



The PILGRIM

Vol. 13, No. 1 Pilgrims of Faith Marian Center (PFMC)

January 2002

MESSAGE of 12/25/2001

Dear Children! I call you today and encourage you to prayer for peace. Especially today I call you, carrying the newborn Jesus in my arms for you, to unite with Him through prayer and to become a sign to this peaceless world. Encourage each other, little children, to prayer and love. May your faith be an encouragement to others to believe and to love more. I bless you all and call you to be closer to my heart and to the heart of little Jesus. Thank you for having responded to my call.

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

A PRAYER



O Holy Spirit, great Consoler, O Infinite Love that possesses Heavenly secrets to draw forth happiness from all our sorrows and pain, lift the heavy burdens present before us.

You are the Paraclete from which we are enabled to enter into the deep mystery of Love. Release us into the joy of freedom, a detached will and divine poverty of our soul.

You have given us Your Divine Promises, from which the joy of hope escapes into our very beings. Lord, thank You for this pledge of our inheritance. We are guaranteed our fulfillment in full intimacy with You.

Fill us with Your majesty and beauty, with Your goodness, and Your riches. Lord, when love calls, teach us to follow as long as it brings us to You, our Beloved. Enfold us in your Heavenly embrace.

AMEN.

(Kathleen prays from the heart for each issue.)

ROOMS CONTINUE to FILL for the 2002 RETREAT CONFERENCE

If you are planning on attending the PFMC 2002 Retreat Conference with Father DeGrandis and

"The PILGRIM" for January 2002 is dedicated to "Mary, Theotokos – God Bearer." See page 3 for Table of Contents / "IN THIS ISSUE . . ."

Father Hampsch and many others great speakers, and you have not made your reservations, please consider doing so as soon as possible. The latest report from the Hilton Hotel is that we have filled all of the available rooms containing two double beds. We are verifying this information with our own PFMC registration list. There are still rooms available with a single King size bed. These rooms can accommodate additional roll-away or cot type beds if requested.

After February 2, 2002, the Hilton Hotel group rate of \$89 per room per night is no longer guaranteed for our group so please reserve your hotel room now. Call 1-800-HILTONS or 856-665-6666 TODAY.

We still have plenty of seats in the ballroom and want to book at least 1000 in advance. We will have the Hilton Hotel set up extra seats for walk-ins, but we would appreciate advance registration so we can get material ready in advance. If you have not yet reserved your seat, please fill out the enclosed Retreat Conference, Youth Track, and/or 3 Day Extension registration forms as appropriate and send or fax to us immediately. Remember we take Discover, Master Card, and Visa for all donations and registration activities. Thank you.

(PFMC 2002 Retreat Conference Volunteers)

POPE JOHN PAUL II ENTRUSTS PEACE of WORLD to the BLESSED VIRGIN MARY

John Paul II expressed words of sadness and concern Friday when he entrusted the peace of the world to the Immaculate Conception.

Dark clouds gather on the horizon of the world,"the Pope said. Humanity, which greeted the dawn of the third millennium with hope, now feels overwhelmed by the threat of new and disconcerting conflicts."

The Holy Father's words were part of a prayer he recited on his knees, before the historic statue of the Immaculate Conception, in Rome's Piazza di Spagna.

Peace in the world is endangered,"the Pontiff said, as he prayed to the Blessed Virgin Mary. This is why we come to you, Immaculate Virgin, to ask you to obtain, as an understanding and strong Mother, that spirits, freed from the smoke of hatred, be open to mutual forgiveness, constructive solidarity and peace."

More than 10,000 people attended the open-air ceremony, including top city officials. The Holy Father proposed Christian commitment as a source of hope, given the current grave situation. Every believer, in his own circumstances of life," must become a sign so that all will see clearly that fidelity to Christ changes one's personal life and augurs for a future of peace, a better future for all,"he concluded.

(At Open-Air Ceremony in Piazza di Spagna
VATICAN CITY, <http://www.Zenit.org>)

MARY, MOTHER of GOD

Any list of Catholic saints begins with the *Theotokos*, Mary, the God-Bearer, whose acceptance of God's will in her life enabled the Incarnation of the Son of God. For centuries, meditating on the life of Mary has led Christians to a closer communion with her son, Jesus Christ.

The primary Marian prayer in the West is, of course, the Rosary <http://www.rosary-center.org/howto.htm>.

[This article was captured from an Internet web page (see credit at end of article) and had active links to other pages. The links have been copied and inserted for your use. At the above listed Internet Universal Resource Locator (URL) can be found the How to Pray the Rosary"page reprinted in the next article plus active links to the Mysteries and Prayers of the Rosary.]

Popularized between the Twelfth and Fifteenth

Centuries, it is a meditative vehicle for appreciating the presence of God throughout our world and our lives, and for pondering the humility and trust with which Mary lived her life. A popular legend holds that Mary herself gave the first Rosary to Saint Dominic, which he used to convert heretics. If the true origin of the Rosary is less precise, still today the Dominican Order has the responsibility of promoting this devotion throughout the Church. [See <http://www.rosary-center.org/1149n5.htm> and the article In Defense of Tradition"which is after How to Pray the Rosary.]"

The great *Magnificat*, composed by Mary herself, [and printed below] is a centerpiece of the prayer life of the Church. Every evening, Catholics around the world pray this canticle as part of the Divine Office, [explained at <http://www.universalis.com/> and discussed in the third article following this one on WHAT IS the LITURGY of the HOURS?" which with the Mass composes the Church's public prayer and consecration of time to God.

My soul gives glory to the Lord, My spirit rejoices in God my Maker, For He has looked with favor on his lowly servant.

From this day, all generations will call me blessed. The Almighty has done great things for me, And holy is His Name.

He has mercy on those who fear him in every generation. He has shown the strength of his arm. He has scattered the proud in their conceit.

He has cast down the mighty from their seats, And has lifted up the lowly. He has filled the hungry with good things, And the rich He has sent away empty.

He has come to the help of His servant Israel, For He has remembered His promise of mercy, The promise he made to our fathers, To Abraham and his children forever. (Luke 1: 46-54)

Holy Mary, mother of the Redeemer, pray for us!

(<http://www.smart.net/~tak/Patrons/mary.html>)

HOW to PRAY the ROSARY

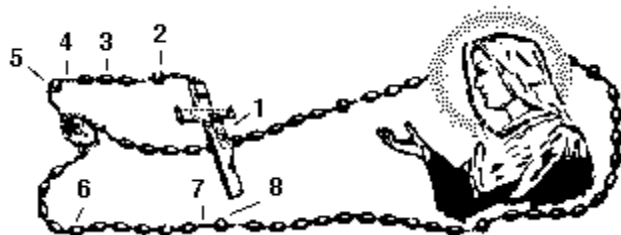
The purpose of the Rosary is to help keep in

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.

memory certain principal events or mysteries in the history of our salvation, and to thank and praise God for them.

There are fifteen mysteries reflected upon in the Rosary, and these are divided into the five JOYFUL MYSTERIES, the five SORROWFUL MYSTERIES, and the five GLORIOUS MYSTERIES.



1. Make the Sign of the Cross and say the 'Apostle's Creed.'
2. Say the 'Our Father.'
3. Say three 'Hail Marys.'
4. Say the 'Glory be to the Father.'
5. Announce the First Mystery; then say the 'Our Father.'
6. Say ten 'Hail Marys,' while meditating on the Mystery.
7. Say the 'Glory be to the Father.'
8. Announce the Second Mystery; then say the 'Our Father.' Repeat 6 and 7 and continue with Third, Fourth and Fifth Mysteries in the same manner.

After the Rosary, pray:

HAIL, HOLY QUEEN, Mother of Mercy, our life, our sweetness and our hope! To thee do we cry, poor banished children of Eve; to thee do we send up our sighs, mourning and weeping in this valley of tears. Turn then, most gracious advocate, thine eyes of mercy toward us, and after this our exile, show unto us the blessed fruit of thy womb, Jesus. O clement, O loving, O sweet Virgin Mary!

V. Pray for us, O Holy Mother of God.

R. That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

Let us pray. O GOD, whose only begotten Son, by His life, death, and resurrection, has purchased for us the rewards of eternal life, grant, we beseech Thee, that meditating upon

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these mysteries of the Most Holy Rosary of the Blessed Virgin Mary, we may imitate what they contain and obtain what they promise, through the same Christ Our Lord. Amen.

After each decade say the following prayer requested by the Blessed Virgin Mary at Fatima: O my Jesus, forgive us our sins, save us from the fires of hell, lead all souls to Heaven, especially those who have most need of your mercy."

As a rule the Joyful mysteries are said on Monday and Thursday, the Sorrowful on Tuesday and Friday, and the Glorious on Wednesday, Saturday, and Sunday

(with this exception: Sundays of Christmas season - the Joyful; Sundays of Lent - Sorrowful)

<http://www.rosary-center.org/howto.htm>

M

was not used in the time of Dominic as applied to this devotion. So obviously there would be no reference to that term in documents of his time.

THE MARIAN PSALTER

The custom of counting repeated prayers by the use of a string of beads or knots, or pebbles in a bowl was prevalent long before the time of Saint Dominic. This was common among the Moslems, the Buddhists, and other non-Christian religions as well as among Christians.

From time immemorial the 150 psalms of the bible comprised the most important part of the official liturgical prayers prayed by the clergy and the monks in monasteries. Since, however, many of the common folk were illiterate, there was an attempt to offer those who could not read (especially the Latin) a substitute for the 150 psalms. The practice arose of substituting 150 OUR FATHERS in place of the Latin psalms, using a string of beads to count them, dividing them into fifties."This chaplet, or string of beads, came to be known as Paternoster"beads. Little by little, the HAIL MARY took its place along side the CREED and the OUR FATHER as a standard prayer. But still, it was only the first half that was used. In the course of time there came to be a parallel Psalter, i.e., one of 150 HAIL MARYS known as the MARIAN PSALTER.

THE ALBIGENSIAN HERESY

The Albigensian heresy that plagued southern France in Saint Dominic's time was based on a dual view of the world similar to that of the Manicheans of the 3rd century, namely, that there are two supreme beings, a good God who created the spirit world, and an evil god who created the material world. The spiritual world is essentially good, and the material world (including the human body) is essentially evil. The evil god (Satan) imprisoned spirits in material bodies, so whatever one can do to be released from that prison (including suicide) is good. Since matter is evil, marriage and the procreation of mankind is evil. The proponents of this heresy rejected Catholic belief regarding the Trinity, the Incarnation, the sacraments, hell and purgatory, but believed in the transmigration of souls. Christ was not truly a man, nor therefore, was Mary truly the Mother of God. The crucifixion, death and resurrection of Christ were only illusions, and the whole concept of the cross in the Christian life was rejected.

rosarium"meaning rose garden, or bouquet of roses,

This heresy was deeply rooted in southern France in the first part of the 13th century. Its rapid growth was

his claims (written 250 years after Saint Dominic) cannot be substantiated by any documents dating from the time of Saint Dominic.

Yet, it appears that this argument of silence put forth by the Bollandists did not seem to outweigh (in the mind of succeeding Popes) the impact of the centuries-old tradition concerning Saint Dominic and the Rosary; for Popes coming after the 17th century continued to refer to Saint Dominic in connection with the beginnings of the Rosary.

THE MILITIA OF JESUS CHRIST

Father Francis Willam, in his book *THE ROSARY, ITS HISTORY AND MEANING* (p. 26), speaks of the "Militia of Jesus Christ" founded by Saint Dominic, the members of which recited daily the Psalter of Our Lady. He refers also to the "Confraternity of Prayer" founded by the Dominicans in Piacenza in 1259 (38 years after the death of Saint Dominic), the members of which also prayed the 150 HAIL MARYS daily. Father Benedict Ashly, O.P. speaks of this Militia as having been found by a Dominican Bishop of Breganza who died in 1271.

At any rate, we have the Marian Psalter actively employed during the life of Saint Dominic and shortly after. In this we have the 150 HAIL MARYS which constitute the "body" of the Rosary, i.e., the vocal prayer. What is wanting is the "soul" of the Rosary, i.e., the praying of these Hail Marys joined with reflection on the mysteries of our salvation. And yet, as Father

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

covering the life of Christ and of the saints included in the liturgical calendar. These were men of undeniable scholarship who set out to rewrite the lives of the saints, so as to preserve in them all that could be established by historical sources, and to weed out legends that surround the lives of many saints.

This group concluded that there was not sufficient evidence to support the tradition of Saint Dominic and the Rosary, that this tradition stemmed only from the testimony of Alan de Rupe, O.P. (d. 1475), and that

Ciappi pointed out, a common method of preaching of Saint Dominic was to preach on the life of Christ, interspersing his reflections with the Marian Psalter.

So it could well be that the heart of what the Rosary is (the combination of vocal and mental prayer) was practiced by Saint Dominic, not as we have the Rosary today, but in such a way that what he did then in time evolved into what we have now; i.e., that his form of preaching interspersed with prayer eventually evolved into what the Rosary is today.

We know from his biographers that Saint Dominic had a great devotion to the Mother of God. And it could well be that the inspiration to preach as he did came from her, as tradition says it did, i.e., the combining of her prayer (the Hail Mary as it existed then) with the reflection on the mysteries of our salvation. Pope Pius XII, in his encyclical on the Rosary, seems to imply this when he states that this devotion in its origin and the wisdom of its constitution is more divine than

ALAN DE RUPE

History well documents the fact that Alan de Rupe (also Alan de la Roche) (1428-1475) was a great apostle of the Rosary. There must be some basis for his claims that Saint Dominic's connection with the Rosary is proved both from tradition and from the testimony of writers."I find it hard to believe that he just made it up. He was not a dreamer. He was a Master of Sacred Theology, wrote a commentary on the Sentences of Peter Lombard, lectured in Paris, was visitor of his Order in central Europe, wrote his APOLOGIA for the Rosary, and preached in widely spread places. He founded the Rosary Confraternity in 1470 in Douai, and did much to popularize the Rosary.

It could well be that sources to which Alan de Rupe had access did not exist in later centuries. Even if documents did originally exist connecting Saint Dominic and the Rosary, countless religious houses and convents were destroyed (with their libraries) in the wars of religious persecution that ravaged Europe over the centuries.

We find this thought clearly expressed by John S. Johnson in his book THE ROSARY IN ACTION, (Ch.3) The critics relied mainly on the argument of silence to question the ancient tradition that the Blessed Virgin gave the Rosary to Saint Dominic. They should have known that many documents referred to by Alan de Rupe may have existed, but did

not survive the burning scourge of the Huguenots, who destroyed convents, monasteries, libraries among the countless institutions they committed to the flames. The critics went so far as to say that Alan had invented the Rosary devotion. . . and had attributed it to Saint Dominic to tie it in with a famous name. But the two persons Alan relies on for his story of the origin of the Rosary had their *Mariales* preserved at the Convent of Gand: which library was burnt during the wars on religion. There are other documents which have been discovered in later years which were from before Alan de Rupe's time. The long poem *ROSARIUS* antedates him by 100 years or so, and clearly refers to Saint Dominic and the battle of Muret. This removes Alan from all suspicion of inventing his sources. The elements were all in place at the time of Saint Dominic; how did they get together in the Rosary?"(p. 26)

We might put this question in another way: Were these elements brought together by the preaching of Saint Dominic? We cannot prove with certainty that they were; but neither does the lack of documents prove that they were not.

Masie Ward further undermines the argument of silence when she writes in her book THE SPLENDOR OF THE ROSARY: Discussions of what happened in the middle ages are apt to be obscured by the fact that so many documents have been lost, especially during the ravages of the Black Plague."(p.34)

Father Guy Bedouelle, O.P., in his book ST. DOMINIC, THE GRACE AND THE WORD, includes this important comment about a contemporary of Saint Dominic: Blessed Romee of Livia, one of Saint Dominic's companions, Prior of the Convent of Lyons, France in 1223, and later Provincial of Provence, was said to have died, according to the medieval chronicler Bernard Gui, holding tightly in his fingers the little knotted cord on which he counted his AVES. Historians regard this as one of the earliest texts describing our present Rosary in its embryonic form."(p. 254)

Father Ludovicus Fanfani, O.P. states in his book DE ROSARI B. M. VIRGINIS that some years after the death of Saint Dominic, the devotion of the Rosary (as he promoted it) began to decline. Among the causes of the decline were the great plague of the Black Death which swept through Europe wiping out great portions of the population, and the great Western Schism - which split Europe into various factions. The devotion did not completely disappear, however, as traces of it remained among the people; and, says

Father Fanfani, documents are not wanting to establish that the devotion was kept alive in England during the 13th and 14th centuries. (p.27)

TESTIMONY OF THE POPES

Pope Benedict XIV (1740-58) was a renowned scholar and a promoter of historical studies and research. When he was an official of the Sacred Congregation of Rites, he was asked about the tradition of Saint Dominic and the Rosary. The following is his response, a century after the work of the Bollandists:

“You ask whether Saint Dominic was the first institutor of the Rosary, and show that you yourselves are bewildered and entangled in doubts on the matter. Now, what value do you attach to the testimony of so many Popes, such as Leo X (1521), Pius V (1572), Gregory XIII (1585), Sixtus V (1590), Clement VIII (1605), Alexander VII (1667), Bl. Innocent XI (1689), Clement XI (1721), Innocent XIII (1724) and others who unanimously attribute the institution of the Rosary to Saint Dominic, the founder of the Dominican Order, an apostolic man who might be compared to the apostles themselves and who, undoubtedly due to the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, became the designer, the author, promoter, and most illustrious preacher of this admirable and truly heavenly instrument, the Rosary.”

After quoting the above, Father Anthony N. Fuerst, in his well documented book, *THIS ROSARY*, states: To reject this tradition in its entirety, without strong arguments would be very rash.”(p. 20)

To the above list of Popes accepting the tradition of Saint Dominic and the Rosary could be added many more coming after the time of Benedict XIV. But this is not the main argument supporting the tradition. It is the coming together of many pieces of a puzzle pertaining to the essentials of the tradition as handed down. For example:

1. given the fact that the members of the Militia of Jesus Christ founded by Saint Dominic, or by a Dominican of his day, prayed the 150 Hail Marys daily. . . .

2. given the fact of Saint Dominic’s devotion to Mary and his ardent prayer in combatting the great heresy of his day . . . along with the testimony of ALAN DE RUPE that Saint Dominic did receive some communication from the Mother of God as to how to combat the errors of his time. . . . (If Our Lady at Fatima gave us a remedy in this century for

overcoming Communism and attaining peace - which remedy included the Rosary - does it not seem probable that she would have intervened in the 13th century offering a means of combatting the devastating heresy of Albigensianism - as tradition assures us she did.)

3. given the fact that, as some of his biographers explain, a common manner of preaching of Dominic was the frequent alternating of his instruction on the mysteries of our faith with prayer. . . .

4. given the fact that the first beginning of this devotion in the time of Dominic was vastly different from its present structure, that then there was no set sequence of the mysteries, and that even the name (Rosary) had not yet been established. . . .

5. given the fact that many convents with their libraries were destroyed in the religious persecutions that followed the 13th century. . . .

In the light of the above, it seems to me that the negative argument (the absence of documents) is outweighed by the presence of the essential components that constitute the heart of what the Rosary is. It seems to me, not merely possible, but very probable, that the Mother of God (as Alan de Rupe testified) did use Saint Dominic in some way to give this devotion to the Church. One source of misconception in this regard is religious art, which portrays Saint Dominic receiving from Our Lady the Rosary such as we use today. This would not have been. But then, if artists are to portray this tradition, how else would they do it?

And too, what Dominic did could have been done in

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We do need to hear from you in writing at least once a year in order to keep you on our mailing list. Bulk Mail is not required to be returned if the delivery address is incorrect. In Christian charity we do not want delivery to incorrect addresses and waste God’s precious resources. There is no “subscription” fee. We do ask for free will donations to support **“The PILGRIM”** and the operations of the **PFMC**.

If you know someone who would enjoy the **“The PILGRIM”**, please ask them to contact us at the address printed in the box on page 5 or near the mailing label on the last page.

such a way that it did not stand out as an innovation, as something new; for it was simply taking the Psalter of Our Lady -already in existence - and using it as a means of making his preaching fruitful. It could be that for this reason it was not commented on by the chroniclers of his day. And yet, the combining of the HAIL MARY with reflection on the life of Christ is the essence of the Rosary devotion.

(by Father Paul A. Duffner, O.P. in *The Rosary Light & Life* - Vol 49, No 5, Sep-Oct 1996 posted at <http://www.rosary-center.org/howto.htm>)

WHAT IS the LITURGY of the HOURS?

The Liturgy of the Hours (also known as the Divine Office) is the richest single prayer resource of the Christian Church. It provides prayers, psalms and meditation for every hour of every day.

It has existed from the earliest times, to fulfil the Lord's command to pray without ceasing.

Never monotonous, always new, it provides the means for the whole world, united, to pray together and sanctify every hour of every day of every year. All over the world, hundreds of thousands of priests and religious have vowed to pray the Liturgy daily, and all over the world they do, in public and in private, in tin shacks and cathedrals, in palaces and in prison camps.

But the Liturgy's very richness is also its weakness. The liturgical calendar, the four-week cycle of psalms, the celebrations of saints - all these interact in an intricate dance of prayer that requires some 6,000 pages of small print in 3 or 4 volumes. The complete books (the Breviary) are expensive to buy, heavy to carry, and, except for the really dedicated, complex to use. Thus many people with a busy life in the world are unable to undertake the project of praying the liturgy, and so it remains shamefully unused.

The purpose of the Divine Office is to sanctify the day and all human activity."

The Office is... the prayer not only of the clergy but of the whole People of God."

Apostolic Constitution, Canticum Laudis.
<http://www.universalis.com/>

CLASSES RESUMED 1/2/2002

Dean Pulcini resumed his Wednesday evening seminars covering an "Introduction to Scripture" on 1/2/2002. The seminars are held in the Great Room of Epiphany House at 61 Cooper Road, Voorhees, NJ. They begin about 7 PM and end about 9 PM. We welcome you to join us for this semester's most interesting, informative, and challenging seminars. Build up your Faith, and learn about the origins of the Bible, and History of the times. Please call 856-768-9228 for more information.

RETREAT CONFERENCE - MARCH 8, 9, and 10, 2002



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

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

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

2. Fill out the appropriate reservation form on the four-page information sheet within this issue of *The PILGRIM* or made available through prayer groups

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

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

Call 856 768-9228 if you need addition information.

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

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

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

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

Michigan, Canada, England, Scotland, Australia, Hawaii, Puerto Rico and the West Indies.

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

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

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

SUPPORT for the PFMC

We are now grappling with another annual budget for the operations of the PFMC from Epiphany House. The down turn in the economy has apparently affected not only the nation's economy but also the contributions of those who receive The PILGRIM.” We have not wanted to curtail our operations or the monthly mailing but we see little choice unless we receive increased and regular contributions.

Please come to Epiphany House at 61 Cooper Road in Voorhees, NJ and browse over the books, statues, medals, and religious goods available for donations. The hours are from 10 AM to 5 PM Monday through Friday except on Wednesdays till 9 PM.

Father Jim Sauchelli blessed 61 Cooper with the Epiphany Blessing shortly after the property was acquired for use as home to the PFMC.

Think about signing someone up for the March 2002 Retreat Conference as a gift. What a spiritual gift to enrich anyone's life. Based on our 501(c)(3) tax exempt status, donations for gifts to others may be considered tax deductible.

Thank you and God be with you.

(Kathleen, Keith and all the volunteers.)

PETITION / DONATION SLIPS

All returned petition and donation slips like those found in 'The PILGRIM' will be taken to Medjugorje and prayed over at each day's Holy Masses. They will then be taken back to Rome, where they will be left in the office of the Holy Father. Each day the Holy Father takes all petitions he gets and prays for them at his daily Holy Mass. Thank you and God bless you.

Kathleen

THE SOLEMNITY OF MARY – MOTHER OF GOD

This feast, closely connected to the feast of Christmas, is the most important and oldest of the major feasts of Mary. It is based on the source of her privileges: her motherhood. Jesus Christ, God's Son "born of a woman," (Galatians 4,4) came to deliver us from sin and make us children of God. He is also Mary's Son, and she, his mother, helps bring his blessings to the world. She is

truly the Mother of God and of the Redeemer...not merely passively engaged by God, but freely cooperating in the work of our salvation through faith and obedience." (Lumen Gentium, 53, 56)

Mary was not simply a passive instrument in God's hands; rather she discovered and accepted new dimensions to her motherhood as her life unfolded. Scripture indicates signs of her new unfolding motherhood.

At the marriage feast in Cana in Galilee, where Jesus worked his first miracle, Mary is the Mother of Jesus" who manifests

"a new kind of motherhood according to the spirit and not just according to the flesh, that is to say Mary's solicitude for human beings, her coming to them in the wide variety of their wants and needs. At Cana in Galilee there is shown only one concrete aspect of human need, apparently a small one and of little importance (They have no wine). But it has a symbolic value, this coming to the aid of human beings means, at the same time, bringing those needs within the radius of Christ's messianic mission and salvific power." (Pope John Paul II, *Redemptoris Mater* 21)

Mary's care for humanity and its needs would not be limited to her earthly life; it lasts without interruption until the eternal fulfillment of all the elect. (Lumen Gentium, 62)

The PILGRIM

Whether in her own lifetime or from her place in heaven, Mary's solicitude for human beings looks, above all, to making known the messianic power of her Son. At Cana in Galilee she told the servers at table, "Do what he tells you." (John 2,5) In all her care for others, she points out Jesus to them.

Throughout her life, then, Mary was a follower of her Son. At the foot of the cross, her motherhood reached a new maturity when Mary experienced her Son's redeeming love for the world. Her spirit was touched and refined by the mystery of his death and resurrection.

From his cross, Jesus, seeing his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing there, said to Mary, Woman, behold your son." (John 19,25-27)

The words uttered by Jesus signify that the motherhood of her who bore Christ finds a 'new' continuation in the Church and through the Church, symbolized and represented by John. " (Redemptoris Mater, 24)

Before Pentecost, awaiting the coming of the Holy Spirit promised by Jesus, the disciples continued with one mind in prayer with the women and Mary, the mother of Jesus, and with his brethren." (Acts 1,14) Thus Mary who is present in the mystery of Christ as Mother becomes- by the will of the Son and the power of the Holy Spirit- present in the mystery of the Church. In the Church too she continues to be a maternal presence, as is shown by the words spoken from the cross: 'Woman, behold your son.' 'Behold, your mother.' "

Readings for the feast

The principal reading for the feast, from Saint Luke's gospel, describes the shepherds coming to Bethlehem where they

found Mary and Joseph and the baby lying in a manger." (Luke 2, 16-21)

Mother and son are found together. She presents her Son to them. In fact, she will always point to him. As a pilgrim of faith, she treasured all these things and reflected on them in her heart;" at the same time, she invites other pilgrims to treasure and reflect on the mystery of Jesus Christ.

Along with the Byzantine and Syrian churches, which celebrate the feast of the Mother of God (Theotokos) on December 26, the Roman church celebrates this primary feast close to the feast of the Birth of Jesus

(Redemptoris Mater)

(www.cptryon.org/compassion/mary)

A LITANY of PRAYER with MARY, MOTHER of JESUS, FRIEND of CHRISTIANS

R: "PRAY WITH US, MOTHER OF JESUS!"

You loved God's Word in the Scriptures, **R:**

You listened to a messenger from our God, **R:**

You believed His word, **R:**

You loved Joseph, faithful and caring husband, **R:**

You gave birth to Jesus in a Bethlehem stable, **R:**

You knew the terror and sorrow of King Herod's madness, **R:**

You loved your cousin Elizabeth, **R:**

Surely you knew John the Baptist, son of Elizabeth, **R:**

You had John the disciple Jesus loved as your friend, **R:**

You took John as a son, **R:**

Take us as your daughters and sons, **R:**

You watched your Son tormented and suffering, **R:**

You were there on that hill as Jesus died, **R:**

You were with the people who placed His body in the tomb, **R:**

You saw Jesus alive again in the glory of Easter, **R:**

You prayed with His friends after He ascended to our Father, **R:**

You left us no trace of your last years on this earth, **R:**

There are many who say they have seen you since then, **R:**

We pray with them, people especially devoted to you, **R:**

We pray with those who cannot accept their stories, **R:**

We pray for the poor, who call you their Queen, **R:**

We pray for the oppressed, who call you their Hope, **R:**

We pray for justice for your sisters, all women of the world, **R:**

We pray for our nation, that calls you its patroness, **R:**

We pray for our pope, who commends our world to your care, **R:**

We believe you were born free from all evil and sin, **R:**

We believe God has given you the fullness of everlasting life, **R:**

We believe that your son Jesus is the Son of God, **R:**

We believe in His promise that His Spirit is always among us, **R:**

(www.paa2000.com/resource/mprayer.htm)

VOCATIONS - 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>

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 bookmarked, type in the Uniform Resource Locator (URL) www.masstimes.org in the white box near the top of your browser.

HEAVENLY FATHER

Lord, I call on you right now in a special way. It is through your power that I was created. Every breath I take, every morning I wake, and every moment of every hour, I live under your power.

Father I ask you now to touch me with that same power. For if you created me from nothing, you can certainly recreate me. Fill me with the healing power of your spirit. Cast out anything that should not be in me. Mend what is broken. Root out any unproductive cells. Open any blocked arteries or veins and rebuild any damaged areas. Remove all inflammation and cleanse any infection.

Let the warmth of your healing love pass through my body to make new any unhealthy areas so that my body will function the way you created it to function.

And Father, restore me to full health in mind and body so that I may serve you the rest of my life.

I ask this through Christ Our Lord. AMEN

(source unknown)

THE PARADOX OF OUR TIME

The paradox of our time in history is that we have taller buildings but shorter tempers, wider freeways, but narrower viewpoints.

We spend more, but have less. We buy more, but enjoy less.

We have bigger houses and smaller families, more conveniences, but less time.

We have more degrees but less sense, more knowledge, but less judgment, more experts, yet more problems, more medicine, but less wellness

We drink too much, smoke too much, spend too recklessly, laugh too little, drive too fast, get too angry, stay up too late, get up too tired, read too little, watch TV too much, and pray too seldom.

We have multiplied our possessions, but reduced our values. We talk too much, love too seldom, and hate too often.

We've learned how to make a living, but not a life.

We've added years to life not life to years.

We've been all the way to the moon and back, but have trouble crossing the street to meet a new neighbor.

We conquered outer space but not inner space.

We've done larger things, but not better things. We've cleaned up the air, but polluted the soul. We've conquered the atom, but not our prejudice.

We write more, but learn less. We plan more, but accomplish less.

We've learned to rush, but not to wait. We build more computers to hold more information, to produce more copies than ever, but we communicate less and less.

These are the times of fast foods and slow digestion, big men and small character, steep profits and shallow relationships.

These are the days of two incomes but more divorce, fancier houses, but broken homes.

These are days of quick trips, disposable diapers, throwaway morality, one night stands, overweight bodies, and pills that do everything from cheer, to quiet, to kill.

It is a time when there is much in the showroom window and nothing in the stockroom. A time when technology can bring this letter to you, and a time when you can choose either to share this insight, or to just hit delete.

Remember, spend some time with your loved ones, because they are not going to be around forever.

Remember, say a kind word to someone who looks up to you in awe, because that little person soon will grow up and leave your side.

Remember, to give a warm hug to the one next to you, because that is the only treasure you can give with your heart and it doesn't cost a cent

Remember, to say, 'I love you' to your partner and your loved ones, but most of all mean it. A kiss and an embrace will mend hurt when it comes from deep inside of you

Remember to hold hands and cherish the moment for someday that person will not be there again.

Give time to love, give time to speak and give time to share the

Precious thoughts in your mind

(by George Carlin)

BRANDON'S PANCAKES

Six year old Brandon decided one Saturday morning to fix his parents pancakes. He found a big bowl and spoon, pulled a chair to the counter, opened the cupboard and pulled out the heavy flour canister, spilling it on the floor. He scooped some of the flour into the bowl with his hands, mixed in most of a cup of milk and added some sugar, leaving a floury trail on the floor which by now had a few tracks left by his kitten.

Brandon was covered with flour and getting frustrated. He wanted this to be something very good for Mom and Dad, but it was getting very bad. He didn't know what to do next, whether to put it all into the oven or on the stove, (and he didn't know how the stove worked!). Suddenly he saw his kitten licking from the bowl of mix and reached to push her away, knocking the egg carton to the floor. Frantically, he tried to clean up this monumental mess but slipped on the eggs, getting his pajamas white and sticky.

And just then he saw Dad standing at the door. Big crocodile tears welled up in Brandon's eyes. All he'd wanted to do was something good, but he'd made a terrible mess. He was sure a scolding was coming, maybe even a spanking. But his father just watched him. Then, walking through the mess, he picked up his crying son, hugged him and loved him, getting his own pajamas white and sticky in the process.

That's how God deals with us. We try to do something good in life, but it turns into a mess. Our marriage gets all sticky or we insult a friend or we can't stand our job or our health goes sour. Sometimes we just stand there in tears because we can't think of anything else to do. That's when God picks us up and loves us and forgives us, even though some of our mess gets all over Him.

But just because we might mess up, we can't stop trying like Brandon to make pancakes, for God or for others. Sooner or later we'll get it right, and then they'll be glad we tried.

(Bernadette – internet)

CONTRAVENING the OLD TESTAMENT, POTTER ARRIVES AS AN OCCULT TIDAL WAVE

It looks innocent enough, even cute. There is the bespectacled boy, Harry Potter, and he stands up

against the forces of evil. He does this by using magic. He's a wizard. He trains under witches. He is a witch -- more technically, a warlock. But it's all in fun. Harmless. Those who complain are on the fringe.

And so it is that at the most spiritually vulnerable time in recent world history comes an occult tidal wave, packaged irresistibly. This is the Beaver Cleaver of witchery. Never has the occult come in such a desirable form, and never has it come in such a massive fashion. We don't pretend to be experts on Potter, but we know all we need to know. We know that Potter casts spells, that he employs witchcraft (there is no such thing as "good" witchcraft), and that the books about him contain the names of actual demons. One former witch -- now a pastor -- described the Potter series as "Witchcraft manuals" written at a surprising level of sophistication.

There is the Hogwart's School of Witchcraft. There is a witch's actual incantation. Such is anything but harmless and the residue will be with us for years. For to orient our youth in the direction of the occult and to expose them to such forces in the name of fun is very dangerous and comes at a time (remember September 11?) when we're supposed to be in the mode of repentance. Societies in Egyptian and Roman times were chastised for involvement in precisely such paganism.

It has nothing to do with fanaticism. It has everything to do with the Bible. Again, the bottom line is simple. As it explicitly states in **Deuteronomy 18:10**: **"Let there not be found among you anyone who immolates his son or daughter in the fire, nor a fortuneteller, soothsayer, charmer, diviner, or caster of spells, nor one who consults ghosts or spirits or seeks oracles from the dead. Anyone who does such things is an abomination to the Lord."**

In another version (the King James) it explicitly uses the term "wizard" as a condemned practice and in **1 Samuel 15:23** we see mentioned **"the sin of witchcraft."** In **II Chronicles** is the account of a man who **"wrought much evil in the sight of the Lord"** because he **"used enchantments, and used witchcraft, and dealt with a familiar spirit, and with wizards."** It doesn't get much more direct than that. You believe the Bible or you believe J.K. Rowling.

As we recall, Rowling told an interviewer she was given the idea by an entity that popped into her head. We wonder what that could have been, but we do not

Ouji Board.

Hopefully, Potter will quickly fade. But it doesn't look like he will. It looks like it could be one of the biggest ever. And it couldn't come at a more spiritually vulnerable time. During a moment when the Lord is calling us back -- and specifically calling us to guard our youth -- here we are sending what can only be described as the occult's version of a tidal wave.

(Saturday, 24 November 2001, ccoletta@UDel.Edu)

A PRIEST COMMENTS about the ABOVE ARTICLE on HARRY POTTER

I agree with everything that is stated in the text that you forwarded to me about Harry Potter,-the books and the movie. They are especially dangerous because they are so attractive,-especially to little children.

Potter infests our children with a dangerous and dark psyche leaving them with the idea that they can conjure up these attractive and helpful entities.

The whole concept of Harry Potter is a subtle but real violation of the First Commandment.

(Father John - PADREJMAC@AOL.COM)

MAINSTREAMING WITCHCRAFT? PARENTS ASSESS HARRY POTTER

As Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone"opened to record breaking crowds the weekend of November 17, parents and experts continue to agree to disagree upon its appropriateness for children.

While some see the series as merely adventuresome entertainment, others wonder if the film might take the stigma away from witchcraft and the occult, opening children to danger.

Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone" is the first in the series of four Harry Potter adventures written by Britain's J.K. Rowling. The film follows the exploits of a bespectacled orphan with magical powers who attends the Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry.

In the first three days of its release, the film made a record \$93.5 million. Audiences packed theaters, with thousands lining up for midnight screenings.

"I have never attended a movie on opening weekend," admitted Barb Hennen, a Catholic mother of seven in Ghent, Minnesota. "Yet, it was really fun for my 13-year-old son and I to see the film together."

She and her son Robert saw the film at their local multiplex on November 17. "I was disappointed that some of the characters in the book were not in the movie," recalled Robert. To date, only one of Robert's 15 classmates had seen the film. "I hope to go see it again," said Robert, who admitted that he has read each of Rowling's four books at least five times each.

However, Barb Hennen cautioned that the film was probably not appropriate for anyone under the age of 9, "Lord Voldemort is scary," she said. "At one point he absorbs a man's body. That's not as clear or visible in the book. That certainly would not be appropriate for younger children to see."

Otherwise, she said it was a fine movie. "The Christian mothers I've talked to have agreed that it's an imaginative and adventuresome story. I don't think it's right to focus only on what could be wrong with it." While she admitted that it could be an entry point for a child into the occult, she added. "A child leaning in that direction might, but Harry Potter wouldn't be the only source the child would go to."

Michael O'Brien respectfully disagrees.

"I think it is a mistake to take a child to the Potter film," said the Canadian Catholic artist and author of "A Landscape with Dragons: The Battle for Your Child's Mind."

The series uses the symbol-world of the occult as its primary metaphor," he explained. "This has the potential of lowering a child's guard to the actual occult activity in the world around us, which is everywhere and growing."

O'Brien argues that both the books and the film present serious threats to the moral integrity of the coming generations. In the film, an added dimension of psychological influence is at work,"he said. "Any serious student of modern media recognizes the power of film to reshape consciousness. By using overt and subliminal techniques, it can override the mind's natural critical faculty."

He added that the widespread devotion to the Potter phenomenon, even among Catholic parents and scholars, is a symptom of our naivete about the power of culture. In our modern culture we have all become accustomed to eating a certain amount of poison in our diet: indeed we often no longer even recognize the poison. **Why have we accepted a set of books which glamorize and normalize occult activity, even though it is every bit as deadly to the soul as sexual sin?"**

Clare McGrath Merkle, a former New Age leader and a revert to the Catholic faith, said she has seen firsthand that O'Brien's warning should be heeded. "We just don't understand that our children live in a reality steeped in violence, sex and the occult," she said.

She said the problem with Potter remains, despite the explanation that the books depict an innocent, even humorous, while magic. "There is only one kind of magic," Merkle. "It's variously known as black magic, occultism, diabolism, or the dark arts."

THE DEFENSE

Los Angeles film critic Michael Medved, known for his defense of traditional virtues and criticism of Hollywood's rejection of them, defends Harry Potter.

"A number of Christian organizations have objected to the whole Harry Potter phenomenon, suggesting that it's benign, light-hearted treatment of witchcraft and the occult will lead your people into dangerous realms. I resisted this argument concerning the books and I reject it even more with the movie,"he said. "It's hard to imagine any child who will want to study necromancy spells or Satanism as a result of seeing the film."

Medved contends that the film projects a deadly serious battle between good and evil, while highlighting humane values of generosity, loyalty, discipline and selflessness."

"Magic" said Medved, "remains a staple in most of the best children's literature in history, and generations of young people have indulged in those fantasies without satanic influence. In Grimm's Fairy Tales,"for example,

magic and witches and shape-changing and curses and incantations have always played a role."

British Catholic home-schooling mother Debbie Nowak also believes that the film can be viewed as good entertainment.

She has seen the film with four of her eight children and doesn't worry about her children falling into the occult.

"Harry Potter has an invisible mark inside of him that his mother gave to him when she sacrificed her life for his,"she said. "This mark, unlike his lightning bolt scar, is one of love. Because he has the mark of love, evil cannot bear his touch."

Mary Weyrich of Paso Robles, Calif. warned that, in these days of cross marketing, much of the danger with the books is extraneous to the story.

"I recently went shopping and noticed the sold-out Harry Potter display."The Catholic mother of eight said. "There on the same shelf was a book of Spells for Children. It looked like a cookbook, except that it was filled with the sorts of things that Harry does, in the books and movie. It was user friendly, easy for children to try."

She looked into the matter further, she said.

On the Internet, "I went to a large online bookstore's Harry Potter site, found Harry's related subjects,"which included witchcraft. Three clicks connected her to "The Witch Bible,"she said.

Her conclusion: "Many will say that the Harry Potter books and movie are just fiction. Many will say that they are so glad that the children are reading again. Many will say that the movie wasn't that scary and it is no big deal. But I do believe that it is a very big deal."

The Harry Potter phenomenon and franchise –and debate –is only just beginning. Warner Brothers was scheduled to begin shooting a sequel in November, and fans are already looking forward to Rowling's next book.

(Tom Drake is the executive editor of Catholic net).

ANDY ROONEY'S WISDOM:

I've learned... That the best classroom in the world is at the feet of an elderly person.

I've learned... That when you're in love, it shows.

I've learned... That just one person saying to me, "You've made my day!" makes my day.

I've learned... That having a child fall asleep in your arms is one of the most peaceful feeling in the world.

I've learned... That being kind is more important than being right.

I've learned... That you should never say no to question a from a child.

I've learned... That I can always pray for someone when I don't have the strength to help him in some other way.

I've learned... That no matter how serious your life requires you to be, everyone needs a friend to act goofy with.

I've learned... That sometimes all a person needs is a hand to hold and a heart to understand.

I've learned... That simple walks with my father around the block on summer nights when I was a child did wonders for me as an adult.

I've learned... That life is like a roll of toilet paper. The closer it gets to the end, the faster it goes.

I've learned... That we should be glad God doesn't give us everything we ask for.

I've learned... That money doesn't buy class.

I've learned... That it's those small daily happenings that make life so spectacular.

I've learned... That under everyone's hard shell is someone who wants to be held when it is a life threatening situation.

I've learned... That the less time I have to work with, the more things I get done.

To all of you... Make sure you read all the way down to the last sentence.

Friends are very rare jewels, indeed.

They make you smile and encourage you to succeed!!

They lend an ear, they share words of praise and they always want to open their hearts to us.

(Andy Rooney)

A FRIEND

One day, when I was a freshman in high school, I saw a kid from my class walking home from school. His name was Kyle. It looked like he was carrying all of

The PILGRIM

his books. I thought to myself, "Why would anyone bring home all his books on a Friday? He must really be a nerd."

I had quite a weekend planned (parties and a football game with my friend tomorrow afternoon, so I shrugged my shoulders and went on. As I was walking, I saw a bunch of kids running toward him. They ran at him, knocking all his books out of his arms and tripping him so he landed in the dirt. His glasses went flying, and I saw them land in the grass about ten feet from him. He looked up and I saw this terrible sadness in his eyes.

My heart went out to him. So, I jogged over to him and as he crawled around looking for his glasses, I saw a tear in his eye. As I handed him his glasses, I said, "Those guys are jerks. They really should get

He looked at me and said "Hey thanks!" There was a big smile on his face. It was one of those smiles that showed gratitude. I helped him pick up his books, and asked him where he lived. As it turned out, he lived near me, so I asked him why I had never seen him before. He said he had gone to private school before now. I would never have hung out with a private school kid before.

We talked all the way home, and I carried his books. He turned out to be a pretty cool kid. I asked him if he wanted to play football on Saturday with me and my friends. He said "yes." We hung all weekend and the more I got to know Kyle, the more I liked him. And my friends thought the same of him.

Monday morning came, and there was Kyle with that huge stack of books again. I stopped him and said "Are you gonna really build some serious muscles with this pile of books every day?" He just laughed and handed me half the books.

Over the next four years, Kyle and I became best friends. When we were seniors, we began to think about college. Kyle decided on Georgetown, and I was going to Duke. I knew that we would always be friends, that the miles between us would never be a problem. He was going to be a doctor, and I was going for business on a football scholarship.

Kyle was valedictorian of our class. I teased him all the time about being a nerd. He had to prepare a speech for graduation. I was so glad it wasn't me having to get up there and speak.

Graduation day, I saw Kyle. He looked great. He was one of those guys that really found himself during

high school. He filled out and actually looked good in glasses. He had more dates than I did and all the girls loved him! Boy, sometimes I was jealous. Today was one of those days.

But I could see that he was nervous about his speech. So, I smacked him on the back and said "Hey, big guy, you'll be great!" He looked at me with one of those looks (the really grateful one) and smiled. "Thanks," he said.

As he started his speech, he cleared his throat, and began: "Graduation is a time to thank those who helped you make it through those tough years. You parents, your teachers, your siblings, maybe a coach...but, mostly your friends. I am here to tell all of you that being a friend to someone is the best gift you can give them. I am going to tell you a story.!"

I just looked at my friend with disbelief as he told the story of the first day we met. He had planned to kill himself over the weekend. He talked of how he had cleaned out his locker so his Mom wouldn't have to do it later. And, he was carrying his stuff home. He looked hard at me and gave me a little smile.

Thankfully, I was saved. My friend saved me from doing the unspeakable." I heard the gasp go through the crowd as this handsome, popular boy told us all about his weakest moment. I saw his Mom and Dad looking at me and smiling that same grateful smile. Not until that moment did I realize its' depth."

Never underestimate the power of your actions. With one small gesture you can change a person's life. For better or for worse, God put us all in others' lives to impact one another in some way. Look for God in others.

(from Father Chuck Davis)

MARY in the PLAN of SALVATION

"... when the appointed time came, God sent His Son, born of a woman ... to enable us to be adopted ... (Gal.4:4-5)". The Catholic Church, taught by the Holy Spirit, honours this woman Mary, with filial affection and devotion as a most beloved mother (Lumen Gentium, .53).

In the great Marian churches of the world, such as Notre Dame de Paris, and Our Lady of Guadalupe in Mexico City, the central act of worship is the Mass - the Lord's supper, the bloodless re-enactment of His sacrifice on Calvary. The focus of worship is the altar,

cross and tabernacle. Christ alone is the center of our faith. He is the one mediator between God and humanity.

We are, however, a fallen race. God, in his goodness, has given us guides to take us to Jesus Christ, the light of the nations. Catholics, since the time of the Apostles, have found in Mary a sure guide. Moreover, the relationship between the believer and Mary is more than that of a pilgrim and a guide. The relationship is maternal. She is our Mother. This is the source of the richness of Marian devotion in the Church.

1. Mary in the Plan of Salvation:

"Committing herself whole-heartedly and impeded by no sin to God's saving will, (Mary) devoted herself totally ... to the person and work of her Son, under and with Him, serving the mystery of redemption ... " (L.G. .56). John Paul II has noted Mary's exceptional pilgrimage of faith as a constant point of reference for the Church, for individuals and communities (Redemptoris Mater, .6).

Mary was introduced into the mystery of Christ by the Annunciation. She was greeted by the Archangel Gabriel, not by her name "Mary," but by the significant words "so highly favored," which would be elaborated by her cousin Elizabeth, **"Of all women you are the most blessed..."** (Lk. 1:28-42). In the visitation to Elizabeth, we are made aware not only of Mary's favored state before God, but also of her virtue of practical charity.

Above all, believers are asked to grow in intimacy with the person of Jesus. During the years of Jesus' hidden life in the home at Nazareth, Mary's life was hidden with Christ in God"(cf. Col. 3:3). The first human creature permitted to discover Christ was Mary; however, the finding of Jesus teaching in the temple (Lk. 2:42-50) reveals that she did not always understand the mystery with whom she lived. She persevered only through faith. Through this faith, Mary is perfectly united with Jesus in his self-emptying, saving act on the Cross (R.M. ..6, 8, 12, 17, 18).

The Cross, the instrument of our redemption, is also the place of Christ's donation of his mother to his believers. In addressing the beloved apostle John, the Lord speaks to all Christians: "Behold, your mother!"

(Jn. 19:27). Each of us is invited, like John, to take her to his own home."

2. The Blessed Virgin Mary and the Church:

In a unique way, Mary co-operated by her obedience, faith, hope and burning charity in restoring supernatural life to souls. For this reason, she is a mother to us in the order of grace. Catholics, in seeking to conquer sin and increase in holiness, turn to Mary who shines forth to the Church as the model of virtues. She displays that motherly love which all, who join in the Church's mission to humanity, should embrace and display (L.G. 60, 61, 65).

Mary is intimately linked to the Church's mission. Just as she was present at the Incarnation, the coming of Jesus, so she was present at the birth of the Church at Pentecost (Acts 1:14). Her maternal care continued after the Resurrection as she prayed with the disciples in the upper room, the Cenacle.

Catholics believe that, after a period of time among the disciples, Mary was assumed body and soul into heaven. From there, she continues her mission of prayer and bringing people to salvation in Jesus. Should we then be surprised that Mary has appeared to individuals throughout the centuries, even to our own day?

Although much Catholic teaching has developed concerning Mary, it has been mixed with the piety of the ordinary faithful. In the life of the Church, in the conservation and nourishing of its living tradition, often the law of prayer is ahead of the law of belief. That is to say, the sense of the faithful as to what is true often precedes formal teaching. For example, for several centuries, feasts celebrated Mary's sinless conception and glorious assumption, but it was only within the last 150 years that they were defined as dogmas of the faith.

Only the bishops in communion with the Pope (the Magisterium) can teach authoritatively the teachings of Christ. Abuses and exaggerated practices surrounding veneration of the Blessed Virgin have been corrected, in the past, by the Church's teaching office. It has been, however, its chief aim to promote true devotion to Mary. The Fathers of the Second Vatican Council (1962-65) gave an important thrust to understanding the Virgin's role within the Church. Rather than issue a separate document on Mary, the

Council Fathers incorporated their teaching on her within the constitution on the Church, *Lumen Gentium*. As Mary was intimately linked to the earthly ministry of her Son, so she is intimately linked to the Church which carries on her Son's ministry through time until He returns again.

3. Veneration of the Blessed Virgin Mary in the Church:

The veneration given to Mary differs essentially from that given to God - Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The Church regulates the Marian forms of piety to ensure that the Triune God is known, loved and glorified (L.G. 66). Official Marian devotion forms a very noble part of the whole sphere of sacred worship which mixes wisdom and religion and which is, therefore, the primary task of believers (Paul VI, *Marialis Cultus*, Introduction).

In the liturgical calendar of the Church, one can share and be nourished by Our Lady's journey of faith. The feast of the Immaculate Conception (December 8th), and the period of Advent, bring the faithful to think about the love with which the Virgin Mother awaited her Son. They are invited to take her as a model and prepare themselves to meet the Saviour who is to come. The Solemnity of Mary, the holy Mother of God, on January 1st, commemorates the part played by Mary in the history of salvation. It occurs within the octave of Christmas and is a fitting occasion for adoring the new born Prince of Peace. Pope Paul VI, highlighting this gift of peace, instituted January 1st as World Day of Peace.

March 25th is the Solemnity of the Incarnation of the Word (Annunciation of the Lord). It is a joint feast of Christ and the Blessed Virgin which marks the beginning of redemption and the union of the divine nature and human nature in the one person of Jesus. It celebrates the generous fiat of Our Lady to God - "let what you have said be done to me" (Lk. 1:38). It is a unique consent in the history of salvation. The Solemnity of the Assumption of Mary into Heaven is celebrated on August 15th. It sets before Christians, indeed before all of humanity, their final hope which is their glorification through the saving act of Jesus Christ.

In addition to the four Solemnities, there are a number of other celebrations in the calendar which commemorate other events in which Mary was closely associated with her Son - the Nativity of Our Lady

(September 8th), the Visitation (May 31st), Our Lady of Sorrows (September 15th), Presentation of the Lord (February 2nd). There are other Marian feasts which were associated with local churches and which have taken on universal importance, such as Our Lady of Lourdes (February 11th). Some of the most carefully researched miracles in the history of Christianity have occurred at the Grotto of Lourdes in France.

There have been special interventions of Mary in local churches. She appeared at Fatima in Portugal in 1917 with a message of prayer and reparation for the salvation of souls. In addition to this Gospel message, the Virgin prophesied certain events in history which, some suggest, included the recent collapse of Communism. In Mexico in 1531, Our Lady of Guadalupe appeared to an Aztec peasant, Juan Diego, at which time she declared herself as "your merciful mother; to you and all inhabitants of the earth." As proof of her visit and concern, she left her image on the cloak, the tilma, of Juan Diego which is still displayed more than four hundred years later in the Basilica near Mexico City. More importantly, her appearance was the impetus to the evangelization of Mexico. Within a few years, eight million Indians were baptized.

Mary brings us to her Son. It is the acid test of proper devotion to Our Lady. **Intimacy with Jesus can only be assured through sincere and persevering prayer.** Two Marian prayers which have received continuous Papal support are the Angelus and the Rosary (M.C. 40-55). The Angelus commends itself on several points: its simple structure, biblical character, historical link to the prayer for peace and safety, its rhythm which sanctifies different moments of the day, and its remembrance of the life, death and resurrection of Jesus. The Rosary has been called the compendium of the entire Gospel. It draws from the Gospel the mysteries and its prayers. The Rosary considers in succession the principal salvific events accomplished in Christ. In addition to elements of praise and petition, the quiet rhythm and lingering pace of the Rosary is conducive to contemplation. It is highly adaptable to individual or group recital, and is ideally suited for family prayer.

Christ is the only way to the Father (Jn. 14:4-11), and the ultimate example for the Christian. The Catholic Church has always taught this and nothing in its pastoral activity should obscure this teaching. The Church has taught, however, by the Holy Spirit and by

the benefit of centuries of experience, that authentic devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary has a great pastoral effectiveness and constitutes a force for renewing Christian life. Ultimately, Mary challenges us with the person and message of Jesus: "Do whatever he tells you." (Jn. 2:5)

(Father Kevin Beach www.leaflets.on.ca/mary.htm)

PRAY FOR ETERNAL WORD TELEVISION NETWORK (EWTN)

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

Mother Angelica has had a second stroke and the reports are that there had to be surgery to relieve pressure. She was still recovering from the first stroke and the fall in which she broke her arm. Please pray for her and all those who have to try and fill her shoes. See updates on her condition on page 27.

Pray that if it be God's will she will recover fully and continue her good work. If that is not possible, pray that God will inspire those who continue on with all that EWTN has become. We need to have a healthy and communicating EWTN.

PILGRIMS of FAITH MARIAN CENTER (PFMC)

We are not a store. We operate like a church pamphlet or book rack where you make selections and offer a donation based on value posted or received. See the two-page order form enclosed in this issue 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. Please come and see the PFMC. We know you will enjoy what you see and find a way of helping out.

Thank you and God bless you,

Kathleen and the Volunteer Staff

DONATIONS by CHARGE CARD ACCEPTED

We accept DISCOVER/PRIVATE ISSUE (NOVUS), MASTER CARD (CIRRUS) and VISA (PLUS) for all donations to the PFMC. This includes for books and religious articles, pilgrimages, retreats and for 'The PILGRIM' or the building debt retirement fund.

BLESSED OIL

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

Read the articles in the November and December 1994 issues as well as the Bible readings for the Holy Week Chrism Mass about Blessed Oil and Holy Oil of Gladness. If you no longer have these articles or never received them, you may request copies from the PFMC.

Oil from Medjugorje is a **sacramental** and should be handled as such. It is NOT the same as the oils blessed by the Bishop for official church ceremonies or during administration of the sacraments by a priest. People being signed with oil as a sacramental should not be misled into thinking that use of a sacramental by the laity in any way replaces blessing by a priest, whose Holy Hands are consecrated by the Bishop in the sacrament of Holy Orders.

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

BULLETIN NOTICES for PFMC AREA EVENTS

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

as compared to the thousands of requests that come in from outside the parish.

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

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

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

2002 RETREAT CONFERENCE

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

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

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

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

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

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

Father Robert DeGrandis and his sister Dorothea DeGrandis Sudol will share the seminars and

workshops of the 3DX on Healing of Memories -

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.

For an information sheet with reservation forms visit <http://www.geocities.com/pilgrimsfaith> or call 856-768-9228.

Kathleen as well as all the PPMC Volunteer Staff

REFLECTION on the MESSAGE of 11/25/01

LET US PREPARE OUR HEARTS

Dear children! In this time of grace, I call you anew to prayer. Little children, pray and prepare your hearts for the coming of the King of Peace, that with His blessing He may give peace to the whole world. Peacelessness has begun to reign in hearts and hatred reigns in the world. That is why, you who live my messages be the light and extended hands to this faithless world that all may come to know the God of Love. Do not forget, little children, I am with you and bless you all. Thank you for having responded to my call.

In the message of the last month, Our Lady told us: "Little children, you are chosen to witness peace and joy," and today she tells us about restlessness in hearts and hatred in the world.

Everyone seeks joy. Everybody wants to be happy and seeks joy. We all want to be happy. The good and the bad are equal in their desire to be happy. The good ones are good to be happy, and the bad ones would not be bad if they would not hope to become happy in such a way.

In his Confessions, the great Saint Augustin told us: If we all love joy, it is because we have already known it in a mysterious way. If we had not come to know it - if we were not created for it - we would not love it. The

one who knocks at the door of a church - even if he does it with violence and anger - does so because he seeks joy.

However, we see that the world around us is mostly sad. Sadness and restlessness strangle our throats and almost suffocate us. There are less and less joyful people and joyful Christians. Nietzsche has already criticised Christians because their faces were too gloomy frowning.

Sadness and restlessness walk on our streets, in our villages and in our cities. Sadness has even sneaked into our families. Sadness and restlessness infect even our children to whom, instead of joy, we give things to eat, bigger and bigger and more and more ugly toys to destroy. Joy does not come from things, from toys, from food, from cars, motors, techniques, money or pleasure.

Our heart and our soul seek the real food. You cannot cheat your soul while giving it things. If you don't feed it with God and His Word, it will rebel and seek vengeance. Your soul gives you signs like emptiness, lack of meaning, nervousness, aggressiveness, anger against everything and everybody. You have to recognize these signs, you have to learn again to enjoy in little things and to recognize so many things around us - that everything is given, and that we have not earned or merited anything.

Gospa, our Mother, walks with us for more than twenty years now. By this message, she prepares us for the time of Advent, which is approaching, and she puts in front of our eyes the King of Peace. Restlessness and hatred govern the world, our Mother tells us in this message, and we know and see that very well. And not only in the world, but they sneaked also into human relationships, families, amongst nations.

Our Lady shows us the way, she puts into our hands a powerful means with which we can reach peace, if only we want it and seek it. It is not enough to see and to understand the state of your heart and your soul, of your family. It is not enough to know it, as it is of no use to a hungry man to know that bread is good. It is of no use for us to know that God is love, of no use to know that Our Lady is here out for love for us.

We have to follow her words, to make the decision, to start today. We need the encounter and the experience of the God of Love. It is useless to curse darkness; let us light a lamp instead, and darkness is already gone. Sometimes it is enough to lift our eyes just a bit above the mud of this world, above our heads, to pronounce a good and positive word, and darkness is already

gone. We have to heal our negative, black, tragic thoughts and pronounce pure words, so that God's health and peace may reach us.

It is not enough to say that there is no prayer in my family, that we can never get together, that every one goes his own way and after his own business. If nobody wants, then you start, have the courage to say to God a word of prayer and a cry, so that through you the light may come down, little by little, on those who are with you.

There are many hearts that follow Our Lady's messages, which she gives to us still today. Our Lady counts on us, who want to hear her messages; she counts on our perseverance, even when we do not see immediately the fruits and successes. Our security is her presence, her words that she is with us in spite of everything. Let us be and let us remain with Her. Peace and good to you.

Father Ljubo Kurtovic, Medjugorje, 11/26/2001

PRESS BULLETIN 169, 12/26/2001

AHEAD ON OUR KNEES

Queues of open souls. Contrite hearts of penitents. All the faithful –who are at the same time sinners –wait for the moment of their encounter with the Merciful Father. Holiness and sinfulness meet in front of the confessional –the place of reconciliation between God and man. Bended knees and seeking forgiveness have marked the time of Advent. It means that many, in spite of everything –have heard Jesus and Our Lady here in Medjugorje. Repeatedly and perseveringly, they call us on the way of forgiveness, conversion and renewal of love. When these three meet, it is a new beginning for each and every person. Our heavenly Mother knows this well and this is why –practically on her knees –she asks us to walk on this path.

Only forgiveness makes a radical change in human behaviour possible. Forgiving and asking forgiveness is the best and the most efficient strategy for men, for nations, for the world. Therefore every confession is a new beginning, a new challenge, the opening of a door which has been closed. This is how people with bended knees, which always mean and remain the sign of rising up and not falling, enter into a new and unknown time.

With the New Year, we enter into a new beginning. It is good to begin with the attitude of repentance. Reconciled and renewed, we shall better receive fruits

of the time that is ahead of us. Time is always a gift –
kairos”of our Creator. We have to know how to receive and use our gifts and talents. The gift of time is a challenge for everyone who looks ahead, who sees the future. As Christians, we always see the future in the expectance of the future glory in the house of our Heavenly Father.

We ask ourselves how shall we reach there. Running, in haste, trying to catch up with time? No, not at all. Jesus tells us that many run, but only few receive the crown of glory. We can only go ahead in humility, on our knees, sprinkling the dew of forgiveness on our road. Those who do not know how to stop, how to look at themselves in relation to God, to brother men, to nature, can hardly advance in spite of the haste of their steps. Therefore, listening to the humble voice of Our Lady in Medjugorje, let us go on our journey with modest shoes and let us know how to shake away the dust of our sins.

Fra Mario Knezovi

NUMBER OF COMMUNIONS AND NUMBER OF CONCELEBRANTS

During the month of November, 40,000 received Holy Communion and 1002 priests concelebrated Holy Mass in Medjugorje.

MONSIGNOR DOCTOR FRANC KRAMBERGER, BISHOP OF MARIBOR (SLOVENIA), ABOUT MEDJUGORJE

In his homily during Mass in Ptujška Gora on November 10th, 2001, Monsignor Doctor Franc Kramberger, Bishop of Maribor (Slovenia), said: I greet all of you who are friends and pilgrims of Our Lady of Medjugorje. In a special way I greet today our respected and excellent guest, the Franciscan Father Jozo Zovko. In his speech, he brought the mystery of Medjugorje near to us. Medjugorje is not only the name of a place in Bosnia and Herzegovina, but Medjugorje is a place of grace where Our Lady is appearing in a special way. Medjugorje is a place where those who have fallen get up again, and all of those who go on pilgrimage to that place find a star, which leads them and shows them a new direction in life. If my diocese, all of Slovenia and the whole world became Medjugorje, there would not be the events that are happening in these last months.”

MONSIGNOR JÉRÔME GAPANGWA NTEZIRYAYO, DIOCESE OF UVIRA

(CONGO) ON A PRIVATE VISIT TO MEDJUGORJE

From the 7th to the 11th of November 2001, Monsignor Jérôme Gapangwa Nteziryayo, from the diocese of Uvira (Congo), was on a private visit to Medjugorje. He came with a group of pilgrims, climbed the prayer hills and participated in the evening prayer programme. He said that he was grateful to God for having given us such a place of prayer.

ITALIAN TELEVISION IN MEDJUGORJE

From November 21st to 23rd, 2001, two Italian journalists were in Medjugorje: Aldo Maria Valli (the "Vaticanist" of the News of the Third Television Programme TG3 of Italian Radio-Television RAI, who often followed the Pope on his journeys and reported about it for the TG3 News) and Riccardo Caniato (author of the book *Maria alba del terzo millennio – Medjugorje vent'anni* – Mary, Dawn of the Third Millennium, Twenty Years of Medjugorje – Edizioni Ares, 2001, which was very positively evaluated by Radio Vatican).

They spoke with Father Branko Radoš, parish priest, with Father Ljubo Kurtovi, with Father Jozo Zovko, Marija Pavlovi and other witnesses. They turned up in holy places and in the parish church. On Thursday, November 22nd, together with His Eminence Corrado Cardinal Ursi, who was on a private visit in Medjugorje, they prayed the rosary and were present during the apparition of Our Lady to Marija Pavlovi.

CORRADO CARDINAL URSI, RETIRED ARCHBISHOP OF NAPLES, ON A PRIVATE VISIT TO MEDJUGORJE

From November 22nd to 24th, 2001, Corrado Cardinal Ursi, retired Archbishop of Naples, was on a private visit to the shrine of the Queen of Peace in Medjugorje. At the age of 94, he desired to visit Medjugorje and he arrived by car from Naples, which is at 1450 kilometres from Medjugorje. Three priests accompanied him: Monsignor Mario Franco, Father Massimo Rastrelli and Father Vincenzo di Muro.

During his stay at the Shrine of the Queen of Peace, Cardinal Ursi met the visionaries and was present during an apparition of Our Lady. He did not hide his enthusiasm about this visit.

Cardinal Ursi composed a booklet under the title *Rosary*, published already in six editions, where he

wrote: In Medjugorje and at other places, Our Lady is

While in Medjugorje, the Cardinal said: "I came here to pray and not to discuss. I desire my entire personal conversion," and, "What a joy and what an immense grace to be present here." After having been present at the apparition of Our Lady to the visionary Marija Pavlovi -Lunetti, Cardinal Ursi said, "I am sure that Our Lady's prayer obtained for me the forgiveness of

THE FIRST ANNIVERSARY OF THE DEATH OF FATHER SLAVKO BARBARI

On November 24th was celebrated the first anniversary of the death of Father Slavko Barbari. On that day, many parishioners, members of Father Slavko's family, his friends and foreign pilgrims gathered for the Way of the Cross on Mount Krievac. Father Branko Radoš led the Way of the Cross, using prayers written by Father Slavko himself.

The faithful prayed, while meditating on that love which gives itself without reserve, just as was lived by this great man.

Sideways, on the spot where Father Slavko gave his soul into the hands of the Lord, a memorial was put up: Father Slavko's relief in bronze encrusted in stone. The memorial stone, which weighs 950 kg, was carried up on the hands of the boys of Sister Elvira's Cenacolo. They took nine hours, praying and thanking the Lord for Father Slavko, who accompanied them during many years on their way from darkness to light.

A solemn evening Mass for Father Slavko Barbari was celebrated in the overfilled parish church of Medjugorje. The main celebrant was the Herzegovinian Franciscan provincial Father Slavko Soldo, and the Mass was concelebrated by many Franciscans and pilgrim priests. In his homily for the feast of Christ the King, the Provincial mentioned how Father Slavko always was at the service of the little and the poor, and so realised the kingdom of God on earth.

In Mother's Village, considered to be Father Slavko's masterpiece, a monument in his memory was unveiled. It is a work of the Italian sculptor Carmelo Puzzolo, in homage of his personal and dear friend. This beautiful bronze statue for Mother's Village was realised thanks to the generosity of Princess Marie of Liechtenstein, who wanted to express her gratitude for Father

2001, a group of Russian Orthodox pilgrims from Moscow participated in a Prayer and Fasting Seminar. In spite of many difficulties concerning visas and the length of the journey, the strong desire to come to the Mother and Queen of Peace attracted them to Medjugorje. Croatian pilgrims participated in this seminar from December 2nd to December 8th, and from December 10th to December 14th, there was another group of 35 Austrian pilgrims.

Numerous groups who come to Domus Pacis to pray and to fast are proof of how powerful their experiences are.

All those who are interested may contact Father Ljubo Kurtovi in the Parish Office of Medjugorje or in the Information Office by telephone + 387 36 651 988.

SAINT NICOLAS' FEAST IN MEDJUGORJE

On the feast of Saint Nicolas, the Elementary School of Medjugorje and the Saint James Parish Office organised the celebration of Saint Nicolas on the parish grounds. A few hundred children gathered together, mainly elementary school children with their parents. After Mass, celebrated by Father Ljubo Kurtovi, the children –while expecting the arrival of the beloved saint –performed their own programme in which they performed recitations, skits and songs. The coming of Saint Nicolas”provoked enthusiasm on the faces of the children. Father Ljubo, just as Saint Nicolas,”invited the children to open their hearts to the needs of others, especially the poor.

THE SOLEMNITY OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

On the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception, December 8th, many groups came on pilgrimage to the Queen of Peace from Croatia, Australia, Austria, England, the Czech Republic, France, Germany, Italy and the USA. We are especially glad about the arrival of a group of Aborigines from Australia. At the end of the English Mass, they sung a hymn to Our Lady in their native language. Three members of the musical Kelly Family”Paddy and Maite with their father - came on pilgrimage to Medjugorje during this feast to prepare themselves in prayer and fasting for their coming tour.

During the morning, Holy Mass was celebrated in 10 languages, and in the afternoon, pilgrims prayed the Rosary on the Apparition Hill.

who personally assisted this concert.

MEETING OF THE RADIO PRAYER GROUP “PRAY TOGETHER WITH A JOYFUL HEART”

On the afternoon of Sunday, November 25th, 2001, on the feast of Christ the King, the Radio Prayer Group “Pray Together with a Joyful Heart”met again in Medjugorje. About 200 members from Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina came together. After the prayer of the Rosary on the Apparition Hill, they had a meeting in the parish, and then, accompanied by Father Branko Radoš, parish priest of Medjugorje and their spiritual councillor, visited the tomb of Father Slavko Barbari, who founded and accompanied this group until his death.

PRAYER AND FASTING SEMINARS

Five Prayer and Fasting Seminars were held in the house of prayer Domus Pacis: from November 9th to 13th, for a group of French speaking pilgrims, and from November 18th to 24th, for a group of pilgrims from Austria. This seminar was organised by Mr. Franz Gollowitsch, who organised the last Prayer and Fasting Seminar held by Father Slavko Barbari shortly before he died in November 2000. The youngest participant was only 13 years old, and the oldest 79. From November 27th to December 2nd,

ON BICYCLE FROM MARIJA BISTRICA TO MEDJUGORJE

On the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary, a very special pilgrim arrived to Medjugorje. His name is Danko Vrani from Krapinske Toplice in Croatia. He began this pilgrimage on November 5th at the Croatian National Marian Shrine of Marija Bistrica. The way he chose took him through Slavonia to the martyr city of Vukovar, then to the Shrine of Our Lady of Loreto in Trsat (Rijeka), and then over the Dalmatian coast to the Shrine of the Queen of Peace. After 1900 kilometres, he arrived to Our Lady of Medjugorje with a shining face: "I did not find it difficult," says trusted in the Divine Providence, I was well received in all the parishes, where I spent nights and, if necessary, waited for the rain and the snow to stop falling."

AN APPEAL TO ALL THE FRIENDS OF MEDJUGORJE

The message of Medjugorje has inspired many faithful all over the world to publish magazines, circular letters and various newspapers to help those who seek God grow in faith with the help of Our Lady's message. We would like to come to know the diversity of these publications and to establish contact with their editors. Therefore, we ask you kindly to send your magazines, circular letters and various newspapers to Medjugorje, to the address: INFORMATION CENTRE "MIR" MEDJUGORJE -FOR THE ARCHIVES, Gospin trg 1, 88266 Medjugorje, Bosnia and Herzegovina. Please be so kind and send two samples.

We ask you to be so kind as to spread this appeal as widely as possible, especially to those who do not use Internet.

Thank you for all you are doing to answer Our Lady's call!

CHRISTMAS IN MEDJUGORJE

As preparation for Christmas, there was not only the evening prayer programme in the church, but also a Rosary-novena recited on Apparition Hill. As every year, a multitude of faithful from neighbouring parishes came to Medjugorje for their Christmas confession.

On December 16th, two children's choirs performed a Christmas concert in the parish church of Medjugorje: "Little Singing Dubrovnik" from Dubrovnik and "Little

Doves of Peace" from Medjugorje. Through their singing, they wished a merry Christmas to all of the faithful and pilgrims from all over the world.

During the Christmas days, at the Shrine of the Queen of Peace in Medjugorje there was, as always, an atmosphere of peace, prayer and togetherness between the faithful who came from all over the world.

On Christmas Eve, several thousand pilgrims assisted the evening Mass. The Vigil started at 10pm in the overfilled church, and ended with midnight Mass. Christmas Day was marked by peace and joy of parishioners and pilgrims who gathered around their Mother.

ANNUAL APPARITION TO JAKOV ON DECEMBER 25TH 2001

At the last daily apparition to Jakov on September 12th, 1998, Our Lady told him that henceforth he would have one apparition a year, every December 25th, on Christmas Day. This is also how it was this year. The apparition began at 15.30 pm and lasted 5 minutes. Our Lady gave the following message:

Dear Children, today when Jesus is born anew for you, in a special way, I want to call you to conversion. Pray, pray, pray for the conversion of your heart, so that Jesus may be born in you all and may dwell in you and come to reign over your entire being. Thank you for having responded to the call.

THE 7TH INTERNATIONAL MEETING FOR PRIESTS

The 7th International Meeting for Priests "PRIEST AT THE SERVICE OF HEALING AND DELIVERANCE" takes place from July 1st (morning) to July 6th (noon) 2002 in the new building behind the Church, accompanied by Father Ljubo Kurtovi, with lecturers from different countries.

You may make reservations by e-mail: lidija.paris@medjugorje.hr in the Information Office personally, by phone/fax: +387-36-651-988 or by e-mail: informacije@medjugorje.hr.

In place of financial payment, we ask you to kindly celebrate five Holy Masses for the intentions of the pilgrims of Medjugorje. The parish of Medjugorje expects your coming with joy. YOUR ACCOMMODATION IS A GIFT FROM THE

bend down to their level and to talk to them. This is how God bended down to our valleys in order to become comprehensible for us, this is how the Blessed Virgin Mary came down to us and spoke to us in a language we understand. All her messages can be condensed in two words: pray and be converted. Be converted from dead things and objects to the living God, from whom comes every joy and peace.

Also in this message, Our Lady talks to us and encourages us to peace, not without reason, because we see that we are surrounded and filled by troubles of all kinds and colours. Nothing in life happens accidentally. Everything has its cause, which we maybe do not recognize. Peace and trouble have their causes and reasons. There is no blind destiny in our life, as some like to say often.

As on the first day, June 24th 1981, when Our Lady appeared to the visionaries with the Child Jesus in her arms, so in this message she brings and gives us Jesus, who has the answer to all our questions, the solution to all our problems. Also today, Mary gives us Jesus who is the Way, the Truth and the Life. She gives Him anew, as she gave Him once and forever to this humanity, when she had given birth to Him in her body and in her faith, in Bethlehem. This event is not a pious story but a reality that happened on this planet. Without Jesus, we are lost creatures erring on this earth without meaning and without goal, without Him, our life knows no way but is only a wayward life. If we do not have Him, what remains is only lie, death and despair.

While He was walking on this earth, Jesus asked: *When the Son of man comes, will he find faith on earth?* (Luke 18:8) Jesus comes not only on Christmas, but wants to visit you every day. He wants to find an open door, an extended warm hand, a burning light of faith. Jesus wants to visit you in your daily life, monotonously coloured and full of heaviness of your duties; He visits you in people whom you like and whom you like less, Jesus visits you in all encounters and all conversations with people. Will you recognize Him? Jesus asks: will you listen to his word, will you –like Peter –throw your nets, will you –according to His word –forgive and bless people, life, your ways and crosses, or curse and despair? Jesus asks today also whether he will find faith on earth.

Our Lady does not cease to encourage us and to enthuse us, counting on us who want to receive and to accept the words of her messages. She knows that we cannot be threatened by our enemies and by those who hate us, but mostly by our lack of faith, of love and of

(Matthew 18:2-4) –which means not childish, but with a childlike heart in the matter of purity and of evil. We have to come to a standstill in front of the manger and imbibe ourselves with this sight, this mysterious event of an unusual birth, which happened on our earth. Since this event, nothing is the same any more, this earth is no more cursed nor condemned to perish. We have to sit at the feet of Jesus, descend from the mountain of our haughtiness and arrogance which believes that we know everything and that we can do everything alone, in order to allow the Child Jesus to talk to us and to fecund us with his peace. This Christmas also, let us learn from children what trust is, let us learn from the Child Jesus who came down to earth, descended into the helplessness of a newborn child, to become able to understand him and to receive him. Children also receive, understand and follow the words of their parents who know how to

friendship for Jesus. We are responsible for our own life, but also for lives of those whom God has placed on our way. Our happiness depends on happiness of others. Let us try today –not tomorrow –to listen to the echo of the voice of God as the longing of our own heart. Let us calm down the noise and voices which consume us - bad news and catastrophes from newspapers, radio and television –in order to feel the nearness and the warm heart of our heavenly Mother and of the little Jesus whom Our Lady bears for us and gives to us.

Father Ljubo Kurtovi , OFM, Medjugorje, 12/26/ 2001

MOTHER ANGELICA CONDITION SLIGHTLY IMPROVES

UPDATE: THURSDAY, 12/27/2001, 5 PM

Irondale, AL (EWTN) - Doctors treating EWTN Foundress, Mother Mary Angelica in a Birmingham, Alabama hospital said her condition shows slight improvement since her surgery on Christmas Eve to remove a blood clot in her brain that had caused her to suffer her second stroke since September. Doctors said she is stable, her vital signs are improving but she remains in intensive care. Since Monday, thousands of well wishers have sent email and telephone messages to EWTN offering prayers for Mother's speedy recovery. EWTN will continue to provide updates on Mother Angelica on the network's web site (www.ewtn.com) as conditions warrant.

**For Information Contact: Scott Hults,
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(www.ewtn.org/general/press/mother_improves.htm)**

POPE EMPHASIZES the HOPE that the CHRIST CHILD BRINGS

VATICAN CITY, DEC. 25, 2001 (ZENIT.org).- At Christmas Midnight Mass, John Paul II emphasized the message of hope that God-made-Man brings to a troubled world.

"But does this certainty of faith not seem to clash with the way things are today?"the Holy Father said in his homily in St. Peter's Basilica. "If we listen to the

relentless news headlines, these words of light and hope may seem like words from a dream. But that is precisely the challenge of faith, which makes this proclamation at once comforting and demanding."

Some 8,000 faithful attended the Mass, after passing strict security checks by Italian police.

Faith make us feel that we are wrapped in the tender love of God, while at the same time it commits us to a practical love of God and of our neighbor,"the Pope said in a firm voice.

At one point in the Mass, he gave a blessing to a dozen children dressed in traditional costumes from around the world, as they presented chalices. A smiling Pope kissed them and caressed their cheeks.

During the homily he said: "Our hearts this Christmas are anxious and distressed because of the continuation in various parts of the world of war, social tensions, and the painful hardships in which so many people find themselves. We are all seeking an answer that will reassure us."

The child Jesus, announced by the Prophet Isaiah as the Prince of Peace,"brings with him the answer which can calm our fears and reinvigorate our hope,"John Paul II said.

"Like the shepherds, we too on this wonderful night cannot fail to experience the desire to share with others the joy of our encounter with this child wrapped in swaddling cloths, in whom the saving power of the Almighty is revealed,"he continued.

"We cannot pause in ecstatic contemplation of the Messiah lying in the manger, and forget our obligation to bear witness to him,"he affirmed.

"With joy we must leave the cave of Bethlehem in order to recount everywhere the marvel which we have witnessed. We have encountered light and life! In him, love has been bestowed upon us,"he added.

Code: ZE01122502, <http://zenit.org/english/>

CALENDARS:

In *January*, the Church celebrates the Solemnities of *Mary, Mother of God (1)*, *Epiphany of the Lord (6)*, the Feasts of *Baptism of the Lord (13)* and *The Conversion of Paul (25)*, and Memorials of *Saints Basil the Great (2)*, *Gregory Nazianzen (2)*, *Genevieve (3)*, *Elizabeth Ann Seton (4)*, *John Neumann (5)*, *Raymond of Penyafort (7)*, *Hilary (13)*, *Anthony, Abbot (17)*, *Agnes (21)*, *Vincent (22)*, *Francis de Sales (24)*, *Timothy (26)*, *Titus (26)*, *Thomas Aquinas (28)* and *John Bosco (31)* as well as *Blessed Andre Bessette (6)*. Most Church calendars recognize *Doctor Martin Luther King, Jr's Birthday (15) (observed) (21)*.

In *February*, the Church observes *ASH WEDNESDAY (13)*, the Feasts of *Presentation of the Lord (2)*, and *Chair of Saint Peter (22)*, the Memorials of *Saints Agatha (5)*, *Paul Miki and Companions (6)*, *Jerome Emiliani (8)*, *Cyril and Methodius (14)*, *Peter Damian (21)* and *Polycarp (23)* as well as *Our Lady of Lourdes (11)*. Most Church calendars show *Presidents' Day (18)* and *Saint Valentine's Day (14)*.

AROUND the PFMC AREA

Please review the announcements on pages 4 and 5 and the Bulletin Notices on pages 18 and 19.

We need everyone to help publish information with prayer groups and in your Parish Bulletin.

For additional information, call the PFMC at (856) 768-9228. Please leave your area code with your phone number so that we may return your call. You may FAX your questions to (856)-768-9428.

The PILGRIM

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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!'



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 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>

Keith and Kathleen and Family:

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

Send us interesting web sites and e-mails:

PFMCkmw@home.com