*

University Residence. A residence for girls studying at the local universities. They follow a schedule of prayer, study, and recreation, as well as helping the Sisters in apostolic activity.

Local Home-Centers

Carmen Maria Home This house is a center of activities to revive and sustain the spiritual life of the youth, the members of the Home of the Mother, and other ecclesiastic communities. We accomplish this with - Eucharistic events, such as Adoration, Holy hours... - Marian events, such as Rosaries, Processions, Solemn Celebrations with Mary... - Events for the youth, such as Summer Camps, Spiritual Exercises, Pilgrimages... *Address: Barrio Pasadorios No 3, Barcenilla, de Piñagos. Cantabria. Spain.*

If you are considering a vocation with us, or would just like to find out more, contact us at the address below:

T

“Comfort I have Given,” “Jokes I Have Laughed at.” Some were almost hilarious in their exactness: “Things I’ve yelled at my brothers”. Others I couldn’t laugh at: “Things I Have Done in My Anger”, “Things I Have Muttered Under My Breath at My Parents.” I never ceased to be surprised by the contents.

Often there were many more cards than I expected. Sometimes fewer than I hoped. I was overwhelmed by the sheer volume of the life I had lived. Could it be possible that I had the time in my years to write each of these thousands or even millions of cards? But each card confirmed this truth. Each was written in my own handwriting. Each signed with my signature. When I pulled out the file marked “Songs I have listened to,” I realized the files grew to contain their contents. The cards were packed tightly, and yet after two or three yards, I hadn’t found the end of the file. I shut it, shamed, not so much by the quality of music but more by the vast time I knew that file represented.

When I came to a file marked “Lustful Thoughts,” I felt a chill run through my body. I pulled the file out only an inch, not willing to test its size, and drew out a card. I shuddered at its detailed content. I felt sick to think that such a moment had been recorded. An almost animal rage broke on me. One thought dominated my mind: “No one must ever see these cards! No one must ever see this room! I have to destroy them!”

In insane frenzy I yanked the file out. Its size didn’t matter now. I had to empty it and burn the cards. But as I took it at one end and began pounding it on the floor, I could not dislodge a single card. I became desperate and pulled out a card, only to find it as strong as steel when I tried to tear it. Defeated and utterly helpless, I returned the file to its slot. Leaning my forehead against the wall, I let out a long, self-pitying sigh.

I

And then I saw it. The title bore “People I Have Shared the Gospel With.” The handle was brighter than those around it, newer, almost unused. I pulled on its handle and a small box not more than three inches long fell into my hands. I could count the cards it contained on one hand. And then the tears came. I began to weep. Sobs so deep that they hurt. They started in my stomach and shook through me. I fell on my knees and cried. I cried out of shame, from the overwhelming shame of it all. The rows of file shelves swirled in my tear-filled eyes. No one must ever, ever know of this room. I must lock it up and hide the key. But then as I pushed away the tears, I saw Him. No, please not Him. Not here. Oh, anyone but Jesus.

I watched helplessly as He began to open the files and read the cards. I couldn't bear to watch His response. And in the moments I could bring myself to look at His face, I saw a sorrow deeper than my own. He seemed to intuitively go to the worst boxes. Why did He have to read every one? Finally He turned and looked at me from across the room. He looked at me with pity in His eyes. But this was a pity that didn't anger me.

I dropped my head, covered my face with my hands and began to cry again. He walked over and put His arm around me. He could have said so many things. But He didn't say a word. He just cried with me. Then He got up and walked back to the wall of files. Starting at one end of the room, He took out a file and, one by one, began to sign His name over mine on each card. “No!” I shouted rushing to Him.

All I could find to say was “no, no, “ as I pulled the card from Him. His name shouldn't be on these cards. But there it was, written in red so rich, so dark, so alive. The name of Jesus covered mine. It was written with His blood. He gently took the card back. He smiled a sad smile and began to sign the cards.

I don't think I'll ever understand how He did it so quickly, but the next instant it seemed I heard Him close the last file and walk back to my side. He placed His hand on my shoulder and said, “It is finished.”

I stood up, and He led me out of the room. There was no lock on its door. There were still cards to be written. “I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.” Phil. 4:13 “For God so loved the world that He gave His only son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life.” My “People I shared the gospel with” file just got bigger, how about yours?

(Bernadette – Internet)

THE MIRACLE PRAYER

Lord Jesus, I come before you just as I am. I am sorry for my sins, please forgive me. In your name I forgive all others for what they have done against me.

I renounce Satan, the evil spirits and all their works. I give you my entire self, Lord Jesus, now and forever.

I invite you into my life Jesus, I accept you as my Lord and Saviour. Heal me, change me, and strengthen me in body soul and spirit.

Come Lord Jesus, cover me with Your precious blood and fill me with Your Holy Spirit. I love You Lord Jesus. I praise You Jesus. I thank You Jesus I shall follow You every day of my life.

Mary my Mother, Queen of Peace, all the Angels and Saints please help me. Amen.

Say this prayer faithfully, no matter how you feel when you come to the point where you sincerely mean each word, with all your heart, something good spiritually will happen to you. You will experience Jesus, and he will change your whole life in a very special way.

(Father Peter Rookey O.S.M.)

A FOURTH CENTURY BC GREEK MEDITATION

May I be no man's enemy, and may I be the friend of that which is eternal and abides. May I never quarrel with those nearest me; and if I do, may I be reconciled quickly. May I never devise evil against any man, and if any devise evil against me may I escape uninjured and without the need of hurting him.

May I love, seek and attain only that which is good. May I wish for all men's happiness and envy none. May I never rejoice in the ill fortune of one who has wronged me. When I have done or said what is wrong, may I never wait for the rebuke of others, but always rebuke myself until I make amends.

May I win no victory that harms either me or my opponents. May I reconcile friends who are wroth with one another. May I to the extent of my power, give all needful help to my friends.

May I never fail a friend in danger. When visiting those in grief, may I be able by gentle and healing words to soften their pain.

May I respect myself. May I always keep tame that which rages within me. May I accustom myself to be gentle, and never be angry with people because of circumstances.

May I never discuss who is wicked and what wicked things he has done; but know good men and follow in their footsteps

(4th century BC Greek Mediation – author unknown)

PRESIDENT GEORGE W. BUSH'S EASTER GREETING

I am pleased to send warm greetings to all those observing Easter. On this day, Christians around the world join in celebrating the Resurrection of Jesus Christ, the Son of God and Son of Man.

For Christians everywhere, Easter is a day when, in the words of the ancient Exultet hymn, the earth “rejoices in shining splendor, radiant in the brightness of its King.” It is a time to be humbled by and grateful for God's sacrifice and boundless love and to rejoice in the sheer wonder of life and the promise of victory over death.

Easter comes at the end of the Lenten season, a period of penitence and solemnity in many Christian traditions. The Lenten season prepares Christ's followers for the joyous affirmation that “Christ is Risen!” Holy Week activities, including Palm Sunday, Holy Thursday, and Good Friday, remind the faithful of the events leading up to Jesus' crucifixion and resurrection.

Many traditions associated with Easter have become a part of our American way of life. Although these customs may differ, the universal message of Easter draws all Christian communities together. As families and friends gather to celebrate, we renew our commitment to follow the example of Jesus Christ in loving our neighbors and giving of ourselves for others. On this joyous day, let us also remember all those in need and those Christians around the world who are persecuted for their faith.

Laura joins me in sending best wishes for a wonderful Easter.

THE FAMILY CORNER

HOW WINDSHIELD WIPERS ARE like GOD - LESSON from a CHILD

One rainy afternoon I was driving along one of the main streets of town, taking those extra precautions necessary when the roads are wet and slick. Suddenly, my son Matthew spoke up from his relaxed position in the front seat.

“Mom, I'm think of something.”

This announcement usually meant he had been pondering some fact for a while and was not ready to expound on all that his seven-year old mind had discovered. But I was eager to hear.

“What are you thinking?” I asked.

“The rain,” he began, “is like sin and the windshield wipers are like God, wiping our sins away.”

After the chill bumps raced up my arms I was able to respond, “That's really good, Matthew.”

Then my curiosity broke in. How far would this little boy take this revelation?

So I asked, “Do you notice how the rain keeps on coming? What does that tell you?”

Matthew didn't hesitate one moment with his answer.

“We keep on sinning, and God just keeps on forgiving us.” Who can drive in the rain again without thinking of this one?

(Bernadette – Internet)

CONSECRATION of CHILDREN to MARY the MOTHER of GOD

Most Holy Mary, Mother of the All-knowing God, I give you all the children He has put into my life. In Your Motherly tenderness protect them from every negative influence, even those now growing in the warmth and secrecy of their mother's womb and those yet to be conceived into our families and lives in the years to come. To Your Immaculate Heart I consecrate their bodies and souls, their hearts and their minds.

Forever protect them throughout their changing lives: the miraculous pre-natal growth, during infancy, the toddler stage, grammar school age, and the fragile teen years, college age, adulthood, and even into old

age. Guard over their youth, and keep their hearts pure, their thoughts holy, innocent and childlike as Jesus has taught us. Bestow on them the graces they need to live according to God's own special design for each one of them. Protect them always throughout life and preserve their innocence. Stay close to them as they experience joys and live through sorrows and endure failures. Uplift their spirits when disappointments take their toll on them. Clothe them with Your purity and love in their relationships and commitments.

Mother them as You mothered little Jesus; shelter them from distractions that may harm and prevent their true happiness. Most Holy Mary, these children that God has put into my life are now as much Yours as they are mine through this Act of Consecration.

Wrap them in the mantle of Your Immaculate Heart and lead them to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. Bless our families. Pray for our families, that we may take our example from the Holy Family and live as holy families, too. Be with us always, and teach us how to pray and live good Christian lives.

And when our Divine Creator sees fit to call them and me one by one to Himself, may we all merit heaven where one day we shall live together in His true peace, praising Almighty God face to face for all eternity. Amen.

(Author unknown)

ONLY from the MOUTHS of BABES - LETTERS from CATHOLIC SCHOOL CHILDREN

Dear GOD, In class they told us what you do. Who does it when you are on vacation? -Jane

Dear GOD, I read the Bible. What does begat mean? Nobody will tell me. Love, Allison

Dear GOD, Are you really invisible or is that just a trick? -Luca

Dear GOD, Is it true my father won't get in Heaven if he uses his bowling words in the house? -Naito

Dear GOD, Did you mean for the giraffe to look like that or was it an accident? -Norma

Dear GOD, Instead of letting people die and having to make new ones, why don't you just keep the ones you have now? -Jane

Dear GOD, Who draws the lines around the countries? -Nan

Dear God, I went to a wedding and they kissed right in church. Is that okay? -Neil -

Dear GOD, What does it mean You are a Jealous God? I thought You had everything. -Jane

Dear GOD, Did you really mean "do unto others as they do unto you"? Because if you did, then I'm going to fix my brother. -Ann

Dear GOD, Thank you for the baby brother, but what I prayed for was a puppy. -Joyce

Dear GOD, Please send me a pony. I never asked for anything before, You can look it up. -Bruce

Dear GOD, My brother is a rat. You should give him a tail. Ha ha. -Dan

Dear GOD, Maybe Cain and Abel would not kill each other so much if they had their own rooms. -Joseph

Dear GOD, I want to be just like my Daddy when I get big but not with so much hair all over. - Sam

Dear GOD, I think about you sometimes even when I'm not praying. -Elliott

Dear GOD, If You watch me in church Sunday, I'll show you my new shoes. -Mickey D.

Dear GOD, I didn't think orange went with purple until I saw the sunset you made on Tuesday. That was cool! -Eugene

Dear God, of all of the people who work for you I like Father Smith and Sister Margaret best. - Anna

Sister asked the boy to create a sentence beginning with I. He began: "I is.." "No!" she interrupted. "Not, 'I is,' but 'I am' ... is correct." "I got it," the boy replied. "I ... am the ninth letter in the alphabet."

The music teacher took her class to its first grand opera at the San Francisco Opera House. The lights dimmed and the conductor began waving his baton while the soprano started to sing. After a while, a student asked his teacher, "Why is the conductor waving his stick at that woman?" "Oh, don't worry, he won't hit her," the teacher assured him. "Then why is she screaming?" he asked.

<http://sfspirit.com/articles.htm>

I'LL DO BETTER TOMORROW, I PROMISE

Dear God, are You still awake?
Have You got a minute or two?
You're pretty good at understanding,
And I really need to talk to You.

You see, Mommy came to tuck me in,
Like she does every night.
I was trying to play a trick on her,
Since she can't see without the light.

I was going to close my eyes
And pretend to be asleep.
But when I heard her crying,
I didn't dare let out a peep.
She started talking to you, God.
Did You hear the things she said?

Could You hear what she was saying?
As she stood beside my bed?
Why would Mommy be so sad?
I wondered just what I had done,

And then I began to remember it all
As she named them one by one...
This morning we worked in the garden,
But, honest, I really didn't know

That if I picked all those little yellow blooms
The tomatoes wouldn't grow!
Charlie and I were trying to be helpers, '
Cause I know that's what Mommy needs,
But I don't think she was too happy with us
When we pulled up carrots instead of weeds.

Mommy said we should stop for the day,
She decided we had helped quite enough.
I sure had worked up an appetite.
I didn't know gardening was so tough!
We had peanut-butter and jelly for lunch,
And I shared too much, I guess...

But I didn't realize until I was done
That Charlie had made such a mess.
Mommy said she needed a nap,
She had one of her headaches today.

She told me to keep an eye on my sister
And find something quiet to play.
Well, God, do You remember all those curls
You gave my little sister Jenny?

We played barber shop...very quietly...
And now, well, she doesn't have any.
Boy, was Mommy mad at me...
I had to go sit on my bed.
She said never to cut "people hair" again.
I guess I'll practice on Charlie instead.

We sat and watched poor old Albert,
I just knew he must be so bored
Going round and round in the same place all day,
Wouldn't You think so, Lord?

I didn't think it would hurt to let him out for awhile. I
mean, mice need exercise, too.
By the way, have You seen Albert lately?
He's been sort of missing since two.

Mommy sent us outside for the rest of the day.
She said we needed fresh air.
But when Daddy came home she told him
She was trying to get something out of her hair.

We thought Mommy needed cheering up,
So we decided to brighten her day.
But, God, did You see the look on her face
When we gave her that pretty bouquet?

We had gotten a little bit dirty,
So Mommy said to get in the tub.
"Use soap this time," she reminded,
"And please don't forget to scrub."

Charlie didn't like the water too much,
But I lathered up real good.
I knew Mommy would be so proud of me
For cleaning up like I should.

I went downstairs to the table,
But during dinner it started to rain...
I'd forgotten to turn off the water, it seems,
And I hadn't unplugged the drain!

I decided right then it was just about time
To start getting ready for bed,
When Mommy said, "It's sure been a long day," And
her face began turning all red.

I lay there listening to Mommy
As she told You about our day.
I thought about all of the things I had done
And I wondered what I should say.

I was just about to tell her
That I'd been awake all along,
And ask her to please forgive me
For all of those thing I'd done wrong.

When suddenly, I heard her whisper,
"God, forgive me for today...
For not being more understanding
When those problems came my way...

For not handling situations
In the way You wanted me to...
For getting angry and losing my temper,
Things I know You don't want me to do.

And, God, please give me more patience,
Help me make it through another day,
I'll do better tomorrow, I promise...
In Jesus' name I pray."

Wiping her eyes, she kissed me
And knelt here beside my bed.
She stroked my hair for a little while...
"I love you, precious," Mommy said.

She left the room without ever knowing
That I'd been awake all the time.
And God, could we make it our little secret?
You know, just Yours and mine?

I'm sorry I was so much trouble today,
I really didn't mean to be...
Daddy says it's tough being a kid sometimes,
But I think it's harder on Mommy than me.

Well, goodnight, God. Thanks for listening.
It's sure nice to know You're there.
I feel so much better when I talk to You
'Cause You always hear my prayer.

And I'll do better tomorrow, I promise...
Just You wait and see!
I'll try not to be so much trouble again,
But, God, please give more patience to Mommy...
...Just in case! Amen

(Author Unknown)

ASHAMED - NEW SCHOOL PRAYER

Now I sit me down in school

Where praying is against the rule
For this great nation under God
Finds mention of Him very odd.
If Scripture now the class recites,
It violates the Bill of Rights.
And anytime my head I bow
Becomes a Federal matter now.
Our hair can be purple, orange or green,
That's no offense; it's a freedom scene.
The law is specific, the law is precise.
Prayers spoken aloud are a serious vice.
For praying in a public hall
Might offend someone with no faith at all.
In silence alone we must meditate,
God's name is prohibited by the state.
We're allowed to cuss and dress like freaks,
And pierce our noses, tongues and cheeks.
They've outlawed guns, but
FIRST the Bible.
To quote the Good Book makes me liable.
We can elect a pregnant Senior Queen,
And the 'unwed daddy,' our Senior King.
It's "inappropriate" to teach right from wrong,
We're taught that such "judgments" do not belong.
We can get our condoms and birth controls,
Study witchcraft, vampires and totem poles.
But the Ten Commandments are not allowed,
No word of God must reach this crowd.
It's scary here I must confess,
When chaos reigns the school's a mess.
So, Lord, this silent plea I make:
Should I be shot;
My soul please take!

Amen

If you aren't ashamed to do this, please pass this on.
Jesus said, "If you are ashamed of me, I will be
ashamed of you before my Father."

(nancycarratura@agfg.com)

THE CROSS

The cross is the hope of Christians
The cross is the resurrection of the dead
the cross is the way of the lost
the cross is the savior of the lost
the cross is the staff of the lame
the cross is the guide of the blind
the cross is the strength of the weak

the cross is the doctor of the sick
the cross is the aim of the priests
the cross is the hope of the hopeless
the cross is the freedom of the slaves
the cross is the power of the kings
the cross is the water of the seeds
the cross is the consolation of the bondsmen
the cross is the source of those who seek water
the cross is the cloth of the naked.
We thank you, Father, for the cross.

(K. Laker)

MORTAL SIN DOES EXIST - REFLECTONS on VERITATIS SPLENDOR

One of the most shameless defenses of an evil choice may be found in a speech given by Gordon Gekko in the film *Wall Street*. The story is about an ambitious young broker, Bud Fox, whose quest for new clients leads him to Gekko, a financial wizard with a genius for making money. Gekko lures Fox into the illegal and lucrative world of corporate espionage and insider trading. Fox becomes rich overnight but at a price that he finds is too high.

At a stockholder' meeting, Gekko gives this praise of greed: "Greed, for lack of a better word, is good. Greed is right. Greed works. Greed clarifies, cuts through, and captures the essence of the evolutionary spirit. Greed, in all of its forms – greed for money, for life, for knowledge - has marked the upward surge of mankind. And greed - you mark my words - will save Teldar Paper Company and that other malfunctioning corporation called the USA."

Shouts of approval and loud applause follow this defense of one of the most self-destructive of the capital sins. Were Saint Paul there he would have roared back, "The love of money [greed] is the root of all evils. Some people in their desire for it have strayed from the faith and have pierced themselves with many pains" (I Tim 6: 10).

The film portrays a world of stock options. But, basically, it is an environment of fundamental immoral options and the actions that flow from them. In this case, the fundamental option is greed. The acts that follow are industrial spying and insider trading. The option and the act go together and reinforce each other. Intensive illegal and immoral acts inflame the greed that in turn multiplies the avaricious deeds.

What works for vice also works for virtue. John Paul II establishes the link between a fundamental option for Christ and positive moral acts connected to it. "Jesus' call to 'come, follow me' marks the greatest possible exaltation of human freedom, yet at the same time it witnesses to the truth and obligation of acts of faith and of decisions which can be described as involving a fundamental option" (No. 66).

However, the Holy Father speaks against an interpretation of fundamental option that divorces it from individual moral acts. Its advocates claim that we can have a basic orientation to God in the "core of our person-hood." But they argue that our outward sinful acts do not necessarily affect the core of our persons. My real moral act is my inner choice for God. My behavior, good or bad, may or may not affect my inner choice.

The pontiff explains it this way: "Behavior ... comes to be considered as a merely physical process, and not according to the criteria proper to a human act. The conclusion to which this eventually leads is that the properly moral assessment of the person is reserved to the fundamental option, prescindng his choice of particular actions" (No. 65)

In other words, the unacceptable view argues that God will judge me on my fundamental option, not the deeds I perform. This is similar to saying, "I promise to be faithful and obedient to God, to love him with all my heart. But my acts of cheating, stealing, lying, and killing do not necessarily affect my orientation to God, my basic option." Hence, the only mortal sin is the reversal of my fundamental option for God.

John Paul II disagrees. "Mortal sin exists also when a person, knowingly and willingly chooses something gravely disordered. Such a choice already includes contempt for divine law, a rejection of God's love for humanity and the whole of creation: the person turns away from God and loses charity. Thus the fundamental orientation can be radically changed by individual acts" ("Reconciliation and Penance")

Returning to our opening story about Gordon Gekko: He knows the link between his fundamental option for greed and the acts necessary to implement it. He uses evolutionary talk to defend it. He scolds the board members of the company he is attacking: "You stand for the survival of the unfittest. You must either choose what is right, or get eliminated." Gordon is not confused by some vague connection between his basic choice and the steps needed to achieve his goal. There is a seamless flow between the two.

So it is when we choose God. Our acts affect our choice, and our choice influences our deeds.

(Father McBride writes for Our Sunday Visitor. All quoted matter is from the encyclical, unless otherwise indicated ©1998 Our Sunday Visitor. Used by subscription. This article appeared in the October 1998 edition of The San Francisco Charismatics (ISSN 1098-4046). Member of the Catholic Press Association of the United States and Canada.)

FORGIVENESS IS NOT CHEAP

One day at work, I was discussing with a woman her nephew who had been my student a couple of years ago. Since a company had called me recently to give a reference, I inquired about him. She told me that he had been recently married. She confided that his mother, her sister, and their side of the family were not invited to the wedding. The nephew had joined the Jehovah Witness Church to which his father belonged. They had arranged the marriage and controlled how the wedding was handled. In her conversation, she made the comment that she did not like their attitude but that all is forgiven. However, there is no responsibility taken for the harm done.

Her point was that even though God forgives us, we need to own up to our own responsibility for the harm done by the sin. For example, if we hurt a person by rejecting them or belittling them, we can ask God to forgive us and God forgives us. However, we need to accept the responsibility for that person's hurt and reconcile with them. We cannot just say, "God forgives me, it is all forgotten and over with."

Jesus said, "If you bring your gift to the altar and there recall that your brother (sister) has anything against you, leave your gift at the altar, go first to be reconciled with your brother (sister), and then come and offer your gift. Lose no time; settle with your opponent while on your way to court with him. Otherwise your opponent may hand you over to the judge, who will hand you over to the guard, who will throw you into prison. I warn you will not be released until you have paid the last penny." (Matt. 5:23 - 26) Jesus mentioned this right after speaking about anger and use of abusive language and calling people names. These are the common hurts between family members and coworkers. Jesus is pointing out that his command to love one another means going back to the one we have hurt and apologizing and reconciling. Jesus is implying that before we seek to be reconciled to God and forgiven our sin we should seek to be forgiven by

the one we hurt and own up to the sin.

Traditional Catholic teaching on the Sacrament of Reconciliation includes the concept of restitution when possible and reconciliation with our brothers and sisters in Christ. It is not an act of earning points but an act of responding to the forgiving love of Jesus Christ by loving the one we have hurt as we have just experienced the love of Jesus. The Church teaches that "Many sins wrong our neighbor. One must do what is possible in order to repair the harm (e.g., return stolen goods, restore the reputation of someone slandered, pay compensation for injuries). Simple justice requires as much. But sin also injures and weakens the sinner himself, as well as his relationships with God and neighbor. Absolution takes away sin, but it does not remedy all the disorders sin has caused. Raised up from sin, the sinner must still recover his full spiritual health by doing something more to make amends for the sin: he must "make satisfaction for" or "expiate" his sins. This satisfaction is also called "penance." (Catechism 1459)

We should put those we have hurt in our intercessions. We should pray that they might be healed by God's love and thereby freed from hurt, from the lack of love that we have shown them. We should pray that they experience the love of Jesus, healing the anguish of our sin against them, and making them whole again. We should do this also for those with whom we have been reconciled.

You may recall that Purgatory is for the temporal effects of sin. Purgatory is to remove the imperfection of venial sins, the left over effects of sin—those that are forgiven but for which we have not completely made restitution. Thus when we pray for those in Purgatory, we are helping with that restoration and reconciliation within the Body of Christ.

Perhaps when we die we remember the things we should have done to make restitution. We accept the time of purification in Purgatory for repairing, as far as we are able, the effects of our sins. Maybe we spend the Purgatory time in prayers and penance for those people on earth and those in Purgatory who have suffered because of our sins. Thus the Church teaches that "To understand this doctrine and practice of the Church, it is necessary to understand that sin has a double consequence.

Grave sin deprives us of communion with God and therefore makes us incapable of eternal life, the privation of which is called the 'eternal punishment' of sin. On the other hand every sin, even venial, entails an

unhealthy attachment to creatures, which must be purified either here on earth, or after death in the state called PURGATORY. This purification frees one from what is called the 'temporal punishment' of sin." (Catechism 1472)

Forgiveness is not cheap. Jesus sacrificed himself for our sins. We are expected to do the same for our sins. Even though our efforts and prayers are a small sacrifice in comparison to his, Jesus fills in the gaps and pours forth His abundant love. Let us accept our responsibility and reconcile where we can and invoke His Holy Name for those where we can't.

(John Murphy is a member of the Archdiocese of San Francisco, Charismatic Renewal Board and is a member of Saint Gregory's Parish, San Mateo. He is an Electronics Instructor at OICW, Menlo Park.)

A MORNING PRAYER

Dear Lord, I thank You for this day. I thank You for my being able to see and to hear this morning. I'm blessed because You are a forgiving God and an understanding God. You have done so much for me and You keep on blessing me.

Forgive me this day for everything I have done, said or thought that was not pleasing to you. I ask now for Your forgiveness. Please keep me safe from all danger and harm. Help me to start this day with a new attitude and plenty of gratitude. Let me make the best of each and every day to clear my mind so that I can hear from You. Please broaden my mind that I can accept all things. Let me not whine and whimper over things I have no control over. Let me continue to see sin through God's eyes and acknowledge it as evil. And when I sin, let me repent, and confess with my mouth my wrongdoing, and receive the forgiveness of God. And when this world closes in on me, let me remember Jesus' example-to slip away and find a quiet place to pray. It's the best response when I'm pushed beyond my limits. I know that when I can't pray, You listen to my heart.

Continue to use me to do Your will. Continue to bless me that I may be a blessing to others. Keep me strong that I may help the weak. Keep me uplifted that I may have words of encouragement for others.

I pray for those that are lost and can't find their way. I pray for those that are misjudged and misunderstood. I pray for those who don't know You intimately. I pray for those that don't believe. But I thank you that I believe. I believe that God changes people and God

changes things. I pray for all my sisters and brothers, for each and every family member in their households. I pray for peace, love and joy in their homes that they are out of debt and all their needs are met. I pray that every eye that reads this knows there is no problem, circumstance, or situation greater than God.

Every battle is in Your hands for You to fight. I pray that these words be received into the hearts of every eye that sees them and every mouth that confesses them willingly. This is my prayer. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

(from: Bernadette)

CHOOSE HOW YOU START YOUR DAY TOMORROW

Michael is the kind of guy you love to hate. He is always in a good mood and always has something positive to say: When someone would ask him how he was doing, He would reply, "If I were any better, I would be twins!"

He was a natural motivator. If an employee was having a bad day, Michael was there telling the employee how to look on the positive side of the situation.

Seeing this style really made me curious, so one day I went up to Michael and asked him, "I don't get it! You can't be a positive person all of the time. How do you do it?"

Michael replied, "Each morning I wake up and say to myself, you have two choices today. You can choose to be in a good mood or you can choose to be in a bad mood. I choose to be in a good mood.

Each time something bad happens, I can choose to be a victim or I can choose to learn from it. I choose to learn from it. Every time someone comes to me complaining, I can choose to accept their complaining or I can point out the positive side of life. I choose the positive side of life.

"Yeah, right, it's not that easy," I protested. "Yes, it is," Michael said. "Life is all about choices. When you cut away all the junk, every situation is a choice. You choose how you react to situations. You choose how people affect your mood. Your bottom line: It's your choice how you live life."

I reflected on what Michael said. Soon thereafter, I left the Tower Industry to start my own business. We lost touch, but I often thought about him when I made

a choice about life instead of reacting to it. Several years later, I heard that Michael was involved in a serious accident, falling some 60 feet from a communications tower.

After 18 hours of surgery and weeks of intensive care, Michael was released from the hospital with rods placed in his back.

I saw Michael about six months after the accident. When I asked him how he was, he replied. "If I were any better, I'd be twins. Wanna see my scars?"

I declined to see his wounds, but I did ask him what had gone through his mind as the accident took place. "The first thing that went through my mind was the well-being of my soon to be born daughter, "

Michael replied. "Then, as I lay on the ground, I remembered that I had two choices: I could choose to live or I could choose to die. I chose to live."

Weren't you scared? Did you lose consciousness?" I asked.

Michael continued, "the paramedics were great. They kept telling me I was going to be fine. But when they wheeled me into the ER and I saw the expressions on the faces of the doctors and nurses, I got really scared.

In their eyes, I read "he's a dead man. I knew I needed

"What did you do?" I asked.

"Well, there was a big burly nurse shouting questions at me," said Michael. "She asked if I was allergic to anything. "Yes, I replied."

The doctors and nurses stopped working as they waited for my reply. I took a deep breath and yelled, "Gravity."

Over their laughter, I told them, "I am choosing to live. Operate on me as if I am alive, not dead."

Michael lived, thanks to the skill of his doctors, but also because of his amazing attitude. I learned from him that every day we have the choice to live fully. Attitude, after all, is everything.

"Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own." (Matthew 6:34)

After all today is the tomorrow you worried about yesterday.

(from J.P. in Connecticut)

HEALING PRAYER at BEDTIME

Jesus, through the power of the Holy Spirit, go back into my memory as I sleep. Every hurt that has ever been done to me – heal that hurt. Every hurt that I have ever caused to another person – heal that hurt. All the relationships that have been damaged in my whole life that I'm not aware of – heal those relationships.

But Lord, if there is anything that I need to do – if I need to go to a person because he is still suffering from my hand, bring to my awareness that person.

I choose to forgive, and I ask to be forgiven. Remove whatever bitterness may be in my heart, Lord, and fill the empty spaces with your love.

Thank you, Jesus.

AMEN

(When we pray this prayer, our Lord gently and gradually removes layers of emotional scar tissue while we sleep, allowing us to be happier people. Each night we pray it, we are making a deposit in an account with fantastic dividends.)

(Phyllis Devereux, Garden Grove, California)

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.

We want to keep the PFMC open from 10 AM to 5 PM daily. In order to do this we need a list of volunteers we can count on to meet their scheduled times. We need regular daily and/or weekly help as

well as help once a month – whatever you can give. We will give you a good orientation, and make use of the gifts that God has given you.

Please come and see the new 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

YOUR HELP IS NEEDED

In every issue of “The PILGRIM” you will find a donation slip. Your donations help us with our electric bills, the printing of the newsletter, the postage, phone bills, insurance and repairs. It is only through donations that we are able to set up retreats and days of recollection. Won’t you help us monthly? Place your envelope with your bills, and remember us as you can. Your monthly tithing helps so much.

The PFMC is a lay Ministry made up of dedicated Roman Catholics. **It is totally dependent upon financial donations. Every person working in the PFMC is a volunteer for Our Lady’s work of converting souls to her Son, Jesus.**

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

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. 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 host this program weekly in conjunction with In His Sign Radio Network. Dominic Lettieri has arranged to have this half-hour sponsored by the Pilgrims of Faith Marian Center (PFMC), A Religious Association, Inc. There will be prayer, scripture, discussion of the Ephesians 6: 11 and following, announcements, call-in time, discussion with callers, healing prayer and summary. The call-in number is 856 962-8178.

LOURDES, PARIS and NEVERS JULY 13 (Friday) to JULY 20 (Friday)

Fly with Pilgrims of Faith Marian Center (PFMC) Pilgrimage Coordinators Vince and Livia Nocella and Spiritual Directors, Father Jim McDonald from Bishop Eustice High School, Pennsauken, NJ, and Father Laserian Nwoga from Our Lady of Mount Carmel Parish, Berlin, NJ, on Air France to Paris and then to Pau. Stay for three nights in Lourdes and then three nights in Paris. There will be a day trip from Paris to the Convent of Saint Gildard in Nevers, France, where Saint Bernadette lies incorrupt. Back in Paris, you will be taken to the Sacre Coeur Basilica, Notre Dame, the beautiful chapel of the Miraculous Medal where St. Catherine Laboure lies incorrupt for Holy Mass, up the Eiffel Tower, and on a Seine river boat ride.

COST: \$1899 (Double Occupancy) plus \$70 taxes. Single Supplement \$299.

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

**JUST MEDJUGORJE with OVERNIGHT
in ROME**

NOVEMBER 9 to NOVEMBER 18

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 Croatian Air to and from Split, Croatia. Transfer to Medjugorje, Bosnia-Herzegovina is by guided motor coach. On return you will fly out of Split on November 17 and spend the night in Rome. Supper will be in a local restaurant near the hotel. Free time in the evening will allow you to see Rome by night, and in the early morning.

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 larger facilities at the Hilton Hotel, New Jersey (NJ) Route 70 and Cuthbert Boulevard, 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 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 -

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.

**ETERNAL WORD TELEVISION
NETWORK (EWTN) NEEDS SUPPORT**

If you enjoy the programming on EWTN, please send in regular and sacrificial contributions.

Kathleen as well as all the PFMC Volunteer Staff

PRESS BULLETIN 162, 5/26/2001

Twenty years since the beginning of the events of Medjugorje is enough time to give us a sufficient distance to observe the beginnings and the ensuing development. A greater chronological distance facilitates a sober distinction between what is central from what is secondary, and allows the focusing on what was essential all the time, without ever being questioned.

What is the permanent content of the events of Medjugorje throughout all these years? What can be considered as central, permanent and generally valid for the life of Christians today? In discerning the

phenomenon of Medjugorje, this has to be continuously examined and underlined.

In the life of a Christian, there are forms of behavior and substance, which are irreplaceable. These elements were given and repeated to us by Jesus. Two millenniums of Christianity have - without any doubt – shown the righteousness of the basic elements of the life of a believer.

One of the main elements in the messages of Our Lady is that piety and spirituality are not to be hidden or to be ashamed of. Our Lady underlines this at a time, which is unfavorable for expressions of piety and of spirituality, which are indispensable for life. Let us not forget that these themes are very poorly and shyly represented in the preaching of the Church.

While we hear more and more about renouncing food for the sake of bodily beauty, Our Lady speaks of renouncing food – fasting – as an exercise in the imitation of the life of Jesus, and finding inner peace. While the opinion prevails that prayer can be replaced, as it is supposed to be just demanding and asking – Our Lady calls to prayer, without necessarily saying why or for whom. While speaking of reconciliation, we strongly think about its underlying political, social and public aspect - Our Lady speaks of reconciliation with God and with oneself. Integral reconciliation means reconciliation of inner tensions and enmities within a person, because these tensions and enmities remain within man even when political, social and public peace is assured. All this says that Medjugorje and similar movements in the world are a real need of Christianity today, and that – if we approach them with faith – they will fulfil their role in a period of the life of the Church. They will fulfil it also because, in their way, they underline principally what is essential in the Gospel.

Fra Ivan Landeka

NUMBER of COMMUNIONS and NUMBER of CONCELEBRANTS

In the month of April, 115,000 communions were distributed and 1925 priests concelebrated Holy Mass in Medjugorje.

FIRST COMMUNION

In the Parish of Medjugorje, the young children traditionally receive their First Communion on the first Sunday in May. This year, 81 children received this sacrament of unity with the Eucharistic Jesus. In the message of February 25, 1998, Our Lady said: “Only

if you come closer to Jesus will you comprehend the immeasurable love He has for each of you... you will become more open to the gift of faith and love towards the Church and the people who are around you.” Let us pray for these children and for all people in the parish of Medjugorje, that they may always be faithful to its mission in the Church!

A PERUVIAN BISHOP in MEDJUGORJE

Mgr. José Antúnez de Mayolo, Bishop from the Archdiocese of Ayacucho in Peru, came for a private visit to Medjugorje from May 13 to 16, 2001. These are his impressions:

“I heard about Medjugorje for the first time several years ago from a cousin of mine who lives in Germany and who had come to Medjugorje. She invited me to come to Medjugorje and, because I have to go to Rome this year, I decided to come to Medjugorje with her. This is a beautiful sanctuary where I find much faith, where I find faithful who live their faith, where faithful come for confession. I was hearing the confessions of Spanish pilgrims. I participated in Eucharistic celebrations and I liked everything very, very much. It is really very beautiful here. It is right that Medjugorje is called a place of prayer for the whole world and “the confessional of the world”. I have been to Lourdes, but it is a very different reality. Lourdes and Medjugorje cannot be compared. They are two different realities. In Lourdes, the event has ended, but here, everything is still developing. Here, faith can be felt in a much stronger way than in Lourdes. Medjugorje is still quite unknown in Peru, but I promise to become an apostle of Medjugorje in my country. The faith is strong and alive here, and this is what attracts so many pilgrims from the whole world. I should like to tell them to have a strong love for the Blessed Virgin Mary. Let them love Her mightily, because She is our Mother and because She is always with us. This is why, those who live and work here have to love Her, but so do the priests who come from abroad. Pilgrims who come here have already started their spiritual journey towards the Blessed Virgin Mary and they already have faith. But many are still without faith. Here, I didn’t feel their presence. I shall come back, I shall surely come back! It is beautiful here. Thank you for your fraternal welcome, for all you have done for me, personally, and for all the pilgrims who visit this place. May God, through the intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary, bless you and your country!”

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

CALENDARS:

In *June* the Church celebrates the Solemnities of **HOLY TRINITY (10)**, **CORPUS CHRISTI (17)**, **SACRED HEART (22)**, **BIRTH of SAINT JOHN the BAPTIST (24)**, and **SAINTS PETER and PAUL (29)**, and the Memorials of *Saints Barnabas, Apostle (11)*, *Anthony of Padua (13)*, *Romuald (19)*, *Aloysius Gonzaga (21)*, *Cyril of Alexandria (27)*), and *Irenaeus (28)*, and of *The First Martyrs of Rome (30)* and *The Immaculate Heart of Mary (23)*. Church calendars show **Fathers Day (17)**.

In *July* the Church celebrates the Feasts of *Saints Thomas, Apostle (3)* and *James, Apostle (25)* and the Memorials of *Saints Elizabeth of Portugal (4)*, *Anthony Mary Zaccaria (5)*, *Maria Goretti (6)*, *Benedict, Abbot (11)*, *Henry (13)*, *Bonaventure (15)*, *Lawrence of Brindisi (21)*, *Mary Magdalene (22)*, *Bridget of Sweden (23)*, *Joachim and Ann (26)*, *Martha (29)*, *Peter Chrysologus (30)* and *Ignatius of Loyola (31)* and *Blessed Junipero Serra (1)* and *Kateri Tekakwitha (14)* as well as **Our Lady of Mount Carmel (16)**. Church calendars show **Independence Day (4)**.

In *August*, the Church celebrates the Solemnity of the **ASSUMPTION (15)**, the Feasts of the **Transfiguration (6)**, *Saints Lawrence (10)* and *Bartholomew (24)* and the Memorials of *Saints Alphonsus Liguori (1)*, *Eusebius of Vercelli (2)*, *John Vianney (4)*, *Cajetan (7)*, *Pope Sixtus II and Companions (7)*, *Dominic (8)*, *Clare (11)* *Pope Pontian (13)*, *Hippolytus (13)*, *Maximilian Kolbe (14)*, *Stephen of Hungary (16)*, *Jane Frances de Chantal (18)*, *John Eudes (19)*, *Bernard (20)*, *Pope Pius X (21)*, *Rose of Lima (23)*, *Louis of France (25)*, *Joseph Calasanz (25)*, *Monica (27)* and *Augustine (28)* as well as the **Dedication of Saint Mary Major (5)**, **Queenship of Mary (22)** and the **Martyrdom of Saint John the Baptist (29)**.

The PILGRIM

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Pilgrims of Faith Marian Center (PFMC), A Religious Association, Inc.

NON-PROFIT and IRS Code 501(c)(3) TAX EXEMPT

Keith and Kathleen Werner, Co-Directors

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

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

If there is no time to read it all now, please put it with other reading material in a place where you can read at least an article per day until the next issue arrives. We operate on divine providence and the kind donations of those who can afford to support us. **PRIESTS!** Please note that **HOMILY** ideas have come from priests reading articles in "The PILGRIM!"



AROUND the PFMC AREA

Please review the Bulletin Notices on pages 26 through 27 and assist us with getting them into your Parish Bulletin. For additional information, call the PFMC at (856) 768-9228. 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>

