



The PILGRIM

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March - April 2006

The PILGRIM is a periodical from **Pilgrims of Faith Marian Center (PFMC)**. The **PFMC** is a ministry of lay Catholic evangelization and healing through the intercession of the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

A PRAYER

My Sweetest Jesus. Out of Your sufferings and brutal death for our sins, You brought forth light of life everlasting for each of us. What a powerful protection you gave us through Your healing love.



Help us to never lose sight of You, especially when moral battles surround us. May Your Paschal Joys shine on our lives through Your Real but Hidden Presence in the Holy Eucharist. Keep our focus on this the greatest of gifts that satisfies and penetrates our very souls. You are the sweetest One, the Promise fulfilled, and Peace Everlasting.

AMEN

MANY of the **PFMC** VOLUNTEERS will be AWAY for a PILGRIMAGE to the HOLY LANDS of ISRAEL and JORDAN, 17-30 APRIL 2006

Keith and Kathleen along with Father Tino and all the fully registered pilgrims are looking forward to this pilgrimage. It allows time to see many holy places, pray, and spend quality time learning of the **Footsteps of Jesus and Moses** in the **Holy Lands of Israel and Jordan, 17-30 April 2006**.

More than half of the nearly **50** pilgrims are staying on for the **1 day** extension for an excursion to **Mount Sinai** in **Egypt** on **29 April 2006** with return to the **U.S.** on **1 May 2006**. Some pilgrims are remaining in **Israel** for additional relaxation after the pilgrimage.

We are excited that many of the **PFMC** volunteers and those close to our ministry will be on this pilgrimage. Because of this we will have a combined **May - June 2006** issue of **"The PILGRIM"** published in the first week of **June 2006**.

"The PILGRIM" for **March - April 2006** is dedicated to **"Our Lady, Tabernacle of the Word Made Flesh."** See page 3 for the **Table of Contents** or **"IN THIS ISSUE . . ."** listing.

THE COMING of the BRIDE of CHRIST COMMUNITY to US for RETREAT, MAY 9 - 11, 2006

Father Marty Jones, Pastor of **Saint Francis of Assisi Parish, Middletown, CT**, will be at the **Epiphany House** of the **PFMC** to give the first **Bride of Christ Community Retreat** or "bridal party" in this area. See the **lilac** colored information sheet enclosed in this issue of **"The PILGRIM."**

The **Bride of Christ Community** is an ecclesial movement of nuptial spirituality for intimate communion with our Beloved Bridegroom, Jesus in the Eucharist, open to His Spirit like Mary, our model and mother, and the other saints of every culture and time, and faithful to the teachings of the **Holy Father**. This movement toward community through prayer (liturgia), fellowship (koinonia) and service (diakonia) to the parish and the diocese has its special mission to prepare each person, and thus the universal Church, as the **Bride of Christ** in joy for the wedding of the Lamb.

The "wedding of the Lamb" has two closely related dimensions: Eucharistic and eschatological: in every Eucharist we are invited to partake in the wedding feast of the Lamb of God which hastens and realizes the eschatological fulfillment when our Bridegroom comes in glory to wed His Bride, the Church.

The **Bride of Christ Community** was conceived in **Rome** on **March 25, 1984**, during the celebration of the **Annunciation of the Lord** and the **Consecration**

The **February** and **March** MESSAGES, from **GOSPA, Our Lady, Queen of Peace**, to an alleged visionary from **Medjugorje, Bosnia-Herzegovina**, are presented beginning on page **20** (centerfold page) with **REFLECTIONS**.

of the world to the **Immaculate Heart of Mary** by **Pope John Paul II** and all the bishops in communion with him. Since our first retreat at the **Carmelite Monastery** in **Williamstown, MA**, for the Solemnity of the **Annunciation, March 23-25, 1987**, members of the **Community** have prayed the **Divine Office** together daily as well as sponsored pilgrimages, conferences and retreats in **Massachusetts, Maine, Connecticut, Rhode Island, and New Jersey**.

Through baptism one becomes a member of the Church, the **Bride of Christ**, and for those who are called to share in the special mission of the Community, there is available a self-paced program of spiritual formation through reading, spiritual direction, devotional practices and retreats which depends on the prior development of the person. However, everyone is encouraged to join the "Bridal Lace" communication network to keep informed of upcoming events of the Community.

To join this network or a local "bridal party", contact **Blanche Williams** at **My Father's House, 39 North Moodus Rd, Moodus, CT 06469-0022, 860-873-1581**, <http://www.myfathershouse.com>.

Contact the **PFMC** at (856) 768-9228 for the 3-day retreat or "bridal party" **9-11 May 2006** or complete and mail in the reservation form from the pink colored information sheet enclosed in this issue of **"The PILGRIM."** This information sheet is available in color and black on white for local printing from: <http://www.geocities.com/pilgrimsfaith/2006/06BCR05.pdf>.

(from Father Marty Jones)

PERPETUAL MIRACULOUS MEDAL NOVENA



The full and traditional **Miraculous Medal Novena Devotions** is celebrated each **Monday** at **Mary, Mother of the Church Parish Worship Center, 20 Braisington Avenue, Bellmawr, NJ 08031-1204**. This includes the **Holy Rosary, Opening Hymn, Novena Prayers, Reading of Favors Received, Sermon, Hymns, Benediction of the Most Blessed Sacrament with Latin Hymns, Closing Hymn and Individual Blessing** with the

first class relic of **Saint Catherine Laboure**. **Rosary: 7:05 PM, Novena: 7:30 PM**. **Father Hartman** prays that **Our Lady** and **Her Divine Son** will continue to bless you and your families.

(beemom531@comcast.net for Father Glenn Hartman)

IN MEMORIAM

Please pray for the repose of the souls of:

Jim Shelly, January 2006

Nellie McCartney, February 2006

Please send us death notices, prayer cards, etc. so we can pray for the deceased. We are considering having a special Holy Mass for all the deceased friends of the **PFMC**. We need those death notices or prayer cards.

2006 RETREAT CONFERENCE / YOUTH TRACK WAS A GREAT SPIRITUAL SUCCESS

All those who attended the **2006 PFMC RETREAT CONFERENCE** have made comments about how spiritually successful it was. Those who have commented want us to have **Father Bing Arrellano** back for **2007**. **Father Bing** is only available for **17 and 18 February 2007**. We have reserved the **Clarion Hotel** for the weekend of **16-18 February 2007** which could be our last **RETREAT CONFERENCE**. Please work with your prayer groups and parishes to avoid scheduling other conflicting activities on this the third weekend in **February 2007**. This will be the last weekend before **Lent** as **Ash Wednesday** is on **21 February 2007**.

Please pray for us because we did not make our room block quota and had to pay **\$2500** as a penalty which goes toward the cost for the use of the public space.

We reduced the registration rates for the **2006 PFMC RETREAT CONFERENCE** to **\$50** per person and **\$95** for a married couple in hopes of better attendance at both the **PFMC RETREAT CONFERENCE** and **YOUTH TRACK**. Walk-in registration was good but not enough to off-set our costs. The **Clarion Hotel Windsor Ballroom** can accommodate up to **800** people. Please let us know in advance if you can come next year, **2007**, so we can have some confidence in setting up another **PFMC RETREAT**.

The volunteer Board of Directors and Staff of the **PFMC** recognize and accept that the final authority regarding the alleged 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 Benedict XVI**.

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.

CONFERENCE. Do you want another **YOUTH TRACK?** The **ALLIANCE of the TWO HEARTS IS AVAILABLE FOR THAT WEEKEND.**

We did **NOT** have a **THREE DAY EXTENSION** of the **RETREAT CONFERENCE** in **2006** because of the holiday and the tremendous expense to the **PFMC** in **2005**. Pray that we will be able to have a three day extension in **2007**. We have a speaker in mind and need lots of prayer to get him to be our **THREE DAY EXTENSION** retreat master in **2007**.

PLEASE MARK YOUR 2006 CALENDARS for **PFMC** EVENTS

See Conference Corner on *page 38* as well as *Bulletin* and Other Notices on *pages 38* and *39*. Most **PFMC** area events will be preceded by their own information sheets with reservation forms.

May 2006

Tuesday, 9 May 2006, thru Thursday, 11 May 2006: **Bride of Christ Community Retreat** in the **Upper Room** at **Epiphany House**. Lodging in nearby hotels is available. **Retreat Master** will be **Father Marty Jones, Pastor of Saint Francis of Assisi Parish, Middletown, CT**. A **lilac** information sheet is available. This retreat is open to non-members of the community. See article on pages **1** and **2**.

FUTURE of the PFMC?

Kathleen and **Keith Werner** have been doing a lot of soul searching during the months of **2005** and **2006** while **Kathleen** is recovering from back surgery and the shut down of her left leg.

They are very thankful for the Good Lord's Blessing of the **PFMC** and all its related ministries over the last **17 years**. They are most thankful for all of the wonderful volunteers that have sacrificed of themselves for the benefit of all who have utilized the services of the **PFMC**.

The operations of the **PFMC** have become a real burden on the personal finances of **Kathleen** and **Keith Werner**. Prior to **9-11-2001**, the income of the **PFMC** was close enough to the expenses that there was not a lot of concern AND **Keith** was still working. Since his retirement in **June 2003** the income of the **PFMC** has taken a drastic drop forcing him to perform creative financing to keep the **PFMC** running. We need some very creative volunteers with good ideas for fundraising and getting the word out on **PFMC** activities.

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This may be the same cry you hear from many of your parishes. We need people with good ideas who can actually put them into practice. We are actually looking for enough volunteers to run the **PFMC**. **Kathleen** and **Keith** would continue to promote it, and continue in the healing ministry and other **PFMC** activities. Replacement volunteers are needed for what **Kathleen** and **Keith** have been doing in the **PFMC** for the last **17 years**.

Epiphany House bedrooms may be used to rest volunteers, if that is needed. **Epiphany House** could even be turned over to a family, if that is needed.

Get creative!! Come with your ideas and willingness to put them into practice. Visit the **PFMC** in person and share your time and talents. You and anyone else

you know who might be willing to volunteer to help the **PFMC** stay in operation for a few more years are very much needed. By *January* of **2008**, less than two years, a decision must be made regarding the direction and future for the **PFMC**. If there are not enough regular volunteers to run the **PFMC** efficiently and bring in sufficient donations, other than those from **Keith** and **Kathleen Werner**, to meet expenses, the shutdown of operations at **61 Cooper Road** in preparations for liquidation of all assets of the **PFMC** including selling the property will begin. The direction and future for the **PFMC** for will not include a print ministry for paper issues of **"The PILGRIM"** after *June* of **2008** unless donations for this part of the ministry meet expenses.

MARY – HER “YES” IS SO IMPORTANT TO OUR FAITH

We just celebrated the **Feast of the Annunciation, 3/25/06**, but because it fell on **Saturday** in **Lent** many lost sight of it's real significance. The **Incarnation of Jesus** is the **Real Presence** in this feast. **Mary's "Yes"** resulted in the **Holy Spirit** moving with **God the Father** to conceive the **Human Body** for the **Word, Our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ**. **Mary** became a **human tabernacle** and for **9 months** carried and nurtured the **Second Person** of the **Holy Trinity** in her womb.

Here is what the **CATECHISM OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH** in **SECTION TWO: THE PROFESSION OF FAITH, Paragraph 2. "Conceived by the Power of the Holy Spirit and Born of the Virgin Mary"** has to say:

Conceived by the Power of the Holy Spirit

484 The Annunciation to Mary inaugurates “the fullness of time”.[119] the time of the fulfilment of God’s promises and preparations. Mary was invited to conceive him in whom the “whole fullness of deity” would dwell “bodily”.[120] The divine response to her question, “How can this be, since I know not man?”, was given by the power of the Spirit: “The Holy Spirit will come upon you.”[121]

485 The mission of the Holy Spirit is always conjoined and ordered to that of the Son.[122] The Holy Spirit, “the Lord, the giver of Life”, is sent to sanctify the womb of the Virgin Mary and divinely fecundate it, causing her to conceive the eternal Son of the Father in a humanity drawn from her own.

486 The Father’s only Son, conceived as man in the womb of the Virgin Mary, is “Christ”, that is to say, anointed by the Holy Spirit, from the beginning of his

human existence, though the manifestation of this fact takes place only progressively: to the shepherds, to the magi, to John the Baptist, to the disciples.[123] Thus the whole life of Jesus Christ will make manifest “how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power.”[124]

Born of the Virgin Mary

487 What the Catholic faith believes about Mary is based on what it believes about Christ, and what it teaches about Mary illumines in turn its faith in Christ.

Mary’s Predestination

488 “God sent forth his Son”, but to prepare a body for him,[125] he wanted the free co-operation of a creature. For this, from all eternity God chose for the mother of his Son a daughter of Israel, a young Jewish woman of Nazareth in Galilee, “a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin’s name was Mary”:[126]

The Father of mercies willed that the Incarnation should be preceded by assent on the part of the predestined mother, so that just as a woman had a share in the coming of death, so also should a woman contribute to the coming of life.[127]

489 Throughout the Old Covenant the mission of many holy women prepared for that of Mary. At the very beginning there was Eve; despite her disobedience, she receives the promise of a posterity that will be victorious over the evil one, as well as the promise that she will be the mother of all the living.[128] By virtue of this promise, Sarah conceives a son in spite of her old age.[129] Against all human expectation God chooses those who were considered powerless and weak to show forth his faithfulness to his promises: Hannah, the mother of Samuel; Deborah; Ruth; Judith and Esther; and many other women.[130] Mary “stands out among the poor and humble of the Lord, who confidently hope for and receive salvation from him. After a long period of waiting the times are fulfilled in her, the exalted Daughter of Sion, and the new plan of salvation is established.”[131]

The Immaculate Conception

490 To become the mother of the Saviour, Mary “was enriched by God with gifts appropriate to such a role.”[132] The angel Gabriel at the moment of the annunciation salutes her as “full of grace”.[133] In fact, in order for Mary to be able to give the free assent of her faith to the announcement of her vocation, it was necessary that she be wholly borne by God’s grace.

491 Through the centuries the Church has become ever more aware that Mary, “full of grace” through God,[134] was redeemed from the moment of her conception. That is what the dogma of the Immaculate Conception confesses, as Pope Pius IX proclaimed in 1854:

The most Blessed Virgin Mary was, from the first moment of her conception, by a singular grace and privilege of almighty God and by virtue of the merits of Jesus Christ, Saviour of the human race, preserved immune from all stain of original sin.[135]

492 The “splendour of an entirely unique holiness” by which Mary is “enriched from the first instant of her conception” comes wholly from Christ: she is “redeemed, in a more exalted fashion, by reason of the merits of her Son”.[136] The Father blessed Mary more than any other created person “in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places” and chose her “in Christ before the foundation of the world, to be holy and blameless before him in love”.[137]

493 The Fathers of the Eastern tradition call the Mother of God “the All-Holy” (Panagia), and celebrate her as “free from any stain of sin, as though fashioned by the Holy Spirit and formed as a new creature”.[138] By the grace of God Mary remained free of every personal sin her whole life long.

“Let it be done to me according to your word. . .”

494 At the announcement that she would give birth to “the Son of the Most High” without knowing man, by the power of the Holy Spirit, Mary responded with the obedience of faith, certain that “with God nothing will be impossible”: “Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord; let it be [done] to me according to your word.”[139] Thus, giving her consent to God’s word, Mary becomes the mother of Jesus. Espousing the divine will for salvation wholeheartedly, without a single sin to restrain her, she gave herself entirely to the person and to the work of her Son; she did so in order to serve the mystery of redemption with him and dependent on him, by God’s grace:[140]

As St. Irenaeus says, “Being obedient she became the cause of salvation for herself and for the whole human race.”[141] Hence not a few of the early Fathers gladly assert. . .: “The knot of Eve’s disobedience was untied by Mary’s obedience: what the virgin Eve bound through her disbelief, Mary loosened by her faith.”[142] Comparing her with Eve, they call Mary “the Mother of the living” and frequently claim: “Death through Eve, life through Mary.”[143]

Mary’s Divine Motherhood

495 Called in the Gospels “the mother of Jesus”, Mary is acclaimed by Elizabeth, at the prompting of the Spirit and even before the birth of her son, as “the mother of my Lord”.[144] In fact, the One whom she conceived as man by the Holy Spirit, who truly became her Son according to the flesh, was none other than the Father’s eternal Son, the second person of the Holy Trinity. Hence the Church confesses that Mary is truly “Mother of God” (Theotokos).[145]

Mary’s Virginity

496 From the first formulations of her faith, the Church has confessed that Jesus was conceived solely by the power of the Holy Spirit in the womb of the Virgin Mary, affirming also the corporeal aspect of this event: Jesus was conceived “by the Holy Spirit without human seed”.[146] The Fathers see in the virginal conception the sign that it truly was the Son of God who came in a humanity like our own. Thus St. Ignatius of Antioch at the beginning of the second century says:

You are firmly convinced about our Lord, who is truly of the race of David according to the flesh, Son of God according to the will and power of God, truly born of a virgin, . . . he was truly nailed to a tree for us in his flesh under Pontius Pilate. . . he truly suffered, as he is also truly risen.[147]

497 The Gospel accounts understand the virginal conception of Jesus as a divine work that surpasses all human understanding and possibility:[148] “That which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit”, said the angel to Joseph about Mary his fiancée.[149] The Church sees here the fulfilment of the divine promise

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

given through the prophet Isaiah: “Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a son.”[150]

498 People are sometimes troubled by the silence of St. Mark’s Gospel and the New Testament Epistles about Jesus’ virginal conception. Some might wonder if we were merely dealing with legends or theological constructs not claiming to be history. To this we must respond: Faith in the virginal conception of Jesus met with the lively opposition, mockery or incomprehension of non-believers, Jews and pagans alike:[151] so it could hardly have been motivated by pagan mythology or by some adaptation to the ideas of the age. The meaning of this event is accessible only to faith, which understands in it the “connection of these mysteries with one another”[152] in the totality of Christ’s mysteries, from his Incarnation to his Passover. St. Ignatius of Antioch already bears witness to this connection: “Mary’s virginity and giving birth, and even the Lord’s death escaped the notice of the prince of this world: these three mysteries worthy of proclamation were accomplished in God’s silence.”[153]

Mary - “ever-virgin”

499 The deepening of faith in the virginal motherhood led the Church to confess Mary’s real and perpetual virginity even in the act of giving birth to the Son of God made man.[154] In fact, Christ’s birth “did not diminish his mother’s virginal integrity but sanctified it.”[155] And so the liturgy of the Church celebrates Mary as *Aeiparthenos*, the “Ever-virgin”. [156]

500 Against this doctrine the objection is sometimes raised that the Bible mentions brothers and sisters of Jesus.[157] The Church has always understood these passages as not referring to other children of the Virgin Mary. In fact James and Joseph, “brothers of Jesus”, are the sons of another Mary, a disciple of Christ, whom St. Matthew significantly calls “the other Mary”. [158] They are close relations of Jesus, according to an Old Testament expression.[159]

501 Jesus is Mary’s only son, but her spiritual motherhood extends to all men whom indeed he came to save: “The Son whom she brought forth is he whom God placed as the first-born among many brethren, that is, the faithful in whose generation and formation she co-operates with a mother’s love.”[160]

Mary’s Virginal Motherhood in God’s Plan

502 The eyes of faith can discover in the context of the whole of Revelation the mysterious reasons why God in his saving plan wanted his Son to be born of a virgin. These reasons touch both on the person of Christ and his redemptive mission, and on the

welcome Mary gave that mission on behalf of all men.

503 Mary’s virginity manifests God’s absolute initiative in the Incarnation. Jesus has only God as Father. “He was never estranged from the Father because of the human nature which he assumed. . . He is naturally Son of the Father as to his divinity and naturally son of his mother as to his humanity, but properly Son of the Father in both natures.”[161]

504 Jesus is conceived by the Holy Spirit in the Virgin Mary’s womb because he is the New Adam, who inaugurates the new creation: “The first man was from the earth, a man of dust; the second man is from heaven.”[162] From his conception, Christ’s humanity is filled with the Holy Spirit, for God “gives him the Spirit without measure.”[163] From “his fullness” as the head of redeemed humanity “we have all received, grace upon grace.”[164]

505 By his virginal conception, Jesus, the New Adam, ushers in the new birth of children adopted in the Holy Spirit through faith. “How can this be?”[165] Participation in the divine life arises “not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God”. [166] The acceptance of this life is virginal because it is entirely the Spirit’s gift to man. The spousal character of the human vocation in relation to God[167] is fulfilled perfectly in Mary’s virginal motherhood.

506 Mary is a virgin because her virginity is the sign of her faith “unadulterated by any doubt”, and of her undivided gift of herself to God’s will.[168] It is her faith that enables her to become the mother of the Saviour: “Mary is more blessed because she embraces faith in Christ than because she conceives the flesh of Christ.”[169]

507 At once virgin and mother, Mary is the symbol and the most perfect realization of the Church: “the Church indeed. . . by receiving the word of God in faith becomes herself a mother. By preaching and Baptism she brings forth sons, who are conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of God, to a new and immortal life. She herself is a virgin, who keeps in its entirety and purity the faith she pledged to her spouse.”[170]

IN BRIEF

508 From among the descendants of Eve, God chose the Virgin Mary to be the mother of his Son. “Full of grace”, Mary is “the most excellent fruit of redemption” (SC 103): from the first instant of her conception, she was totally preserved from the stain of original sin and she remained pure from all personal sin throughout her life.

509 Mary is truly “Mother of God” since she is the mother of the eternal Son of God made man, who is God himself.

510 Mary “remained a virgin in conceiving her Son, a virgin in giving birth to him, a virgin in carrying him, a virgin in nursing him at her breast, always a virgin” (St. Augustine, Sermon 186, 1: PL 38, 999): with her whole being she is “the handmaid of the Lord” (Lk 1:38).

511 The Virgin Mary “co-operated through free faith and obedience in human salvation” (LG 56). She uttered her yes “in the name of all human nature” (St. Thomas Aquinas, S Th III, 30, 1). By her obedience she became the new Eve, mother of the living.

www.christusrex.org/www1/CDHN/creed3.html

ANOTHER PRAYER



Mary, Our Dearest Mother, make each day in the next nine months, particularly in your month of May, a garden of fragrant flowers, a source of joyous awareness of your presence. You accompany us on our journey to your Son. It is through your love that we find strength in daily battles against temptation and sin. Thank you, Mary, for your motherly guidance, and for always being there to teach us truth about your Son.

ANNUNCIATION – INCARNATION

March 25: Solemnity of the Annunciation Blessed Mary, Ever-Virgin

Rev. Matthew Mauriello



Each year on March 25, the Church celebrates the Solemnity of the Annunciation of the Lord. This great feast takes its name from the tidings announced by the angel Gabriel to the Blessed Virgin Mary concerning the Incarnation of the Son of God.

← El Greco – Detailed

It is interesting to note why this celebration of the conception of Jesus Christ is celebrated on the particular date of March 25. In the early third century, Tertullian (+220) states definitely that Our Savior died on the cross on March 25. This is confirmed by St. Hippolytus of Rome (+235) as well as St. Augustine (+431) in his Treatise. De Trinitate (iv, 5) which states that, “Jesus died on the cross on March 25, the same day of the year as that on which He was conceived.”

This date then, became the starting point for the Christmas cycle, since nine months from the Annunciation is the placement of the birth of Jesus on Christmas day. His circumcision follows on the eighth day, January 1, and His presentation in the Temple, the fortieth day after His birth at Bethlehem is placed on February 2. The birth of the forerunner of the Lord, St. John the Baptist falls on June 24, since the angel told Mary at the Annunciation that “Elizabeth, your kinswoman has conceived a son in her old age and is now in her sixth months for nothing is impossible with God.” (Lk.1 :36-37)

St. Ambrose of Milan (+397) along with St. Jerome (+420) defended the Perpetual virginity of Mary against Jovinian and Helvidius, respectively, whose writings stated that Mary had other children. The great Latin Doctor of the Church, St. Augustine, Bishop of Hippo, supports the perpetual virginity of Mary and compares it to the Resurrection of the Lord who had the power to “pass through closed doors.” (In.20:19)

The Council of Nicea in the year 325 approved the formula “ex Maria virgine”, meaning born of the Virgin Mary and inserted it into the Creed. This was later confirmed by the Second Council of Constantinople in the year 553 and by the non-ecumenical Lateran Council, under Pope St. Martin I which, in 649, promulgated the perpetual virginity of Mary.

The Sixth Ecumenical Council, Constantinople III, in 681, accepted this canon without question and thereby clearly confirmed its dogmatic character.



← Luberoff - Contemporary

The Annunciation has its main focus on the Incarnation: God became man to save us. The prayers of the Mass as well as the preface stress the title virgin for Mary. A further theme of the liturgy is the first beginnings of the Church as expressed in the Prayer over the Gifts.

Scripturally, both the Gospel of St. Matthew 1:18-25 and that of St. Luke 1:26-38 provide explicit evidence for Mary’s virginal conception of Jesus. The Church teaches that Mary was a virgin before, during and after the birth of Christ. Mary conceived Jesus in her womb “by the power of the Most High”, (Lk 1:35) without the loss of her virginity. (Catechism, No. 485) “She remained a virgin in giving birth to Jesus: His miraculous birth did not diminish her virginal integrity but sanctified it “ (Vatican II, Lumen Gentium, 57) Following the birth of Jesus, Mary

remained a virgin the rest of her earthly life, until she was taken body and soul into heaven, where she reigns as Queen. (Lumen Gentium, 59)

Mary's virginity became the first problem of the Patristic Age. St. Justin the Martyr (+165) points to Isaiah 7:14 in his treatise, *Against Trypho*, who changed parthenos (virgin) to almah (young girl) in the Septuagint translation of the Sacred Scriptures. Both St. Irenaeus (+202) and Tertullian (+220) agree with St. Justin. St. Zeno of Verona (+372) was the first to refer to Mary's virginity as "ante partum, in partu; post partum", that is before birth, during birth and after birth.

It is important to understand Mary's perpetual virginity in light of the mystery of Christ. (Eph.3:4, 11) All of us are exhorted to imitate the great virtues of Mary: her fidelity, discipleship, charity and purity. (Lumen Gentium, 63-64) Her perpetual virginity primarily and unmistakably points to the importance of the Incarnation - the Mystery of the Eternal Word becoming flesh in Mary's womb without the intervention of a human father, in a marriage of the human and the divine through the marvelous plan of Almighty God.

[Footnotes and references cited are available on-line.]

(<http://www.udayton.edu/mary/meditations/EVERVIRGIN.html>)

DEUS CARITAS EST: POWERFUL on CORE of CHRISTIAN FAITH

VATICAN CITY, JAN 25, 2006 (VIS) - At midday today in the Holy See Press Office, the presentation took place of Benedict XVI's first Encyclical "Deus caritas est." Participating in the press conference were Cardinal Renato Raffaele Martino, president of the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, Archbishop William Joseph Levada, prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, and Archbishop Paul Josef Cordes, president of the Pontifical Council "Cor Unum."

In his remarks, Cardinal Martino made reference to that part of the Encyclical in which the Pope considers the relationship between justice and charity, and indicates certain points concerning the field of jurisdiction of the Church and her social doctrine, and the jurisdiction of the State, in achieving a just social order.

After highlighting how the building of social and State order is not immediately incumbent upon the Church but rather upon the political sphere, the Pope points out that "the Church is duty-bound to offer,

through the purification of reason and through ethical formation, her own specific contribution towards understanding the requirements of justice and achieving them politically."

The Holy Father, Cardinal Martino went on, "affirms that, in building a just social order, the duty of the Church with her social doctrine is that of reawakening spiritual and moral forces." In this context, he continued, "lay people, as citizens of the State, are called to participate directly in public life." Their mission "is to mould social life appropriately, respecting its legitimate autonomy and cooperating with other citizens, according to their respective areas of jurisdiction, each under their own responsibility."

"The presence of lay people in the social field," the cardinal continued, "is here conceived in terms of service, a sign and expression of charity which is made manifest in family, cultural, working, economic and political life."

For his part, Archbishop Levada affirmed that the Encyclical, is "a powerful text on the 'nucleus of Christian faith,' understood as the Christian image of God and the image of man that derives from it. A powerful text that seeks to counter the erroneous use of the name of God, and the ambiguity concerning the word 'love' that is so evident in the world today."

"In order to explain the novelty of Christian love, the Holy Father seeks first to illustrate the difference and unity between two concepts inherent to the phenomenon of love from the times of the ancient Greeks: 'eros' and 'agape'." These two concepts "do not oppose one another, but come harmoniously together to offer a realistic concept of human love, a love that involves the entirety - body and soul - of the human being. 'Agape' prevents 'eros' from abandoning itself to instinct, while 'eros' offers 'agape' the fundamental and vital relationships of human existence."

The prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith then went on to point out how "in the indissoluble marriage between man and woman this human love takes a form that is rooted in creation itself."

"Love for others, rooted in the love of God, is the duty, not only of each individual faithful, but also - and here we come to the second part of the Encyclical - of the entire community of believers, in other words the Church. From the historical development of the ecclesial aspect of love, which dates back to the very origins of the Church, we may draw two conclusions: firstly that the service of charity is part of the essence of the Church, secondly that no one must lack what they need, either within or outside the Church."

In his Encyclical the Pope, Archbishop Levada added, “offers some illuminating comments on certain aspects of the Church’s service of charity - ‘diakonia’ - in modern times. He responds to the objection according to which charity towards the poor is an obstacle to the fair distribution of the wealth of the earth to all mankind.”

At the same time the Pope “praises new forms of fruitful collaboration between State and Church bodies, making reference to the phenomenon of voluntary work.”

In summing up the Encyclical, Archbishop Levada pointed out how it “offers us a vision of love for others, and of the ecclesial duty to practice charity, as being a way to implement the commandment of love, one that finds its roots in the essence of God Himself, Who is Love.” The document, he concluded, “invites the Church to a renewed commitment to the service of charity (‘diakonia’) as an essential part of her existence and her mission.”

The last to speak was Archbishop Paul Josef Cordes, who highlighted how “today’s text is the first ever Encyclical on the subject of charity.” Perhaps, he suggested, the presentation had also been entrusted to him as president of “Cor Unum” because his dicastery “puts into effect the Pope’s personal initiatives as a sign of his compassion in the face of certain situations of misery.”

“The Church’s charity is made up of concrete initiatives,” said the archbishop. “It includes political initiatives, such as those for the elimination of debt of the poorest countries. We wish to promote an awareness of justice in society.” However, he went on, “Pope Benedict XVI [also] wished to illuminate charitable commitment with a theological foundation. ... He is convinced that faith has consequences on the individual who acts, and therefore on the manner and intensity of his acts of charity.”

“The social doctrine of the Church and the theology of charity are, without doubt, inter-linked,” the prelate said, “but they are not exactly the same. Indeed, the former expresses ethical principles associated with the search for the common good and moves, therefore, more at a political and community level. On the other hand, caring - both individually and together - for the suffering of others does not call for a systematic doctrine. Rather, it arises from the word of faith.”

“In our society there exists, fortunately, a widespread feeling of philanthropy, ... but this can give the faithful the idea that charity is not an essential part of the ecclesial mission. Without a solid theological foundation, the great ecclesial agencies could become

... disassociated from the Church, [and] ... prefer to identify themselves as non-governmental organizations. In such cases, their ‘philosophy’ and their projects would be indistinguishable from the Red Cross and the U.N. agencies. This, however, contrasts with the two-thousand-year history of the Church, and does not take into account the intimate rapport between ecclesial action on behalf of man and credibility in the announcement of the Gospel.”

“We must go further,” Archbishop Cordes concluded, “the present sensibility of so many people, especially the young, also contains a ‘kairos apostolico.’ This opens notable pastoral prospects. There are innumerable volunteers, and many of them discover the love of God in the giving of themselves to others with disinterested love.”

(ENC/DEUS CARITAS EST/... VIS 060125 (1150))

GOD IS LOVE: FIRST ENCYCLICAL of BENEDICT XVI

VATICAN CITY, JAN 25, 2006 (VIS) - Given below is a summary of Benedict XVI’s first Encyclical, entitled “Deus caritas est” (God is love). Dated December 25, Solemnity of the Nativity of the Lord, it considers the question of Christian love.

The Encyclical is divided into two long parts. The first, entitled, “The Unity of Love in Creation and in Salvation History,” presents a theological-philosophical reflection on “love” in its various dimensions - “eros,” “philia,” and “agape” - highlighting certain vital aspects of God’s love for man and the inherent links that such love has with human love. The second part, entitled “The Practice

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of Love by the Church as a 'Community of Love'," concerns the concrete implementation of the commandment to love others.

PART ONE

The term "love" - one of the most used, and abused, words in today's world - has a vast field of meaning. In this multiplicity of meanings, however, the archetype of love par excellence that emerges is that between man and woman, which in ancient Greece was given the name of "eros." In the Bible, and above all in the New Testament, the concept of "love" is rendered more profound, a development expressed by the rejection of the word "eros" in favor of the term "agape" to express oblate love.

This new view of love, an essential novelty of Christianity, has not infrequently been considered in a completely negative sense as the refusal of "eros" and of all things corporeal. Although there have been tendencies of this nature, the meaning of this development is quite different. "Eros," placed in the nature of man by his Creator, needs discipline, purification and maturity in order not to lose its original dignity, and not be degraded to the level of being pure "sex," becoming a mere commodity.

The Christian faith has always considered man as a being in whom spirit and matter are mutually intertwined, drawing from this a new nobility. The challenge of "eros" may be said to have been overcome when man's body and soul are in perfect harmony. Then love truly becomes "ecstasy," but not ecstasy in the sense of a passing moment of euphoria, but as a permanent departure from the "I" closed within itself towards freedom in the giving of self and, precisely in this way, towards the rediscovery of self, or rather, towards the discovery of God. In this way, "eros" can raise the human being "in ecstasy" towards the Divine.

Ultimately what is necessary is that "eros" and "agape" never be completely separated from one another; indeed, the greater the extent to which the two - though in different dimensions - find their right equilibrium, the more the true nature of love is realized. Although initially "eros" is, above all, desire, in approaching the other person it will ask ever fewer questions about itself and seek ever more happiness in the other, it will give itself and desire to "be there" for the other. Thus the one becomes part of the other and the moment of "agape" is achieved.

In Jesus Christ, Who is the incarnate love of God, "eros-agape" achieves its most radical form. In His death on the cross, Jesus, giving Himself to raise and save mankind, expressed love in its most sublime form. Jesus ensured a lasting presence for this act of

giving through the institution of the Eucharist, in which, under the species of bread and wine, He gives Himself as a new manna uniting us to Him. By participating in the Eucharist, we too become involved in the dynamics of His act of giving. We unite ourselves to Him, and at the same time unite ourselves with everyone else to whom He gives Himself. Thus we all become "a single body." In this way, love for God and love for others are truly fused together. The dual commandment, thanks to this encounter with the "agape" of God, is no longer just a requirement: love can be "commanded," because first it was given.

PART TWO

Love for others rooted in the love of God, in addition to being the duty of each individual faithful, is also the duty of the entire ecclesial community, which in its charitable activities must reflect Trinitarian love. An awareness of this duty has been of fundamental importance in the Church ever since her beginnings; and very soon the need became clear for a certain degree of organization as a basis for a more effective realization of those activities.

Thus, within the fundamental structure of the Church, the "diaconry" emerged as a service of love towards others, a love exercised collectively and in an ordered fashion: a concrete service, but at the same time a spiritual one. With the progressive growth of the Church, the practice of charity was confirmed as being one of her essential aspects. The Church's intimate nature is thus expressed in a triple duty: announcing the Word of God ("kerygma-martyria"), celebrating the Sacraments ("leiturgia"), and the service of charity ("diakonia"). These duties are inherent to one another and cannot be separated.

Beginning in the nineteenth century, a fundamental objection was raised against the Church's charitable activity. Such activity, it was said, runs counter to justice and ends up by preserving the status quo. By carrying out individual acts of charity, the reasoning went, the Church favors the preservation of the existing unjust system, making it in some way bearable and thus hindering rebellion and potential transformation to a better world.

In this way, Marxism sought to indicate in world revolution, and in the preparations for such revolution, a panacea for social ills; a dream that has since been shattered. Pontifical Magisterium - beginning with Leo XIII's Encyclical "Rerum novarum" (1891), and later with John Paul II's three social Encyclicals: "Laborem exercens" (1981), "Sollicitudo rei socialis" (1987), and "Centesimus annus" (1991) - has considered the social question with growing attention and, in facing ever new

problems, has developed a highly complex social doctrine, proposing guidelines that are valid well beyond the confines of the Church.

The creation of a just order in society and the State is the primary duty of politics, and therefore cannot be the immediate task of the Church. Catholic social doctrine does not want to give the Church power over the State, but simply to purify and illuminate reason, offering its own contribution to the formation of consciences so that the true requirements of justice may be perceived, recognized and put into effect. Nonetheless, there is no State legislation, however just it may be, that can make the service of love superfluous. The State that wishes to provide for everything becomes a bureaucratic machine, incapable of ensuring that essential contribution of which suffering man - all mankind - has need: loving personal dedication. Whoever wants to dispose of love, seeks to dispose of man.

In our own time, one positive collateral effect of globalization appears in the fact that concern for others, overcoming the confines of national communities, tends to broaden the horizons of the whole world. Structures of State and humanitarian associations both support, in various ways, the solidarity expressed by civil society; thus, many charitable and philanthropic organizations have come into being. In the Catholic Church too, as in other ecclesial communities, new forms of charitable activity have arisen. It is to be hoped that fruitful collaboration may be established between these various elements. Of course, it is important that the Church's charitable work does not lose its own identity, lost against the background of widespread organized charity of which it is simply another alternative. Rather it must maintain all the splendor of the essence of Christian and ecclesial charity. Therefore:

Christian charitable activity, apart from its professional competence, must be based on the experience of a personal encounter with Christ, Whose love touched believers' hearts, generating within them love for others.

Christian charitable activity must be independent of parties and ideologies. The program of Christians - the program of the Good Samaritan, the program of Jesus - is a "heart that sees." This heart sees where there is need of love and acts accordingly.

Christian charitable activity, furthermore, must not be a function of that which today is called proselytism. Love is gratuitous, it is not exercised in order to achieve other goals. However, this does not mean that charitable activity must, so to say, leave God and Christ on one side. Christians know when the time is

right to speak of God, and when it is right to be silent and let love alone speak. St. Paul's hymn of charity must be the "Magna Charta" for the entire ecclesial service, protecting it from the risk of degrading into mere activism.

In this context, and faced with the impending secularism that also risks conditioning many Christians committed to charitable work, we must reaffirm the importance of prayer. Living contact with Christ ensures that the immensity of need coupled with the limits of individual activity do not, on the one hand, push charity workers into ideologies that seek to do now that which God, apparently, does not manage to do or, on the other, serve as a temptation to surrender to inertia and resignation. Those who pray do not waste their time, although a situation may seem to call only for action, nor do they seek to change and correct God's plan. Rather they aim - following the example of Mary and the saints - to draw from God the light and the strength of love that defeats all the darkness and selfishness present in the world.

To read the full text of the Encyclical, go to: http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/benedict_xvi/encyclicals/index_it.htm.

(ENC/DEUS CARITAS EST/... VIS 060125 (1620))

THE DAYS of HOLY WEEK

[NOTE: Though written for a **Christian** rather than **Roman Catholic** audience, this article is great reading for an understanding of **Holy Week**.]

Holy Week is the last week of [Lent](#), the week immediately preceding Easter Sunday. It is observed in many Christian churches as a time to commemorate and enact the suffering (Passion) and death of Jesus through various observances and services of worship. While some church traditions focus specifically on the events of the last week of Jesus' life, many of the liturgies symbolize larger themes that marked Jesus' entire ministry. Observances during this week range from daily liturgical services in churches to informal meetings in homes to participate in a [Christian version of the Passover Seder](#).

In Catholic tradition, the conclusion to the week is called the Easter Triduum (a *triduum* is a space of three days usually accompanying a church festival or holy days that are devoted to special prayer and observance). The Easter Triduum begins Thursday evening of Holy Week with Eucharist and concludes with evening prayers Easter Saturday.

Increasingly, evangelical churches that have tended to look with suspicion on traditional “High-Church” observances of Holy Week are now realizing the value of Holy Week services, especially on Good Friday (see [Low Church and High Church](#)). This has a solid theological basis both in Scripture and in the traditions of the Faith. Dietrich Bonhoeffer, the German theologian who was executed by the Nazis, wrote of the *Cost of Discipleship* and warned of “cheap grace” that did not take seriously either the gravity of sin or the radical call to servanthood: “When Jesus bids a man come, he bids him come and die.”

It is this dimension that is well served by Holy Week observances, as they call us to move behind the joyful celebrations of Palm Sunday and Easter, and focus on the suffering, humiliation, and death that is part of Holy Week. It is important to place the hope of the Resurrection, the promise of newness and life, against the background of death and endings. It is only in walking through the shadows and darkness of Holy Week and Good Friday, only in realizing the horror and magnitude of sin and its consequences in the world incarnated in the dying Jesus on the cross, only in contemplating the ending and despair that the disciples felt on Holy Saturday, that we can truly understand the light and hope of Sunday morning!

In observing this truth, that new beginnings come from endings, many people are able to draw a parable of their own lives and faith journey from the observances of Holy Week. In providing people with the opportunity to experience this truth in liturgy and symbol, the services become a powerful proclamation of the transformative power of the Gospel, and God at work in the lives of people.

The entire week between Palm Sunday and Holy Saturday is included in Holy Week, and some church traditions have daily services during the week. However, usually only Palm Sunday, Maundy Thursday, and Good Friday are times of special observance in most churches.

Palm Sunday (or Passion Sunday)



This Sunday observes the triumphal entry of Jesus into Jerusalem that was marked by the crowds, who were in Jerusalem for Passover, waving palm branches and proclaiming him as the messianic king. The Gospels tell us that Jesus rode into the city on a donkey, enacting the prophecy of Zechariah 9:9, and in so doing emphasized the humility that was to characterize the Kingdom he proclaimed. The irony of his acceptance as the new Davidic King (Mark 11:10) by the crowds who would only five days later

cry for his execution should be a sobering reminder of the human tendency to want God on our own terms.

Traditionally, worshippers enact the entry of Jesus into Jerusalem by the waving of palm branches and singing songs of celebration. Sometimes this is accompanied by a processional into the church. In many churches, children are an integral part of this service since they enjoy processions and activity as a part of worship. This provides a good opportunity to involve them in the worship life of the community of Faith.

This Sunday is also known as **Passion Sunday** to commemorate the beginning of Holy Week and Jesus’ final agonizing journey to the cross. The English word *passion* comes from a Latin word that means “to suffer,” the same word from which we derive the English word *patient*.

In most Protestant traditions, the [liturgical color](#) for [The Season of Lent](#) is purple, and that color is used until Easter Sunday. In Catholic tradition (and some others), the colors are changed to Red for Palm Sunday. Red is the color of the church, used for [Pentecost](#) as well as remembering the martyrs of the church. Since it symbolizes shed blood, it is also used on Palm Sunday to symbolize the death of Jesus. While most Protestants celebrate the Sunday before Easter as Palm Sunday, in Catholic and other church traditions it is also celebrated as Passion Sunday anticipating the impending death of Jesus.

Increasingly, many churches are incorporating an emphasis on the Passion of Jesus into services on this Sunday as a way to balance the celebration of Easter Sunday. Rather than having the two Sundays both focus on triumph, Passion Sunday is presented as a time to reflect on the suffering and death of Jesus in a Sunday service of worship. This provides an opportunity for people who do not or cannot attend a Good Friday Service to experience the contrast of Jesus’ death and the Resurrection, rather than celebrating the Resurrection in isolation from Jesus’ suffering. However, since Sunday services are always celebrations of the Resurrection of Jesus during the entire year, even an emphasis on the Passion of Jesus on this Sunday should not be mournful or end on a negative note, as do most Good Friday Services (which is the reason Eucharist or Communion is not normally celebrated on Good Friday).

Maundy Thursday, or Holy Thursday

There are a variety of events that are clustered on this last day before Jesus was arrested that are commemorated in various ways in services of worship. These include the last meal together, which was probably a Passover meal, the institution of

Eucharist or Communion, the betrayal by Judas (because of the exchange with Jesus at the meal), and Jesus praying in Gethsemane while the disciples fell asleep. Most liturgies, however, focus on the meal and communion as a way to commemorate this day.

During the last few days, Jesus and His disciples had steadily journeyed from Galilee toward Jerusalem. On the sunlight hillsides of Galilee, Jesus was popular, the crowds were friendly and the future was bright. Even his entry into Jerusalem had been marked by a joyous welcome. But in Jerusalem there was a growing darkness as the crowds began to draw back from the man who spoke of commitment and servanthood. There was an ominous tone in the murmuring of the Sadducees and Pharisees who were threatened by the new future Jesus proclaimed.

Even as Jesus and his disciples came together to share this meal, they already stood in the shadow of the cross. It was later that night, after the meal, as Jesus and His disciples were praying in the Garden of Gethsemane, that Jesus was arrested and taken to the house of Caiaphas the High Priest. On Friday He would die.

There is some difference in the chronology of these events between the Synoptic Gospels (Matthew, Mark, and Luke) and John's account (see [Synoptic Problem](#)). In the Synoptics, this last meal was a Passover meal, observing the exodus of the Israelites from Egypt when death "passed over" the Hebrew homes as the tenth plague fell upon the Egyptians. Yet, in John's account the Passover would not be celebrated until the next day. And while the Synoptics recount the institution of Communion during this final meal, John instead tells us about Jesus' washing the disciples' feet as a sign of servanthood.

In any case, this Thursday of Holy Week is remembered as the time Jesus ate a final meal together with the men who had followed him for so long. We do not have to solve these historical questions to remember and celebrate in worship what Jesus did and taught and modeled for us here, what God was doing in Jesus the Christ. And the questions should not shift our attention from the real focus of the story: the death and resurrection of Jesus.

Traditionally in the Christian Church, this day is known as Maundy Thursday. The term **Maundy** comes from the Latin word *mandatum* (from which we get our English word *mandate*), from a verb that means "to give," "to entrust," or "to order." The term is usually translated "commandment," from John's account of this Thursday night. According to the Fourth Gospel, as Jesus and the Disciples were eating their final meal together before Jesus' arrest, he washed the disciples' feet to illustrate humility and

the spirit of servanthood. After they had finished the meal, as they walked into the night toward Gethsemane, Jesus taught his disciples a "new" **commandment** that was not really new (John 13:34-35):

A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; even as I have loved you, you also ought to love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.

The colors for Maundy Thursday are usually the colors of Lent, royal purple or red violet. Some traditions, however, use red for Maundy Thursday, the color of the church, in order to identify with the community of disciples that followed Jesus. Along the same line, some use this day to honor the apostles who were commissioned by Jesus to proclaim the Gospel throughout the world.

The sharing of the Eucharist, or sacrament of thanksgiving, on Maundy Thursday is the means by which most Christians observe this day. There is a great variety in exactly how the service is conducted, however. In some churches, it is traditional for the pastor or priest to wash the feet of members of the congregation as part of the service. Increasingly, churches are observing some form of the Passover Seder as a setting for the Eucharist of Maundy Thursday (see [Introduction to a Christian Seder](#) and [Haggadah for a Christian Seder](#)). Some churches simply have a "pot-luck" dinner together concluded with a short time of singing and communion.

In some church traditions all of the altar coverings and decorations are removed after the Eucharist is served on Maundy Thursday. Since the altar in these traditions symbolize the Christ, the "stripping of the altar" symbolizes the abandonment of Jesus by his disciples and the stripping of Jesus by the soldiers prior to his crucifixion. This, like the darkness often incorporated into a Good Friday service, represents the humiliation of Jesus and the consequences of sin as a preparation for the celebration of new life and hope that is to come on Resurrection Day. Some churches only leave the altar bare until the Good Friday Service, when the normal coverings are replaced with black.

However it is celebrated, the Eucharist of Maundy Thursday is especially tied to the theme of remembering. As Jesus and his disciples followed the instructions in the Torah to remember God's acts of deliverance in their history as they shared the Passover meal together, so Jesus calls us to remember the new act of deliverance in our history that unfolds on these last days of Holy week

Good Friday, or Holy Friday

Friday of Holy Week has been traditionally been called Good Friday or Holy Friday. On this day, the church commemorates Jesus' arrest (since by Jewish customs of counting days from sundown to sundown it was already Friday), his trial, crucifixion and suffering, death, and burial. Since services on this day are to observe Jesus' death, and since Eucharist is a celebration, there is traditionally no Communion observed on Good Friday. Also, depending on how the services are conducted on this day, all pictures, statutes, and the cross are covered in mourning black, the chancel and altar coverings are replaced with black, and altar candles are extinguished. They are left this way through Saturday, but are always replaced with white before sunrise on Sunday.



There are a variety of services of worship for Good Friday, all aimed at allowing worshippers to experience some sense of the pain, humiliation, and ending in the journey to the cross. The traditional Catholic service for Good Friday was held in mid-afternoon to correspond to the final words of Jesus from the cross (around 3 PM, Matt 27:46-50). However, modern schedules have led many churches to move the service to the evening to allow more people to participate. Usually, a Good Friday service is a series of Scripture readings, a short homily, and a time of meditation and prayer. One traditional use of Scripture is to base the homily or devotional on the **Seven Last Words of Jesus** as recorded in the Gospel traditions.

Father, forgive them, they know not what they do. (Luke 23:34)

This day you will be with me in paradise (Luke 23:43)

Woman, behold, your son. . . . Behold, your mother. (John 19:26-27)

Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani? . . . My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? (Matthew 27:46, Mark 15:34)

I thirst. (John 19:28)

It is finished! (John 19:30)

Father into your hands I commend my spirit (Luke 23:46)

Some churches use the [Stations of the Cross](#) as part of the Good Friday Service. This service uses paintings or banners to represent various scenes from Jesus' betrayal, arrest, trial, and death, and the worshippers move to the various stations to sing hymns or pray as the story is told. There is a great

variety in how this service is conducted, and various traditions use different numbers of stations to tell the story (see [The Fourteen Stations of the Cross](#)).

Another common service for Good Friday is **Tenebrae** (Latin for "shadows" or "darkness"). Sometimes this term is applied generally to all church services on the last three days of Holy week. More specifically, however, it is used for the **Service of Darkness** or **Service of Shadows**, usually held in the evening of Good Friday. Again, there are varieties of this service, but it is usually characterized by a series of Scripture readings and meditation done in stages while lights and/or candles are gradually extinguished to symbolize the growing darkness not only of Jesus' death but of hopelessness in the world without God. The service ends in darkness, sometimes with a final candle, the Christ candle, carried out of the sanctuary, symbolizing the death of Jesus. Often the service concludes with a loud noise symbolizing the closing of Jesus' tomb (see [The Empty Tomb](#)). The worshippers then leave in silence to wait.

Some churches observe communion on Good Friday. However, traditionally Eucharist is not served on Good Friday since it is a celebration of thanksgiving. Good Friday is not a day of celebration but of mourning, both for the death of Jesus and for the sins of the world that his death represents. Yet, although Friday is a solemn time, it is not without its own joy. For while it is important to place the Resurrection against the darkness of Good Friday, likewise the somberness of Good Friday should always be seen with the hope of Resurrection Sunday. As the well-known sermon title vividly illustrates: "It's Friday. But Sunday's a'comin'!"

Holy Saturday

This is the seventh day of the week, the day Jesus rested in the tomb. In the first three Gospel accounts this was the Jewish Sabbath, which provided appropriate symbolism of the seventh day rest. While some church traditions continue daily services on Saturday, there is no communion served on this day.

Some traditions suspend services and Scripture readings during the day on Saturday, to be resumed at the [Easter Vigil](#) after sundown Saturday. It is traditionally a day of quiet meditation as Christians contemplate the darkness of a world without a future and without hope apart from God and his grace.

It is also a time to remember family and the faithful who have died as we await the resurrection, or to honor the martyrs who have given their lives for the cause of Christ in the world. While Good Friday is a traditional day of fasting, some also fast on Saturday as the climax of [the season of Lent](#). An ancient

tradition dating to the first centuries of the church calls for no food of any kind to be eaten on Holy Saturday, or for 40 hours before sunrise on Sunday. However it is observed, Holy Saturday has traditionally been a time of reflection and waiting, the time of weeping that lasts for the night while awaiting the joy that comes in the morning (Psa 30:5).

(by Dennis Bratcher

<http://www.cresourcei.org/cyholyweek.html>)

FAMILY EVENING PRAYER for HOLY WEEK

Mother or child: From the words of Pope Pius XII on the Sacred Liturgy, Dearly beloved, in Holy Week, when the most bitter sufferings of Jesus Christ are put before us by the liturgy, the Church invites us to come to Calvary and follow in the blood-stained footsteps of the Divine Redeemer, to carry the Cross willingly with him, to reproduce in our hearts His spirit of expiation and atonement, and to die together with Him.

Father: We ought to glory in the Cross of Our Lord Jesus Christ

Family: in whom is our salvation, life and resurrection.

Father: Let us pray. All-powerful, Eternal God, You have chosen to give mankind a model of humility; Our Savior took on our flesh, and subjected himself to the Cross. Grant us the grace to preserve faithfully the lessons He has given us in His Passion and to have a share in His Resurrection. This we ask of You through Our Lord Jesus Christ, Your Son.

Family: Amen.

Favor this dwelling, Lord, with Your presence. Far from it repulse all the wiles of Satan. Your holy angels—let them live here, to keep us in peace. And may Your blessing remain always upon us. This we ask of You through Our Lord Jesus Christ, Your Son.

Father: Let us bless the Lord

Family: Thanks be to God.

Father: May the almighty and merciful Lord, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, bless and keep us.

Family: Amen.

<http://catholicism.about.com/cs/prayers/qt/fameveprayhol04.htm> from [Jessica Steinmetz](#)

EASTER SUNDAY 2006 - SERMON

My brothers and sisters, today's message from the First Reading [Acts 10:34, 36-43] of the Word

of God is presented to us by our first Pope, Peter the First. Often, we do not think of Peter as the First Pope. Rather, we think of him as St. Peter. But in reality, it is he who received the Keys to the Kingdom of God and he was in fact the first Pontiff of the Holy Catholic Church. As the spiritual leader of the Church of Jesus Christ that was being established on earth, Saint Peter took his place of authority and began to speak to those who had assembled in the house of Cornelius.

St. Peter said, "You know the message of God sent to the people of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ - he is Lord of all." For centuries, the people of God had awaited for the coming Messiah who would bring peace to the world to reconcile man with God. Peter affirmed that this had come to pass through Jesus Christ. Jesus is the Lord of all! Through Jesus, God the Father had fulfilled all His promises that are found in the Old Testament.

In the presence of all, Peter affirmed that he and the disciples of the Lord were witnesses to all what Jesus had done in Judea and in Jerusalem. What was said about Jesus was not fabricated stories. It was the truth. The disciples of Christ lived alongside Him and witnessed everything that He had done and said.

Peter testified that Jesus was indeed crucified and that He had died on the Holy Cross. But God raised Him from the dead on the Third Day. And, after His glorious Resurrection, Jesus appeared to many of the disciples who were chosen by God as witnesses. In all, it is estimated that Jesus appeared to approximately 500 different persons during the days that followed His Resurrection.

Now, when Jesus appeared to the disciples, it was not in a dream or in a vision. Nor was it the Spirit of Jesus who appeared to the disciples because a spirit cannot eat or drink. It was the Lord Jesus Himself, He had resurrected from the dead. In His resurrected physical body, Jesus ate and drank with the disciples.

When Jesus came to the disciples, He gave them a command. Jesus commanded the disciples to preach to the people and to testify to all that He was the One sent by God to judge the living and the dead. Jesus was the promised Messiah in fulfillment of the Scriptures.

In today's first reading, Peter finished by stating that all the prophets of the Old Testament spoke about the coming of Jesus. In their inspired writings, they testified that those who would believe in Jesus would receive the forgiveness of sin through His Most Holy Name. As the Holy Bible tells us elsewhere, Jesus gave the authority to forgive sins in His Name to His disciples. "If you forgive the sins of any, they are

forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained.” [Jn. 20:23]

During today’s Second Reading that was taken from the Letter of Paul to the Colossians, [Col. 3:1-4] we heard that if we have been raised with Christ, we should seek the things that are from above where Christ dwells in Heaven. We should set our minds on spiritual things, not on worldly things.

Having been born again through the Church Sacrament of Baptism, we are obligated to God to feed our souls with spiritual things. We are called to spiritually grow in shining virtues and in the fruit of the Holy Spirit so that we may gradually be transformed by the grace of God the Father to become more in the likeness of His Son Jesus Christ.

For many, their participation in the celebration of the Holy Mass on Easter Day is a stepping stone towards returning to their living faith. It is a sincere resolution... but it must not end there.

Jesus is the Lord of all! And we all need Him! On a regular basis, we need to receive the Sacrament of Confession that Jesus has instituted on earth through the apostles for the forgiveness of our sins. We need to receive the Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist that Jesus has instituted on earth through the apostles as our assurance of salvation and eternal life in the Kingdom of God. The Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist is the Living Bread that feeds our souls once we have been reinstated in a state of grace after having received the Sacrament of Confession.

During today’s reading of the Holy Gospel, [Jn. 10:1-18] we heard how Mary Magdalene needed Jesus. She wept when she realized that His body was gone, believing that someone had stolen it. She wept because she missed the Divine Presence of Jesus. She missed that inner burning desire to be near the living body of Jesus, to follow Him, to hear Him, to feel loved, to be understood and to be forgiven of sins.

Mary Magdalene was not the only one to have these feelings. All the disciples of Jesus felt that way. That is why they reacted the way they did when they heard some saying that Jesus was no longer in His tomb, that He had resurrected, or that He was appearing here and there to different disciples.

The words, “Jesus is alive!” or “I have seen the Lord!” were enough to instantly create a great spiritual hunger in the soul of the disciples of Jesus where emptiness existed because of His death. The worldly minds of the disciples suddenly became alerted to the truth. Through these words, there was a new hope. Faith was being reinstated in the Words that Jesus had spoken while He lived on earth.

Jesus is the Lord of all! It is the will of God that we all experience spiritual hunger for the Divine Presence of the Lord Jesus. It is the will of God that Jesus feed our spiritual hunger so like Mary Magdalene and the disciples, we will never want to leave His Divine Presence.

When we set our minds on Jesus, we do what is spiritual. While we are in this world, we are not of this world. Through faith in Jesus and the Sacrament of Baptism, we have become new creations of the godly seed, called to obey and serve the Lord Jesus in all righteousness.

When you go home today, think of the words, “Jesus is alive!” Think of the words, “Jesus is the Lord of all!” He is your Lord as much as He is my Lord and the Lord of all the others, those who are present and those who are not. Remember that spiritual hunger that you experienced so many times in your life, during those moments when you desired that the Lord Jesus could be so close to you... (pause) and He came close to you. You felt His warmth, His joy and His peace.

Awaken your spirits so you may relive those moments, not only for a day or two, but for every day of your life until you appear before the Lord Jesus in person. While you are in this world, be of above. For Jesus is the Lord of all and by the grace of God the Father and the power of the Holy Spirit, He can once more ignite your hearts with a burning hunger that will draw you to Him.

www.catholicdoors.com/homilies/2006/060416.htm

THE RESURRECTION: INFLUENCE on the CHURCH in the FIRST DECADES

In 1 Corinthians 15, the earliest New Testament writing to discuss Christ’s resurrection, Paul tells us what the resurrection meant to Christians in the first 25 years of church history.

Paul begins his debate by using two technical terms that indicate how Christian traditions were passed on. He says he “handed on” to them what he had “received” (1 Cor. 15:3). The story of the resurrection was passed on by word of mouth. Paul did not create his own story; he stood as a link between early eyewitnesses and the Corinthians.

In 1 Corinthians 15:3-5 we find four elements of early Christian tradition. First, Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures. Christianity had its origin in Judaism and therefore appealed to the

Jewish scriptures to interpret its experience with Jesus.

Second, Christ was buried. There should be no doubt about the awful finality of his death and burial. Yet this was not merely a martyr's death for a noble cause. It was for our sins, and therefore redemptive.

Third, Christ was raised on the third day in accordance with Scripture. The passive verb means that Jesus did not rise by himself but **was raised** by God. The terrible dilemma of a messiah executed as a criminal gave way to the good news that God vindicated him by raising him up.

The Resurrection on the Third Day also has an Old Testament background. Speaking of God's graciousness, Hosea said, "After two days he will revive us; on the third day he will raise us up" (Hosea 6:2). "Two days" and "the third day" simply mean a very short time. Matt 12:40 states that Jesus like Jonah would stay in the heart of the earth three days and nights.

Finally, Christ appeared to Cephas and the twelve, as reported also in the gospels. Since Judas committed suicide, "the twelve" was probably a title for the apostles rather than a numerical figure.

Paul lists other appearances in 1 Corinthians 15:6-8. Since the structure of this list is different from the previous statements, Paul may have used a number of other traditions.

1 Corinthians 15 is an important chapter not only because it contains early Christian traditions, but also because it illustrates how a truth is communicated across cultural lines. Paul, raised in Judaism and steeped in the Old Testament, was making his case to Corinthian Christians who held to Greek ideas of life and death.

At the beginning, Christianity was primarily a Jewish movement. Judaism viewed human beings as mortal; their destiny was death. In the Old Testament, there is little reference to life after death.

During the Maccabean period of Jewish history (180-160 B. C.) ideas about a future resurrection began to emerge. Jews experienced extreme suffering at the hands of Greek kings (the Seleucid dynasty who controlled Palestine after Alexander the Great) who forced them to accept Greek culture and worship. According to 2 Maccabees 7, seven Jewish brothers and their mother died heroically for their faith. At the point of death, one of the brothers said, "One cannot but choose to die at the hands of mortals and to cherish the hope God gives of being raised again by him" (2 Macc. 7:14). Likewise the Book of Daniel, which many scholars believe to have been written in the Maccabean period, states, "Many of those who

sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt" (12:2). Whereas Jewish thought anticipated a future resurrection, early Christianity affirmed that in Christ the resurrection has become a present reality.

In contrast to Jewish and Christian ideas of resurrection, Greek philosophers from the time of Plato thought in terms of immortality of the soul. Human beings were made up of two parts, body and soul. The body died and decayed but the soul lived on forever. When Corinthian Christians said, "There is no resurrection" (1 Cor 15:12), they meant that the body of Jesus turned to dust but his soul remained immortal.

Paul protested. If there was no resurrection, the Christian faith was in vain. It was not so much that the soul of Jesus somehow survived death but that God raised His Son in triumph over death and sin. And just as God raised Christ He will also raise us up. Our hope is based not on immortality of the soul but on an immortal God.

(by Jirair S. Tashjian

<http://www.cresourcei.org/resurrection.html>)

EUCCHARISTIC MIRACLES

(Repeated from "***The PILGRIM***")

February - March 2006 as the "By Place and Date" Reports are continued below)

Throughout Christian history, our Lord has shown us that he is really present as the Blessed Sacrament. Interestingly, many Eucharistic miracles have occurred during times of weakened Faith. For instance, many Eucharist miracles have taken place as a result of someone doubting the Real Presence. Included in this issue of "***The PILGRIM***" are descriptions of just two of these miracles. Both of them have received full approval by the Church.

Most Eucharistic miracles involve incidences in which the Host has "turned into human flesh and blood". Of course we as Catholics believe that the consecrated Host is the Body, Blood, Soul, and Divinity of our Lord, only under the appearances of bread and wine. Therefore, Jesus, through these miracles, merely manifests His Presence in a more tangible way.

Then he said to Thomas, 'Put your finger here, and see my hands; and put out your hand, and place it in my side; do not be faithless, but believing.' Thomas answered him, "My Lord and my God!" Jesus said to him, "Have you believed

because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet believe.” (Jn 20:27-29)

EUCCHARISTIC MIRACLES by PLACE and DATE

**(Continued from “*The PILGRIM*”
February - March 2006)**

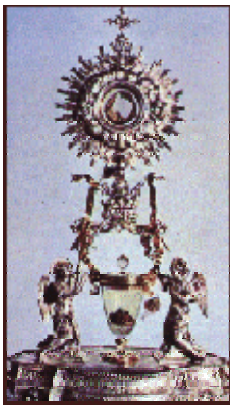
LANCIANO, ITALY - 8th CENTURY A.D.

Ancient Anxanum, the city of the Frentanese, has contained for over twelve centuries the first and greatest Eucharistic Miracle of the Catholic Church. This wondrous Event took place in the 8th century A.D. in the little Church of Saint Legontian, as a divine response to a Basilian monk’s doubt about Jesus’ Real Presence in the Eucharist.

During Holy Mass, after the two-fold consecration, the host was changed into live Flesh and the wine was changed into live Blood, which coagulated into five globules, irregular and differing in shape and size.

The Host-Flesh, as can be very distinctly observed today, has the same dimensions as the large host used today in the Latin church; it is light brown and appears rose-colored when lighted from the back.

The Blood is coagulated and has an earthy color resembling the yellow of ochre.



Since 1713 the Flesh has been reserved in an artistic [silver Ostensorium](#), delicately embossed by an artisan of the Neapolitan school.

The Blood is enclosed in a rich and very [old cup](#) made of Rock-crystal.

The Minor Conventual Friars have been the custodians of the Sanctuary since 1252; their appointment was the wish of

Bishop Landulf of Chieti; their appointment was confirmed by a Pontifical Bull dated April 20th, 1252.

The church was in charge of the Basilian monks until 1176; from 1176 until 1252 the Benedictines staffed the church.

In 1258 the Franciscans built the present church.

In 1700 its architectural style was changed from romanesque-gothic to baroque.

The “Miracle” was first reserved in a chapel situated at the side of the main altar.

Then, from 1636 it was reserved in a side-altar of the nave which still contains the old [iron chest](#) and the commemorative inscription.

In 1902 it was transferred into the present [monumental marble altar](#) which the people of Lanciano had erected.

Various ecclesiastical investigations (“Recognitions”) were conducted since 1574.

In 1970-’71 and taken up again partly in 1981 there took place a scientific investigation by the most illustrious scientist Prof. Odoardo Linoli, eminent Professor in Anatomy and Pathological Histology and in Chemistry and Clinical Microscopy. He was assisted by Prof. Ruggero Bertelli of the University of Siena.

The analyses were conducted with absolute and unquestionable scientific precision and they were documented with a series of microscopic photographs.

These analyses sustained the following conclusions:

The Flesh is real Flesh. The Blood is real Blood.

The Flesh and the Blood belong to the human species.

The Flesh consists of the muscular tissue of the heart.

In the Flesh we see present in section: the myocardium, the endocardium, the vagus nerve and also the left ventricle of the heart for the large thickness of the myocardium. The Flesh is a “HEART” complete in its essential structure.

The Flesh and the Blood have the same blood-type: AB (Blood-type identical to that which Prof. Baima Bollone uncovered in the Holy Shroud of Turin). [Also in the Eucharistic Miracle of Santarem near Fatima in Portugal.]

In the Blood there were found proteins in the same normal proportions (percentage-wise) as are found in the sero-proteic make-up of fresh normal human blood. In the Blood there were also found these minerals: chlorides, phosphorus, magnesium, potassium, sodium, and calcium.

The preservation of the Flesh and of the Blood, which were left in their natural state for twelve centuries and exposed to the action of atmospheric and biological agents, remains an extraordinary phenomenon.

In conclusion, it may be said that science, when called upon to testify, has given a certain and thorough response as regards the authenticity of the Eucharistic Miracle of Lanciano.

Additional information and the results of scientific studies can be found on the internet using the link: <http://www.negrisud.it/miracolo/tableofcontents.html>.

(For information, books, pamphlets, slides, postcards, and souvenirs of the Sanctuary, please apply to: Santuario del Miracolo Eucaristico, Frati Minori Conventuali, 66034 Lanciano (Ch), Italy Taken from <http://www.negrisud.it/miracolo/shortdesc.html>)

BOLSENA/ORVIETO, ITALY - 1263

In 1263 a German priest, Peter of Prague, stopped at Bolsena while on a pilgrimage to Rome. He is described as being a pious priest, but one who found it difficult to believe that Christ was actually present in the consecrated Host. While celebrating Holy Mass above the tomb of Saint Christina (located in the church named for this martyr), he had barely spoken the words of Consecration when blood started to seep from the consecrated Host and trickle over his hands onto the altar and the corporal.

The priest was immediately confused. At first he attempted to hide the blood, but then he interrupted the Mass and asked to be taken to the neighboring city of Orvieto, the city where Pope Urban IV was then residing.

The Pope listened to the priest's account and absolved him. He then sent emissaries for an immediate investigation. When all the facts were ascertained, he ordered the Bishop of the diocese to bring to Orvieto the Host and the linen cloth bearing the stains of blood. With archbishops, cardinals and other Church dignitaries in attendance, the Pope met the procession and, amid great pomp, had the relics placed in the cathedral. The linen corporal bearing the spots of blood is still reverently enshrined and exhibited in the Cathedral of Orvieto.

It is said that Pope Urban IV was prompted by this miracle to commission Saint Thomas Aquinas to compose the Proper for a Mass and an Office honoring the Holy Eucharist as the Body of Christ. One year after the miracle, in August of 1264, Pope Urban IV introduced the saint's composition, and by means of a papal bull instituted the feast of Corpus Christi.

After visiting the Cathedral of Orvieto, many pilgrims and tourists journey to Saint Christina's Church in Bolsena to see for themselves the place where the miracle occurred. From the north aisle of the church one can enter the Chapel of the Miracle, where the stains on the paved floor are said to have been made by the blood from the miraculous Host. The altar of the miracle, which is surmounted by a 9th-century canopy, is now situated in the grotto of Saint Christina. A reclining statue of the saint is nearby.

In August of 1964, on the 700th anniversary of the institution of the feast of Corpus Christi, Pope Paul

VI celebrated Holy Mass at the altar where the holy corporal is kept in its golden shrine in the Cathedral of Orvieto. (His Holiness had journeyed to Orvieto by helicopter; he was the first pope in history to use such a means of transportation).

Twelve years later, the same pontiff visited Bolsena and spoke from there via television to the 41st International Eucharistic Congress, then concluding its activities in Philadelphia. During his address Pope Paul VI spoke of the Eucharist as being ". . . a mystery great and inexhaustible."

(from *Eucharistic Miracles* by Joan Carroll Cruz [TAN Books and Publishers, Inc.](#))

PFMC DISPLAYS and / or PRESENTATIONS



Kathleen and Keith are available to participate in parish or 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 and her Son 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. Recipients are asked to donate at or above the suggested value posted on each article on display. Displays may be set up without a presentation.

We are willing and have offered to set up displays in parishes for all the weekend Holy Masses. We'll come on Saturday afternoon in time (about 2 hours) to set up before the first vigil Holy Mass and stay through Sunday afternoon or evening until after the last Sunday Holy Mass (Volunteer staff pending).

Displays in parishes are particularly beneficial when good Catholic religious goods or book stores are not convenient to the parishioners.

Ask your pastor if he would allow the **PFMC** to set up a display in the basement, school cafeteria, or gymnasium, or wherever we could have about 20 large tables with display material on them.

MESSAGE of 2/25/2006 via Maria Pavlovic Lunetti

Dear children! In this Lenten time of grace, I call you to open your hearts to the gifts that God desires to give you. Do not be closed, but with prayer and renunciation say 'yes' to God and He will give to you in abundance. As in springtime the earth opens to the seed and yields a hundredfold, so also your heavenly Father will give to you in abundance. I am with you and love you, little children, with a tender love. Thank you for having responded to my call.

MESSAGE of 3/25/2006 via Maria Pavlovic Lunetti

Courage, little children! I decided to lead you on the way of holiness. Renounce sin and set out on the way of salvation, the way which my Son has chosen. Through each of your tribulations and sufferings God will find the way of joy for you. Therefore, little children, pray. We are close to you with our love. Thank you for having responded to my call.

(The **PFMC** upholds the final decision of the **Magisterium** of the **Roman Catholic Church** led by the **Holy Father, Pope Benedict XVI**, as to the authenticity of messages to alleged visionaries from **Medjugorje**.)

REFLECTION on the MESSAGE of 2/25/2006

SAY YES TO GOD

Today Mary, Mother of Jesus and Mother of the Church, wishes to prepare us for Lent with her message. Lent is the season of the church year that we call the strong time. At the beginning of the Gospel, as well as at the beginning of Lent we hear Jesus' call: **"Convert and believe in the Gospel."** At the beginning of Lent, particularly on the first day, we hear the following words: **"Remember, man, you are dust, and unto dust you shall return."** As Holy Scripture depicts in great detail, God created us from the dust of the ground, breathed His breath, His Spirit and His life into us. God has placed Himself in the heart of everyone of us. If we break the bond, break our relationship with Him, which we can as we have a free will, then we have no life in us. It means that without God we are dead, we do not exist. In the best case scenario we can merely vegetate. If there is no bond between God and us, if we do not reach out for Him every single day, we are left without His Spirit inside us.

Our Lady is a Mother, and a Mother cannot remain calm watching her children walk through this world without God. Her words are simple and easily comprehensible, but hard when we have to materialize them in our life. She still speaks today: **"Open your hearts"**. God dwells in the heart of everyone of us. And we may be out of ourselves, as St Augustine puts it nicely: **"Too late have I loved Thee, O Beauty so ancient and so new, too late have**

I loved Thee!." St. Paul says: **"He is not far from any of us. For in Him we live and move and have our being."** If we run away from God or if we deny Him faith, then it is not us any more, as the Psalm goes: **"Far from Thee, life is life no longer. Not believing in Thee means being nobody."**

Because she is the Mother, Our Lady wants us to live and to have God's life in us. The path to reach this is an open heart, prayer, and renunciation. Only then can we receive what God desires to give us. And when it is God who gives, He gives in abundance. Renunciation is not intended to lose something, but to gain even more. It does not mean holding our hands tight, but to open them so that God may place in them the gifts of peace, love, trust, light and hope.

Our Lady makes us see the image of nature: Spring, the earth, the seed. God has placed His own laws in nature and these laws abide by the will of God. We all know how devastating consequences may be when man tries to change the laws of nature. Even more devastating are the consequences when man tries to change the Divine Laws that God has imprinted in our consciousness and in our spirit.

Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of the Church and Our Mother, pray for us in this merciful time of Lent and lead us to the path of prayer and renunciation so that we can receive gifts from God which He desires to give us with His infinite love.

Father Ljubo Kurtovic, Medjugorje, 26.2.2006,
<http://medjugorje.hr.nt4.ims.hr>

ANOTHER REFLECTION on the MESSAGE of 2/25/2006

“Dear children! In this Lenten time of grace, I call you to open your hearts to the gifts that God desires to give you. Do not be closed, but with prayer and renunciation say ‘yes’ to God and He will give to you in abundance.”

As one contemplates these words of Our Lady found in the first two sentences of Her message of February 25, 2006, one can begin to understand the importance of the Lenten season; while coming to the realization that Our Lady is calling us to focus more upon God and His gracious gifts. However, to accept this beautiful request of Our Lady, we must continue to change, and reject those complacent feelings that often fill our hearts.

For the most part, we are not as faithful to God as we think we are. On a daily basis, we become “so caught up” in the world around us. The daily news, personal problems, struggles at work or at school, and other anxieties seem to always overwhelm us. Many fall into a malaise of doubt and unbelief. For some, the reality of trusting in God to overcome these situations is not apparent to them.

The Lenten season is that time for all believers to embark upon a spiritual renewal. Unfortunately, for many the reception of ashes on Ash Wednesday will be their only spiritual activity during Lent. Let us now ask ourselves this very personal question: what am I going to do during these next six weeks to open my heart to the gifts that God desires to give to me? More prayer time and acts of sacrifice that encompass a renunciation of some of our favorite things can be a good starting place. Also, very frequent attendance at Mass (even daily, if possible) can help us to connect with our loving God as we reflect upon Jesus’ profound sacrifice. In this process, as we receive the Sacred Body and Blood, Soul and Divinity of Our Dear Loving Savior, we can become united in our hearts with the sacrificial love of Jesus. Through the presence of the Eternal Father, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit in the Sacraments, we are constantly being given the beautiful gift of holy grace. This is truly one of the gifts that ***“God desires”*** to give to us.

During these days of Lent, let us pray to the Holy Spirit, our dear Sanctifier, to help us to understand the real meaning of the Passion and Death of Jesus. Being able to understand Jesus’ sacrifice while embracing His Passion, Death, and Resurrection within our lives is one of the serious challenges that face all believers. This has been the case from the time of the apostles to the present day. To be a faith-filled Christian with a willingness to carry the Lord’s

cross is never easy. For all of us, living today in the fast paced world of selfishness, greed, and overzealous pride, with people wanting to do their own thing, many find it very difficult to fully commit themselves to Jesus. Again, we must reflect upon the second sentence of Our Lady’s message of February 25, 2006. ***“Do not be closed, but with prayer and renunciation say ‘yes’ to God and He will give to you in abundance.”***

As we begin another Lenten season in the Church, the time has come for us to change. May we acquire the strength to come down off of “our high horses” of pride, selfishness, and condemnation of others that leads us into that realm where we think that we are better than everyone else. We need to embrace the humility of Jesus and Our Lady. We have to make prayer and the opportunity to pray more significant in our daily existence. Through prayer, renunciation and sacrifice may we say yes to God, and be willing to embrace the cross of Jesus. We consider ourselves to be believers in Jesus, but we must remember that actions speak louder than words. We can say anything. However, will we have the courage to put these words into significant action for Our Dear Lord? Will we love others in the unconditional way that God has loved us?

“As in springtime the earth opens to the seed and yields a hundredfold, so also your heavenly Father will give to you in abundance. I am with you and love you, little children, with a tender love.” With these two sentences of Her message of February 25, 2006, Our Lady speaks to us with very encouraging words. As we contemplate the opportunity to serve God through Christian discipleship, may we believe and be aware of the fact that we are not alone in this endeavor. The Eternal Father continues to shower us with His heavenly gifts of grace. Through prayers of thanksgiving, may we acknowledge to the Father that we accept with much graciousness all of His gifts especially His unconditional love for us. Without that love, we would not survive for five minutes in this world. Without God’s love, we would be swallowed up in a moment by the forces of evil.

May we also be inspired by our dear Blessed Mother’s love for us. She protects us with Her motherly embrace while teaching us to come to Jesus in the fullest sense of the word. We have been blessed by God’s love, and have been called to purify our own souls. In this process, may we pray and sacrifice in love for the salvation of all souls. Let us embrace God’s way to salvation that is being taught to us by Our Lady. During these days, we must reject

the selfishness and self-promotion of the world around us.

Then we will begin to change, and that process of conversion so necessary for all of us, will become a very significant part of who we are.

I hope you are well. Give my best to all of your families. Have a wonderful Lenten season becoming more focused on God's love.

May the loving and consoling peace of Jesus fill your heart. May the blessing of Almighty God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit come upon you and remain with you, forever and ever. Amen.

God's love and prayers always,

Father Ed

(HEdwardChalmers@aol.com, Wednesday, 3/1/2006)

REFLECTION on the MESSAGE of 3/25/05

I AM LEADING YOU ALONG THE PATH OF HOLINESS

This month the Blessed Virgin Mary begins her motherly message with the following words: "Courage, little children!" Mother wants to encourage, awaken and inspire her children along the path of holiness. Or, as she said in one of her messages: "You, dear children, are not able by yourselves, therefore I am here to help you." Mary is full of grace wishing the best to her children, and that is holiness.

In Church everybody is called to holiness. As our dearly departed Pope John Paul II used to emphasize: "Without any hesitation do I say that the perspective into which the whole of pastoral planning is to be placed is under the heading of holiness. It would be a contradiction to settle for a life of mediocrity, marked by a minimalist ethic and shallow religiosity." Blessed Mother Teresa used to say: "Holiness is not the luxury of the few, it is a simple duty for each one of us." The ideal of Christian holiness is not an extraordinary life lived exclusively by a few "great men" of holiness. Desiring to become holy means desiring to become more and more similar to the person we love. Man is turning into the ideal standing before him. We have the most beautiful, the holiest and the purest Mother - the Virgin Mary.

She is blessed because she believed. Her greatest glory lies in the fact that she has retained nothing of her own, nothing of her ego that might glorify her for her own sake. Neither did she place any barrier to the glory of God, nor did she oppose God's love and will.

She was devoid of any stain of selfishness that may have tarnished God's light in her heart. Completely devoid of any sin, Mary was pure as the glass of a very clean window having no other task than to let the sunlight in.

It is her apparitions and her being close to here with which she tries to cast God's light on every heart, to encourage and lead every heart along the path of holiness.

If one is to go to another place, one must leave the place where one is. This is why she tells us to renounce every sin and everything that binds us. To have the courage to say No to a sin and Yes to God.

For our sake was Jesus tried, then suffered, was tortured and murdered. For our sake did he choose the path of salvation. He did all that for our sake, but he did not do it instead of us. He will not and he does not want to make the decision about our eternity for us. He is sending us his and our Mother so that we can decide in favour of life, and not of death.

God has a solution even in cases of most severe pain and suffering. With God nothing is tragic. The Virgin Mary is a witness to that encouraging us not to renounce prayer as a means of protecting us from losing our way on the path of salvation.

Thank you, Mary, for the safety you instil in our insecure hearts. Thank you for bringing Jesus to us and leading us towards Jesus.

**Father Ljubo Kurtovic, Medjugorje, 26.3.2006,
(<http://medjugorje.hr.nt4.ims.hr>)**

ANOTHER REFLECTION on the MESSAGE of 3/25/2006

"Courage, little children! I decided to lead you on the way of holiness." As one reads these first two sentences of Our Lady's message of March 25, 2006, one can certainly ascertain the importance of being courageous and becoming holy. However, the reality of being courageous and embracing holiness for most can be more than difficult. It seems that any believer who wishes to be successful in this endeavor must seek out through prayer and contemplation, the discernment, inspiration, and sanctification of the Holy Spirit.

As we contemplate the gift of the Holy Spirit to us from God the Father and Jesus, let us remember that the Holy Spirit, the third person of the Trinity, is the personification of the love that God the Father and Jesus have for each other. Living in this world, can we even fathom the immensity of that love? Are we willing to develop our faith to the point where we will

begin to understand the meaning of this love personified by the Holy Spirit? Through prayer, let us seek out the Holy Spirit asking for His sanctifying grace and the gifts that come from that grace.

Courage or fortitude is one of the gifts of the Holy Spirit. In the Novena to the Holy Spirit published by the Holy Ghost Fathers, the fourth day is dedicated to the gift of fortitude. The reflection for that day says, "By the gift of fortitude, the soul is strengthened against natural fear, and supported to the end in the performance of duty. Fortitude imparts to the will an impulse and energy, which move it to understand without hesitancy, the most arduous tasks, to face dangers, to trample under foot human respect, and to endure without complaint the slow martyrdom of even lifelong tribulation. He that shall persevere unto the end, he shall be saved." The words of the prayer to the Holy Spirit for that day are very similar to the words of the reflection: "Come, O Blessed Spirit of Fortitude, uphold my soul in time of trouble and adversity, sustain my efforts after holiness, strengthen my weakness, give me courage against all the assaults of my enemies, that I may never be overcome and separated from thee, my God and greatest Good. Amen."

During these days, living in this world of sin, evil, and indifference where many are overcome by a serious lack of faith with an unwillingness to change and take the necessary steps to strengthen their faith, we must be filled with courage. Contemplate and reflect upon these beautiful words of the reflection and prayer of the fourth day of this Novena to the Holy Spirit. If we are not courageous, we will always fall short of being holy. By embracing the Holy Spirit's gifts of fortitude or courage, we can begin to understand the shallowness of the greed and materialism all around us. Also, we will have the strength to accept Jesus' cross and offer ourselves to our dear Lord. Then suffering can be seen as a blessing where one purifies his or her soul, preparing oneself for the Lord. Unfortunately for most, this reality only occurs when one is dying. Thus in a profound way may we pray to the Holy Spirit for the gift of fortitude. Then we can be courageous and start a special process of embracing these requests of Our Lady in this message of March 25, 2006.

"Renounce sin and set out on the way of salvation, the way which my Son has chosen." During these days, as we come closer to another Holy Week, let us embrace these beautiful words of Our Lady found in the third sentence of Her message of March 25, 2006. As we contemplate Jesus' gift of Himself to us, may we accept His beautiful unconditional love that radiated throughout His passion, crucifixion, death,

and resurrection. In this way, with courage, we can reject sin and all of its selfish implications that can envelop us on a constant basis. We must strive to be Christ-like. We must see the love of Jesus in all those people who are placed in our lives. Again, we must carry Jesus' cross with devotion and strength, accepting our personal suffering as a gift from God, to be used to purify our souls and the souls of others. This is the Christian way. This is the reality of Christian discipleship. Let us listen to the words of Our Lady in the fourth sentence of Her message of March 25, 2006. ***"Through each of your tribulations and sufferings God will find the way of joy for you."*** Are we ready to find joy in our tribulations and sufferings? This is, and will continue to be a serious challenge for all of us. However, we can attain this wonderful spiritual realm if we will give up our own selfish wants and desires for the glory of God.

"Therefore, little children, pray. We are close to you with our love." May we continue to pray with the heart being devoted to prayer in a most fervent way. Believe that the love of God and Our Lady challenges us to change. If we only give ourselves the chance, we can love as God has loved us. May we constantly reflect and meditate on the love of God. In this process, let us be willing to embrace the paternal love of the Father, the sacrificial love of Jesus, the sanctifying love of the Holy Spirit, and the motherly love of Our Lady. In this way, we will be preparing ourselves for the Kingdom of God, understanding those words of Jesus to His apostles, *"I have come not to be served, but to serve."*

I hope you are well. Give my best to all of your families. Have a wonderful Holy Week and a beautiful Easter Season. Treasure these days as we remember our dear Lord's sacrifice for us. During this time, may we pray often in thanksgiving to the Father, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit. It is my prayer for you that the profound joy that filled the hearts of the apostles as they saw the Risen Lord will fill your hearts. We must move forward in our spiritual journeys finding ***"the way of joy,"*** in all of our daily activities including those occasions of tribulation and suffering. May the blessing of Almighty God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit come upon you and remain with you, forever and ever. Amen.

God's love and prayers always,

Father Ed

(HEdwardChalmers@aol.com, Thursday, 3/30/2006)

PRESS BULLETIN – NOW SELECTED “NEWS ARTICLES”

Last Press Bulletin was 217, 12/25/05

We will post selected “NEWS ARTICLES” from the **Medjugorje Web Site** maintained in *Saint James Parish, Medjugorje, Bosnia-Herzegovina*.

The new Medjugorje-monthly: “GLASNIK MIRA” – “The Messenger of Peace”

In January 2006, the Information Centre “MIR” Medjugorje began publishing the Medjugorje-monthly named “Glasnik Mira” – “The Messenger of Peace”.

For almost fifteen years, on a monthly basis, our readers received “Glas Mira” – “The Voice of Peace”. Insofar as it was possible in the prevailing circumstances, this magazine followed, reported, and promoted the spirituality that emanates from the event that happened here one late afternoon on June 24, 1981. For fifteen years, more exactly since the fall of atheistic communism, we had the occasion to put in writing, to follow, to make our own and to live the spirituality that was born here. This monthly publication was, and remains, a permanent monument to a decisive period in the history of the world, of the Catholic Church and of this parish which, through the plan of Providence, was brought into the very centre of world attention and of Christ’s Church.

This monthly publication spoke essentially about Medjugorje, but it was edited and published in Zagreb. From the very beginning, it was the source of a certain discomfort, but we had no other choice because of the war and of the unstable circumstances in our region. Since the war is over for ten years now, and as the situation here has become more stable, those in charge have decided that the monthly should be edited in Medjugorje and published under a new name. No longer will it be known as “the voice” of peace but will be called “the messenger” of peace instead. We thank the previous staff for all that was done during the past fifteen years.

In almost all Marian apparitions, Our Lady calls those who, by the power of the Holy Spirit have the grace to see Her... “my angels”, “my little ones”, “my children”. She is always the loving mother. The word “messenger” is a translation of the Greek word “angel”, because this word and name concern the service that the “angels” provide in God’s plan. An angel is always a herald, a messenger. He brings the good news to us from beyond, from eternity into time. A name is a program. A name is a person. This is why, with the change of the name, we all want to

enter consciously and with determination into the school of Mary and become her “messengers”... Messengers and bearers of peace, just as Pope Benedict XVI underlined recently in his homily for the New Year.

In relation to Jesus, John the Baptist was both voice and messenger. The messenger transformed the voice into a clear message for the world. Jesus also was the voice and the messenger in His person, in His appearance, in His words, in His deeds, but above all in His silence. All of us, in our own way, are called to be messengers and bearers of a message that is resounding and spreading from here for a quarter of a century now.

How can a voice become a messenger, or how can a message become a person? We believe that this can best be illustrated through something that we experienced last year during Holy Week, something that was transmitted by all the TV stations around the world. It is an image that remains carved in our memory and in the memory of the whole world... a frail old man at a window, his face distorted by pain and suffering, his mouth wide open, trying but not managing to say anything. There is no voice, just stertorous breathing. This was an image of the decline of human strength, of the loss of the immense energy that filled the late Pope at the beginning of his pontificate.

Ecce homo – Behold the man! We were all touched in the depths of our souls. It’s impossible to interpret what the Pope is trying to say, but his gestures are clearly saying that he is the person who lived in an authentic way, who is as powerful when he speaks loudly as when he remains voiceless... A person who gave an authentic face to life and to faith... A person who was a message, a person who was an incarnate messenger! His very appearance was the strongest message – without a word. This is what we would like to accomplish by changing the name. We would like each one of us to become *a messenger, a herald, a witness*, and the message of all that the Lord is doing here for the Church and for the world. Sometimes, the silence of the little ones and of the humble ones speaks more powerfully than the voice of the media.

Therefore, this is an invitation to everyone to become and to be – by words, but mostly by their very lives – a messenger of all that our God is doing in such a powerful way through Mary, in the work of evangelisation and salvation of the world. The ways of God and His orderly thinking are usually contrary to human measures and ways. God usually chooses the little ones, the insignificant ones, even those who are foolish in the eyes of the world, in order to humiliate the wise and arrogant ones. In God’s plan

nobody is insignificant, and above all no one is superfluous. Through Her apparitions, Mary has created an army consisting of millions of little ones, of devoted ones, of beloved ones. We can only respond to such love with love and commitment. This is what we would like to accomplish with this new messenger. We believe that heavenly blessings, as well as your help and encouragement, will support us in this undertaking.



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The annual apparition of Our Lady to Mirjana Dragicevic-Soldo 3/18/06



The visionary Mirjana Dragicevic Soldo had daily apparitions from June 24th 1981 to December 25th 1982. During the last daily apparition, Our Lady gave her the 10th secret, and told her that she would appear to her once a year, on the 18th of March. It has been this way through the years.

This year several thousand pilgrims gathered to pray the Rosary at the Cenacolo Community in Medjugorje. The apparition lasted from 13:59 to 14:04 and Our Lady gave the following message:

Dear children! In this Lenten time, I call you to interior renunciation. The way to this leads you through love, fasting, prayer and good works. Only with total interior renunciation will you recognize God's love and the signs of the time in which you live. You will be witnesses of these signs and will begin to speak about them. I desire to bring you to this. Thank you for having responded to me.

(3/18/06)

President of the International Catholic Organization “Jesus Youth” from India on Pilgrimage



Manoj Sunny, international coordinator of the catholic organisation “Jesus Youth” from India (Kerala) and engineer by profession, came on pilgrimage

to Medjugorje in the beginning of March 2006. George Ettiyil, a member of the organisation, and Lufthansa airport manager in Chenay, accompanied him.

The Catholic faith is deeply rooted in the Indian province of Kerala. Although the Catholics are a tiny minority in India as a whole, in Kerala they number 22 million, which is one third of the population of that province. Although the word Medjugorje is widely known, the events are not at all well known in India. What Our Lady is asking in Medjugorje is effectively lived by the Catholic parishes and families in Kerala: rosary, confessions, sacramental life... Many young people come to church, and the faith is strong, although in the big cities, this outlook is changing due mainly to the influence of the media.

The first time they heard about Medjugorje in India, was from a nun who gave conferences there. Their first impression was that these events were very Catholic, and that the message was simple and clear, but very powerful nevertheless. They read books and felt a desire to come and see things for themselves. They established contacts with Medjugorje and received an invitation to come on pilgrimage. It took them two years to obtain their visas and they encountered other unbelievable difficulties, but they never gave up.

In Medjugorje, they participated in the international seminar for leaders. They experienced joy and peace, and a spiritual renewal, especially when praying on the Apparition Hill and on Cross Mountain. They were impressed by the conferences given by the Franciscans. They met Vicka, the visionary, whose manifestation of joy and love impressed them deeply.

They themselves said that they hoped Medjugorje would not lose the simplicity which characterises it at present. According to their words, Mary is coming to simple people. Her spirit is here, and here it will remain as long as people continue to pray, and if there are those who seek holiness and live according to her messages. Those who come here from the outside should not primarily seek material profit, but should seek rather to imitate those parishioners who live Our Lady's messages and who have shown the way during the past 25 years.

The “Jesus Youth” movement was founded in 1976 in southern India (Kerala) and is active in 19 countries around the world (USA, Canada, Italy, Great Britain, Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, New Zealand, Singapore, Australia, Germany, Malaysia, South Korea, Thailand, United Arab Emirates etc. (See: www.jesusyouth.org) (3/13/06)

French Catholic Television KTO



A team from the French Catholic Television Station KTO, led by Richard Boutry, Director of Information, visited Medjugorje from the 6th to the 8th of March 2006.

They came to make a documentary entitled: "Medjugorje, Analysis of a Phenomenon". It will contain the witness of French speaking people who have been working for several years now with the pilgrims. It will try to answer the following questions: Why such apparitions, to whom, how? What are the messages? Why is Medjugorje experiencing such growth? What are the pilgrims seeking? Why has the Holy See not given a directive as yet?

Richard Boutry had already visited Medjugorje at the beginning of 2005, together with his wife (a psychologist) and his two children. He was so impressed by the events that, a year later, he decided to come back and make a documentary.

The former Archbishop of Paris, Cardinal Lustiger, founded the French Catholic Television Station KTO at the end of 1999. (See: <http://www.kto.fr> or www.ktotv.com) (3/9/06)

Footballers and leaders of the "Croatian Volunteer" club attend Mass for their departed president



Footballers and leaders of the "Croatian Volunteer" Club assisted at Mass for Stjepan Spajic, the departed former President of their club, in St. James' Parish Church in Medjugorje on Friday, March 3rd, 2006. The Eucharistic celebration was concelebrated by 10 priests,

presided over by the Parish Priest, Dr. Fr. Ivan Sesar. One hundred and ten of the senior, junior and novice members of the football club were present in the church. After Mass, the Parish Priest offered them a statue of Our Lady, together with some wooden rosaries, as a permanent souvenir of Medjugorje. On the previous day, all the players and leaders of the club climbed the Hill of Our Lady's apparitions.

The departed Stjepan Spajic was famous for the fact that many distinguished Croatian footballers were members of the club: Blaž Baka Slišković, Predrag Jurić, Goran Jurić, Stjepan Tomas, Robert Prosinečki, Boris Živković, and Mario Bazina, to mention but a few.

The footballers spent ten days training in Medjugorje in preparation for the resumption of the football championship. (3/5/06)



The Philippines feel a special gratitude towards the Queen of Peace

At the end of February and the beginning of March 2006, nine priests from the Philippines, members of the Society of Our Lady of the Most Holy Trinity, came to Medjugorje to celebrate the 10th anniversary of their priestly ordination. This pilgrimage was led by Fr. Alejandro Vergara, SOLT, Regional Priest Servant. The Society was founded in 1958 in the USA, and its membership is comprised of priests, religious women, married deacons and families.

A further reason behind this visit is the fact that the Philippines feel a special debt of gratitude towards the Queen of Peace because of her intervention in 1986, which they experienced during their peaceful revolution that precipitated the fall of the dictatorship in the Philippines. According to the testament of two of those priests, who were laymen at that particular time, they took part in the peaceful and silent demonstrations against the dictatorship in the streets of Manila, with nothing but roses and rosaries in their hands, when inexplicably, the soldiers from the helicopters began waving white scarves, just when the tanks and the helicopters were about to shoot on hundreds of thousands of demonstrating citizens. They landed their helicopters among the crowd, called on the soldiers to leave their tanks and witnessed that they could not shoot because they had seen Our Lady, and recognised her as the Queen of Peace.

According to the Filipino priests, Medjugorje was not known in the Philippines at that time, but Cardinal Jaime Sin had declared the year 1985 as a Marian Year for the Philippines, and invoked the help of the Queen of Peace. When in 1986, the dictatorship of Marcos was overthrown without shedding a drop of blood, Pope John Paul II called Cardinal Sin and asked him what he had done to cause the peaceful downfall of the dictatorship. The answer was: "I declared a Marian Year for the Philippines!" After this, the Pope declared the year 1988 as a Marian Year for the whole Church. In 1989, the USSR fell...

After these events, Cardinal Sin opened a large Marian Shrine in the street in which those decisive events took place, a shrine in which Our Lady is venerated under the name of the Queen of Peace. The

statue that was made for this shrine resembles the statue of Our Lady of Medjugorje.

It was thanks to a donation given to them by a married couple that the nine priests of the Society of Our Lady of the Most Holy Trinity were enabled to visit Medjugorje. They spent their time in silence, on the hills and in the Church. (For more about this congregation, see: Society of Our Lady of the Most Holy Trinity <http://www.solt3.org>). (3/4/06)

Members of the Franciscan Youth Fraternity made their promises



On Sunday, February 26th, 2006, during the evening Mass at 6 pm, members of the Franciscan Youth Fraternity from Medjugorje (FRAMA) celebrated the rite of professing their vows. This is an event of the greatest significance for any Fraternity. On that day, 43 young men and women became members of the Fraternity. Twenty-three of them became fully professed, as they made their first promises to follow the Lord according to the example of St. Francis, their founder. They received the T-cross, St. Francis' sign of penance and conversion, and symbol of full membership of the Franciscan family. The rest of the group renewed their annual promises. Fr. Sretan Curcic, Provincial assistant of the Franciscan Youth Fraternity and spiritual assistant of the FRAMA in Siroki Brijeg, who was Chief Celebrant of the Mass, led the rite. In his homily, he spoke about the beauty of the Franciscan vocation and invited young people to give Christian witness, and to take care of their local Fraternities.

Holy Mass was concelebrated by Fr. Ivan Sesar - Parish Priest of Medjugorje, Fr. Boze Milic - spiritual assistant of the FRAMA in Medjugorje, and other spiritual assistants: Fr. Mario Knezovic (Posusje), Fr. Marinko Sakota (Gradnici), Fr. Robert Crnogorac (Drinovci) and Fr. Dario Dodig (Humac).

This celebration was honoured by the presence of the members of the other nine Fraternities from Herzegovina, accompanied by their assistants. FRAMA members from Cerin sang, under the direction of Prof. Martin Pero Boras. After Mass, all the Fraternity members and guests gathered together

in the Parish hall, where FRAMA Medjugorje performed a short drama. Afterwards, they enjoyed a meal prepared by the Medjugorje FRAMA. (3/1/06)

The 13th International Meeting for Guides and Leaders of Peace Centers and Medjugorje Prayer, Pilgrim and Charity Groups



The 13th International meeting for Guides and Leaders of Peace Centers and Medjugorje Prayer, Pilgrim and Charity Groups will take place in Medjugorje from the 5th. to 9th. of March, 2006. The theme of this encounter is: "You shall be my witnesses to the ends of the earth" (Acts 1,8)

Many friends of Medjugorje wish to be kept up to date in all matters relating to the Medjugorje phenomenon. These regular annual meetings aim to do precisely that. During the seminar, there are lectures given with this objective in mind, but time is also made available for common language group meetings and time for personal encounters also.

Through these meetings, the Information Center "Mir" Medjugorje wants to be a "promoter of unity". The role of these meetings is to give orientation, to educate and to give counsel, but it also seeks to reveal potential errors or possible deviations in dealing with the events of Medjugorje. The Information Center has always sought help, counsel and stimulation from competent experts in relation to this.

These seminars have never been considered obligatory, but were proposed to organizers of pilgrimages, leaders of Centers for Peace and of Prayer and Charity Groups as a support in their apostolate. The seminars were frequented by Medjugorje friends from all over the world and of all profiles: from the so-called "big" organizers, representatives of "big" Peace Centers and "big" benefactors, to the anonymous "little" pilgrims for whom it was a precious annual spiritual food.

The First International Meeting of organizers of pilgrimages, leaders of Centers for Peace and of Prayer Groups was organized by the Information

Center “Mir” Medjugorje on the occasion of the 13th anniversary of Our Lady’s apparitions, the 22nd and 23rd of June, 1994, in Medjugorje. There were participants from Europe, USA, Latin America, Australia and New Zealand. This first meeting highlighted the need to organize similar, better prepared meetings, with even richer content, in the future.

This is how the “Prayer and Formation Seminars” for organizers of pilgrimages, leaders of Centers for Peace and of Prayer Groups came about. Due to the lack of conference rooms in Medjugorje, these meetings took place for many years on the Adriatic coast: Baska Voda (1995), Tucepi (1996) and Neum (1997, 1998, 1999 and 2000). For each meeting, the Information Center invited lecturers – specialists in different areas of theology (fundamental, pastoral, mystical), of spirituality, of philosophy, of biblical sciences, of history, of the media etc., to explore from a variety of perspectives this phenomenon of Medjugorje, now known worldwide. For organizers of pilgrimages, leaders of Centers for Peace and of Prayer Groups, these were occasions to personally deepen their own understanding of the events of Medjugorje, to share this knowledge among themselves, but also to share with those others for whom they have made themselves available out of love for God, for the Church and for Our Lady. All the lectures and conclusions from these seminars can be found on our web-page under the following titles: LECTURES from Yearly International Meetings for Guides and Leaders of Peace Centers and Medjugorje Prayer, Pilgrim and Charity Groups, CONCLUSIONS from Yearly International Meetings for Guides and Leaders of Peace Centers and Medjugorje Prayer, Pilgrim and Charity Groups, and THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION. The book “Prayer-Educational Seminars”, with the lectures included, can be found in the Souvenir Shop. (2/25/06)

A Hundred Students from the Franciscan University in Steubenville on pilgrimage



In the beginning of February 2006, a group of a hundred students from the Catholic Franciscan University in Steubenville (USA) came on pilgrimage to Medjugorje. Fr. Dave Pivonka, TOR, a Third

Order Franciscan, and Vice-President of the University, accompanied this pilgrimage. Fr. Pivonka came to Medjugorje and brought his students here because he believes that Medjugorje is authentic, that one can feel a special peace here, and that it is helping

young people to live their faith. According to his testimony, Medjugorje is one of the most Christocentric Marian shrines; it presents the opportunity to pray in silence and in solitude, and to encounter Jesus. He believes that the true aim of Catholic Education is to teach young people to live with Jesus and to give witness with their lives. When one person becomes holy, it influences others. Whoever wants to change himself will change the whole world, and Medjugorje is helping to bring this about. Mary appeared to a group of young people here, and they are sharing the experience with the whole world, and this in turn is influencing the whole world.

This group of students is spending one semester in a monastery in Gaming, Austria, and during the semester, pilgrimages are organised to different shrines all across Europe. This part of the University programme is organised by Peter Drag from Poland in conjunction with his wife Nicole Lungaro-Mifsuo from Malta.

In Medjugorje, the students took part in the prayer programme in the parish church, they prayed the Rosary on the Apparition Hill, and they also made the Way of the Cross on Cross Mountain. Amanda Godfrey and Danielle Castellucci told us that they came to Medjugorje because they believe that the Mother is calling them. Thanks to their experience in Medjugorje, their families are now asking new questions, they are also changing and they also want to live the will of God. For some students it was their second visit to Medjugorje. They believe that one can come to Medjugorje several times, and that each time it will be different: The first visit is something new, a discovery, and the second and each subsequent visit deepens the experience.

In Steubenville, there are about 2,200 students, and many of them study theology and prepare themselves to give service to the Church. The mission of the Catholic Franciscan University in Steubenville is to expose young people not only to knowledge, but also to the practical experience of living the Catholic faith in their daily lives and in their future professional lives, and to direct them towards holiness of life. (See: <http://www.franciscan.edu>) (2/23/06)

The 11th International Seminar for Priests

The 11th International Seminar for Priests will be held in Medjugorje from 3 to 8 July 2006. The topic of the seminar is: “[Spirituality of priest](#)” (“...**Let us pray, little children,..., so that the Church may resurrect in love...**”, from the message of 25 March 1999)

You may make reservations by e-mail: seminar.marija@medjugorje.hr, or by fax: +387-36-651-999 (for Marija Dugandzic).

We ask all priests who have arranged their own accommodation with a family in Medjugorje to note in their application the name and the phone number of the family where they will be staying. We will arrange accommodation for all the priests who have no direct contacts and have not arranged their own accommodation. (Please note in your application if you wish us to arrange accommodation for you.)

Instead of a monetary payment, we ask you to kindly celebrate five Mass intentions.

It is necessary to bring with you: your celebret given by your superior, an alb and stole, a Bible, a small FM radio with headphones (for simultaneous translation).

Many priests who do not have access to Internet may not have been informed about the existence of this international meeting in Medjugorje. Therefore, we kindly ask all Organizers of pilgrimages, Prayer Groups and Centres for Peace to publish this information as widely as possible by all means at their disposal, so that as many priests as possible may participate. In as much as it is possible, we also kindly ask you to financially assist the priests who would like to come but do not have the necessary funds for such a journey. We thank you in advance and pray for God's blessing and the blessing of the Queen of Peace upon you and your work. (2/16/06)

Commemoration of the martyrdom of the Franciscans connected with Medjugorje



On the 10th of February, the Feast of Blessed Cardinal Stepinac, Medjugorje Parish commemorated the martyrdom of the Franciscans who were either born in Medjugorje or who had worked in the parish.

Either during or immediately after World War II, 66 Franciscans from Herzegovina perished at the hands of the partisans and the communists. Ten of them are connected with Medjugorje in one way or another... they were either born in the parish, or they had served in it. Their names are: **Fr. Jozo Bencun, Fr. Marko Dragičević, Fr. Mariofil Sivrić, Fr. Grgo Vasilj, Fr. Jenko Vasilj, Fr. Križan Galić, Fr. Bono Jelavić, Fr. Paško Martinac, Fr. Anđelko Nuić and Fr. Bernardin Smoljan.**

Also on that day, the Sacrifice of the Mass is celebrated in memory of all the victims from Medjugorje Parish, who fell during World Wars I and II, or during the recent war in defence of the country, and also in memory of all those who gave their lives for the faith and for the homeland. Holy Mass was presided over by Fr. Ivan Sesar, the Parish Priest of Medjugorje.

A short biography of the Franciscan martyrs:

Fr. Jozo Bencun was born in Medjugorje on September 26th., 1869. As a priest, he worked in numerous Herzegovinian parishes. The partisans took him from the monastery in Mostar on February 14th., 1945, killed him, and threw his body into the Neretva River. He died at the age of 76, in the 56th year of his religious life and the 52nd year of his priesthood. The whereabouts of his grave is unknown.

Fr. Marko Dragicevic was born in Medjugorje on February 17th., 1902. After attaining a doctorate in classical philology in Fribourg (Switzerland), he worked as a professor of classical languages in the Franciscan High School in Široki Brijeg. On February 11th., 1945, he was taken from the altar in Izbično and killed in Grabova Draga at the age of 43, in the 23rd year of his religious life and the 17th year of his priesthood.

Fr. Mariofil Sivric was born in Medjugorje on February 10th., 1913. The partisans killed him around February 12th., 1945, somewhere near Široki Brijeg, at the age of 32, in the 15th year of his religious life and the 9th year of his priesthood. The whereabouts of his grave is unknown.

Fr. Grgo Vasilj was born in Medjugorje on March 13th., 1886. As a priest, he worked throughout Herzegovina. On February 14th., 1945, together with six other brothers, among whom was the Provincial, Fr. Leo Petrović, he was killed and thrown into the Neretva River in Mostar, at the age of 59, in the 40th year of his religious life and the 34th year of his priesthood. The whereabouts of his grave is unknown.

Fr. Jenko Vasilj was born in Medjugorje on May 2nd., 1914. In May 1945, he was captured somewhere in Slovenia and killed in a place unknown, at the age of 31, in the 14th year of his religious life and the 8th year of his priesthood. The whereabouts of his grave is unknown.

Fr. Križan Galic was born in Gorica on November 30th., 1870. He served in various parishes in Herzegovina. He was killed by a bomb thrown through a window in the presbytery in Medjugorje, on October 30th., 1944. He is buried in the Kovačica cemetery in Medjugorje.

Fr. Bono Jelavić was born in Veljaci on September 17th., 1898. He obtained a doctorate in theology in Ljubljana. He was a professor at the High School in Široki Brijeg, and the Parish Priest of Medjugorje from 1939 to 1940. Around May 31st., 1945, he was killed near Velika Gorica close to Zagreb, at the age of 47, in the 29th year of his religious life and the 22nd year of his priesthood. The whereabouts of his grave is unknown.

Fr. Paško Martinac was born in Dragićina on June 26th., 1882. He was Parish Priest of Medjugorje from 1936 to 1939. While he was a parish curate in Veljaci, when the partisans came to take the Parish Priest Fr. Julian Kožul, to the prison in Ljubuški, he went with him. He was shot on February 10th., 1945, somewhere in the Ljubuški area, at the age of 63, in the 44th year of his religious life and the 38th year of his priesthood.

Fr. Anđelko Nuić was born in Drinovci on April 10th., 1908. He was a curate in Medjugorje from 1943 to 1945. The partisans killed him after May 15th., 1945, along the road somewhere in Slovenia, at the age of 37, in the 19th year of his religious life and the 13th year of his priesthood. The whereabouts of his grave is unknown.

Fr. Bernardin Smoljan was born in Rodoč near Mostar on October 3rd., 1884. From 1931 to 1936, he was the Parish Priest of Medjugorje where, in 1933, together with the parishioners, he built the Cross on Šipovac Hill, subsequently called Križevac (Cross Mountain). He was one of the Councillors of the Herzegovinian Province, and General Visitor of the Franciscan Order. The partisans killed him on February 14th., 1945, and threw his body into the Neretva River, at the age of 61, in the 44th year of his religious life and the 37th year of his priesthood. The whereabouts of his grave is unknown. (2/11/06)

The 17th International Youth Festival - Mladifest 17 – Medjugorje 2006

The 17th International Youth Festival - Mladifest 17 – will take place in Medjugorje from August 1st to August 6th, 2006. The theme of the encounter is, **“Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path”** (Ps 119 [118]:105) **(Dear children ... witness with your life that you believe and live the Word of God.** - Message of January 25, 2006) The program is available on-line.

This theme is in harmony with the theme of the 21st World Youth Day, which is taking place on April 9th (Palm Sunday) in local Churches. Holy Father is addressing his word to young people:

“From this moment onwards, my dear young friends, in a climate of constant listening to the word of God, call on the Holy Spirit, Spirit of fortitude and witness, that you may be able to proclaim the Gospel without fear even to the ends of the earth. Our Lady was present in the cenacle with the Apostles as they waited for Pentecost. May she be your mother and guide. May she teach you to receive the word of God, to treasure it and to ponder on it in your heart (cf Lk 2:19) as she did throughout her life. May she encourage you to declare your "yes" to the Lord as you live "the obedience of faith". May she help you to remain strong in the faith, constant in hope, persevering in charity, always attentive to the word of God. I am together with you in prayer, and I bless each one of you with all my heart.” (3/26/06)

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



SAINT JOSEPH the WORKER - MAY 1

On May 1, 1955, Pope Pius XII granted a public audience to the Catholic Association of Italian Workers, whose members had gathered in Saint Peter's Square to celebrate the tenth anniversary of their society. They were solemnly renewing, in common, their promise of loyalty to the social doctrine of the Church, and it was on that day that the Pope instituted the liturgical feast of May 1st, in honor of Saint Joseph the Worker. He assured his audience and the working people of the world: “You have beside you a shepherd, a defender and a father” in Saint Joseph, the carpenter whom God in His providence chose to be the virginal father of Jesus and the head of the Holy Family. He is silent but has excellent hearing, and his intercession is very powerful over the Heart of the Saviour.

We can conclude from the role for which Saint Joseph was chosen and named by Heaven that he was a man of tried virtue and consummate holiness. No other mortal man would ever hold a higher office. Saint Joseph surpassed all the Saints of the Old Law in sanctity; in him the virtue of his ancestors reached its culmination and perfection. Like Abraham, he was a man of faith and obedience; like Isaac, one of prayer and vision; like Jacob, he was patient and self-sacrificing; like Joseph of Egypt, his chastity was inviolable. And like David, of whom he is the direct descendant, he is a royal intercessor according to the heart of God. *Ite ad Joseph — Go to Joseph*; to Joseph of Egypt, the pharaoh told the needy to go for assistance to receive the grain that would save their

lives. To the new Joseph, the *just man* to whom the Son of God Himself was subject as to a father, all Christians can go with confidence, and he will see to their spiritual and temporal needs with paternal goodness.

(Heavenly Friends: a Saint for each Day, by Rosalie Marie Levy, (Saint Paul Editions: Boston, 1958) <http://magnificat.ca/cal/engl/05-01.htm>).



THE ROSARY of SAINT JOSEPH the WORKER

INTRODUCTION

This is a special Rosary dedicated to Saint Joseph the Worker. It is intended to be prayed by those employed and those who are not employed at this moment in time. It is to remind us of the working life of Joseph especially in connection with Jesus. It is also to be prayed so that we may imitate Jesus and Joseph in our working life and ask for their blessing in both finding and keeping our jobs so our families are well provided for. I hope you enjoy praying this Rosary and that Saint Joseph will grant you your prayers.

The Rosary itself is a normal Five Decade Rosary with a Saint Joseph center piece medal. It contains Five Mysteries of the Life of Joseph as a Worker. It is very similar to the main Saint Joseph Rosary. You make the sign of the Cross and then pray the Apostle's Creed on the Crucifix; then one Our Father and three Hail Joseph's (to Saint Joseph The Worker), which are prayed for the Pope and for the Church; then for each subsequent Mystery you pray one Our Father; ten Hail Joseph's (To Saint Joseph The Worker.); one Glory Be; and one O My Jesus. At the end of the Rosary you pray the closing prayer and then go on to pray the Litany of Saint Joseph The Worker. You finish by once again making the sign of the Cross.

I highly recommend that this Rosary be prayed before an image of Saint Joseph The Worker.

THE MYSTERIES of the SAINT JOSEPH the WORKER ROSARY

- 1. SAINT JOSEPH BEGINS HIS
CARPENTRY TRADE.**
- 2. SAINT JOSEPH PROVIDES FOR MARY.**

3. SAINT JOSEPH PROVIDES FOR JESUS.

4. SAINT JOSEPH TEACHES JESUS THE CARPENTRY TRADE.

5. SAINT JOSEPH PATRON, MODEL, AND ADVOCATE OF ALL WORKERS.

1st Meditation

The time has now come for the Blessed Father to begin His Carpentry Trade. He has learned this well and has excelled so much that at such a young age He begins His Trade. His skills are most perfect and there is no flaw in them. He knows all there is to know about wood and the building trade. Everyone begins to come to Him and people from afar learn fast about the fame of this skilled Carpenter. Everyone wants to hire Him. Yet, He is little more than a young teenage boy, but still, people admire His talent as a Carpenter. What a wonderful example He is both as a student and a skilled hard worker.

2nd Meditation

Not long after He begins His Carpentry Trade, Joseph becomes engaged to Mary. He is only between 16 and 17 years old. Still, He has the maturity to begin to provide for His prospective new bride. He even obtains a house for them and starts to build it up to a high standard so that He can give His bride a comfortable place to live in. He works very hard and saves a lot so that He and Mary will have enough money for themselves to live on. Mary supplies Joseph with food and drink taking delight in seeing her wonderful espoused husband at work. All the time, Mary is thanking God for having given her such a good and perfect husband.

3rd Meditation

In the meantime, two Annunciations have happened. One to Mary, the other to Joseph. There is now going to be a third member of the family, Jesus. Joseph, now 18 years old, marries Mary and takes her into the beautiful home He has prepared for her. Joseph continues to work hard, especially now there will be a little one to look after.

They soon receive news that they must journey to Bethlehem for a census by Rome. They do so and arrive to find Bethlehem full up and so Jesus is born in a stable. They remain in Bethlehem for a while and Joseph obtains work there and looks after Jesus and Mary. He does so well He obtains a house for them.

One day they receive a visit from 3 Kings. But, with this visit comes exile to Egypt, for Herod wants to kill Jesus. So, they remain in Egypt, Joseph working and telling the people there about Jesus

Soon they will be able to return and settle back down in Nazareth.

4th Meditation

While back in Nazareth, Joseph now begins teaching Jesus the Carpentry Trade. This is the way fathers used to bring up their sons. Joseph teaches Jesus all the skills necessary to be good with wood and other building materials. Joseph does not leave anything out. So perfect is Joseph's teaching that later on Jesus becomes known as the Carpenter from Nazareth. What a wonderful example Joseph is! He rears His Son to be a provider just as He is. Jesus learns so well at Joseph's side and both work hard to look after each other and Mary.

5th Meditation

Because His example is such a perfect one, Joseph has earned the right to become the Patron, Model, and Advocate of all workers today.

If anyone wants to learn how to be a good employee, good employer and even a good student, then let them "ITE AD JOSEPH" "GO TO JOSEPH", and learn from Him.

Look at Joseph and Jesus and imitate Their attitude towards working life.

(<http://www.webspawner.com/users/joseros/therosarya.ndlit.html>)

THE PRAYERS of the SAINT JOSEPH THE WORKER ROSARY

THE HAIL JOSEPH

(TO SAINT JOSEPH THE WORKER)

Hail Joseph, the Carpenter of Nazareth.

The Lord is with Thee.

Blessed art Thou among all workmen.

And Blessed is Jesus, the Carpenter's Son.

Holy Joseph, Patron, Model and Advocate of all workers, be our Provider and Sustainer in this valley of tears and pray for us sinners now and at the hour of our death. Amen.

MEMORARE TO SAINT JOSEPH THE WORKER

Remember O Sweet and Loving Saint Joseph, Patron, Model and Advocate of all workers, that no one ever

came to You for comfort and help and was left forsaken.

Filled therefore with confidence in Your compassion and mercy, I fly to You, O Carpenter of Nazareth. To You I come, before You I kneel, sinful and sorrowful.

Despise not my poor words, O Virgin Father of the Word Incarnate, but graciously hear and grant my petition.

Amen.

LET US PRAY

Blessed Saint Joseph, by thine example as a workman on earth, grant us that same spirit of workmanship that you displayed, never once giving in to sloth or indolence, but joyously working daily for the needs of the Family of Nazareth and so becoming today the Patron, Model and Advocate of all workers.

May we look to you for help and guidance in finding and keeping our jobs and also working with joy in our hearts.

May we also look to You for sustenance in times of hardship.

Please provide for us in all circumstances of life, for it is to You we will turn to in our distress and it is to You that we will return to in thanksgiving for all Your merciful bounties.

Amen.

(<http://www.webspawner.com/users/joseros/therosarya.ndlit.html>)



NOVENA ROSARY to SAINT JOSEPH

How The Novena Rosary Is Prayed

The Novena Rosary is divided up into "Nine Consecutive Days". On each day there is a special intention to be prayed for.

First of all, there is a special prayer for the Intention of that particular day and then it is followed by the "Rosary To Saint Joseph The Worker"

Here is how the Novena Rosary should look:-

Day One - Vocations, Both Secular And Religious

Prayer

O Saint Joseph the Worker, we come to You on this First Day of Your Rosary Novena to pray to You for Vocations, both Secular and Religious. We beg You to guide us as to which path we should follow, which one is right for us! We humbly implore You that You would give to those of the Catholic Faith both Secular and Religious Vocations in a balanced number as we know that the Church needs more Religious Vocations but at the same time the Church would also need financial support not to mention families needing financial support, so we ask of You Vocations of both kinds.

O Saint Joseph the Worker, You lived both kinds of Vocation on earth, for You had to provide financially for Your Family but in rearing Jesus You had a Religious Vocation too.

Please help us to decide which Vocation is right for us as individuals, and were it even remotely possible, could we please have the grace of both Vocations together, that is, a Secular Vocation as well as a Religious Vocation. We humbly ask You to guide us in this matter and help us to walk along the right path.

We ask all this in Jesus' Name. Amen.

Rosary of Saint Joseph The Worker

[See the article above for a more detailed description of the Rosary of Saint Joseph the Worker as well as the special prayers. Publisher.]

The Mysteries:

Saint Joseph begins His Carpentry Trade.

Saint Joseph Provides For Mary.

Saint Joseph Provides For Jesus.

Saint Joseph Teaches Jesus The Carpentry Trade.

Saint Joseph, Patron, Model, And Advocate of All Workers. Prayers

On The Cross

Apostle's Creed (Revised).

On The Large Beads

The Our Father

On The Small Beads

Hail Joseph (To Saint Joseph The Worker).

Link

Glory Be (Revised).

O My Jesus.

Prayers At The End Of The Rosary

Memorare To Saint Joseph The Worker.

Let Us Pray.

Day Two - Suitable Work

Prayer

Saint Joseph The Worker, Patron, Model, and Advocate of Workers, please help us to find the right kind of work for us as individuals. We would like to have work that suits us so that we may enjoy job satisfaction. Many people today, as in the past, go out to work mainly to earn a living, and while this is a necessity, these ones as well as us would be deprived of job satisfaction, which is so essential for a happy work environment.

Grant us to know what is right for us, to know which job would give us the greatest happiness and in which we could excel as individuals and give excellent service to others.

Help us to prepare for the right kind of job for us and put us on a path where we could achieve this.

Be our Guide, O Saint Joseph The Worker, and help us in finding suitable employment.

We ask all this in Jesus' Name. Amen.

Rosary of Saint Joseph The Worker - As Above.

Day Three - Gaining And Keeping Employment

Prayer

O Saint Joseph the Worker, once You have guided us on what type of job to go for, we most humbly implore You to assist us in gaining that type of employment and to help us to keep that employment.

We ask this of You whether we are working for ourselves or for somebody else.

There is so much unemployment in the world today, that we have need of Your special care in gaining and keeping our jobs.

Because You had gainful employment and never lost Your job we implore You to share with us the secret of always being employed. Show us what to do in order to stay on this track. Help us to focus and to be conscientious in our work. All this we ask through Jesus. Amen.

Rosary of Saint Joseph The Worker - As Above.

Day Four - The Right Education

Prayer

Saint Joseph the Worker, please help us to have the right kind of education for the job that we wish to do. Let there be nothing found wanting in our education record. Even if we failed in school help us to make up for this in adult life. Educate us also should we wish

to work for ourselves. Show us the highs and the lows of this procedure. Help us to be practical and never rush in where angels fear to tread.

Help us to be educated where working for others is concerned. Make us aware of all our legal rights, so that we may not be unfairly treated nor trampled on. Grant us at least some of Your wisdom and prudence, O Saint Joseph The Worker, that we may avoid the pitfalls and so enjoy a happy working life. We ask this through Jesus. Amen.

Rosary of Saint Joseph The Worker - As Above.

Day Five - For Husbands And Wives To Work Together

Prayer

O Saint Joseph the Worker, today we ask a special grace from You, that You would grant the grace to those who want it, for husbands and wives to work together in secular work.

In the beginning, Adam and Eve worked together and had they been faithful their work would have turned into a major family concern. But, because of their disobedience, mankind has suffered, and now, for the most part, husbands and wives work separately, and very often children are left with strangers.

O Saint Joseph the Worker, this was never the case with You. Your workshop was always alongside the House of Nazareth and You and Jesus and Mary were always in close proximity to each other with little or no separation at all.

Oh that this grace would be granted to us and our families!

If possible, grant us to work from home, maybe even to have our own business, so that our families may never be separated, or even to work together for the same company, if possible. Help us, please, with this matter, O Happy and Joyful Worker of Nazareth, always we ask this through Your working Son Jesus. Amen.

The Rosary of Saint Joseph The Worker - As Above.

Day Six - Fathers And Mothers Rearing Children Towards Employment

Prayer

Saint Joseph the Worker, Carpenter of Nazareth, You reared Jesus for gainful employment and placed Him in the carpentry trade alongside Yourself. You thus gave Jesus the best start in life possible with regard to secular employment and there was no flaw whatsoever in the way You did this. It was so perfect, that in the end, Jesus became known as "The

Carpenter", showing that You had indeed done a job well done with Jesus. Your education of Jesus was indeed superlative, including Your religious education of Jesus.

Teach us, therefore, please, how to rear, train and educate our children towards employment and thus give them the best start in life possible. We wish to imitate Your matchless example, and although we could never come up to Your standard, please help us to have a measure of success with our children.

Please grant us this through Your beloved Child, Jesus. Amen.

The Rosary of Saint Joseph The Worker - As Above.

Day Seven - Imitation of Jesus And Joseph In Their Attitude Towards Work

Prayer

O Saint Joseph the Worker of Nazareth, grant us the grace of imitating You and Jesus in Your attitude towards work. Help us to be conscientious in our daily work and not to be neglectful nor to procrastinate. Help us never to put off till tomorrow what can be done today.

We wish to imitate the hard working and dedicated attitude that You and Jesus had while working.

Please help us to avoid having a lazy or slothful attitude in our work, whether we work for ourselves or for an employer. Teach us to do the job properly and fully. Help us never to take short cuts but to do all things to the highest standard possible. Please grant us this through Your Own hard work and the hard work of Jesus Your Son. Amen.

The Rosary of Saint Joseph The Worker - As Above.

Day Eight - Fairness Of Behavior From Employers And Employees

Prayer

O Saint Joseph the Worker, Fair and Just, with You and with Jesus there is no injustice nor is there any unfairness of any kind. Grant this grace to employers that they may never mistreat their employees in any way, shape or form. Make employers look after the welfare of their staff by paying them their wages, providing necessary equipment, looking after the health and safety of their employees, providing any necessary food and drink plus other expenses. Help employers to be kind and compassionate and to treat employees the way that they wish to be treated. Take away from employers any harshness, cruelty, bitterness, nastiness and any abusive treatment. Help employers to work in harmony with their employees

and to create a stable environment for them and never to be deceitful towards them.

Help employees to do an honest days work for an honest days wage. Help employees to be respectful of their employers and to treat them how they would wish to be treated.

Help both parties to be honest in all their dealings with each other and so provide a harmonious atmosphere for all concerned. Let there be justice and harmony in the workplace, let there be joy and happiness there too. We ask all this in the Name of Jesus. Amen.

The Rosary of Saint Joseph The Worker - As Above.

Day Nine - A Decent Paid Job Either Working For Or For Someone Else

Prayer

Saint Joseph the Worker, You were never rich, but, You were able to provide the basics for Your Family and You were never impoverished. Grant to us, here on earth, the grace of a decent paid job, either working for ourselves or for an employer. Grant us a good wage and to be paid on time. We ask this of You so that we may care for the needs and wellbeing of our entire family.

O Saint Joseph the Worker, be compassionate towards us who languish here below in this valley of tears, and help us to provide for the temporal needs of our family that we too may never become impoverished but may be able to pay our way.

We wish to be able to pay all our bills and never to be in debt. We wish to be able to clothe and feed our families and to have a roof over our heads.

We wish to have extra money to save for certain occasions, such as old age, children's education, holidays, gifts and anything else that would benefit the family.

O Saint Joseph the Worker, Patron, Model, and Advocate of all workers, please work this prayer for us and all the other prayers of this Novena Rosary as well, so that, one day, we may come to Heaven and thank You personally for all You have done for us. Through Jesus, Your Son, Our Lord. Amen.

Rosary of Saint Joseph The Worker - As Above.

(junebrown4@aol.com

http://www.webspawner.com/users/joseros/novenarosa_rytos.html)

VOCATIONS DEPARTMENT

If you need vocation information and you do not find it in your local parish or diocese, please call **(856) 768-9228**.

THÉRÈSE and PRIESTS

If one were to study the life of Thérèse, an investigation of her letters would not be a bad starting point. Letters are like mirrors. They provide us with an image of the writer at the moment of their composition. Letters, especially personal letters between friends, acquaintances and relatives, have a certain spontaneity which is not otherwise found in other forms of literature. They possess a certain confidentiality, a certain frankness, a certain familiarity and a certain intimacy comparable to a conversation. Letters reflect the familiarity and intimacy comparable to a conversation. Letters reflect the writer's present which is hard to recapture even by a conscientious and deliberate effort by the author for the purpose of drafting an autobiography. One can even go on to say that letters are as much autobiographical as an autobiography.

In discussing the importance of letters, it is not, in any way, my intention to pit the letters of Thérèse against her *Histoire d'une ame* ("The Story of a Soul"). Rather, I am providing myself with an apology for how I intend to proceed in this paper—namely, to focus on (but not to limit myself to) Thérèse's letters specifically to two priests—Fr. Maurice-Barthelemy Belliere and Fr. Adolphe-Jean Louis-Eugene Roulland.

There were nine priests who played a part in the life of Thérèse: 1) Abbe Domin, Chaplain to the Benedictines of Lisieux; 2) Abbe Reverony, Vicar General of Bayeux; 3) Msgr. Hugonin Bishop of Bayeux and Lisieux; 4) Canon Delatroette,

HOLY MASS TIMES

If you ever think you will miss Holy Mass because you don't know the times of Holy Mass or the locations of churches in the area that you are currently located, please call **1-410-676-6000**.

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

You can find maps to the churches in addition to the times of Holy Mass celebrations.

ecclesiastical Superior of the Carmel; 5)Fr. Almire Pichon, S.J.; 6) Fr. Alexis Prou, S.J.; 7) Abbe Youf, Chaplain to the Carmel; 8)Fr. Belliere; and 9) Fr. Roulland.¹ Of these nine, Thérèse wrote letters to five: Fr. Pichon, S.J., Msgr. Hugonin, Abbe Reverony, Fr. Belliere and Fr. Roulland. Of these five, Thérèse has written more letters to Frs. Belliere and Roulland who were assigned to her as spiritual brothers. She wrote eleven letters to Fr. Belliere while he was still a seminarian and seven letters (six of which have been preserved) to Fr. Roulland.

A few words about these two priests appear to be in order. Fr. Belliere was a second year seminary student at the Sommervieu Major Seminary when he became Thérèse's first spiritual brother. He was born on June 10, 1874. His mother died at an early age. He was, thus, raised by Mrs. Barthelemy, his aunt and mother by adoption. He left France for his Novitiate in Algiers with the White Fathers on September 29, 1897, the day before Thérèse died. He was ordained a priest on June 29, 1901. After several years as a missionary in Africa, he was stricken with "sleeping sickness" and was forced to return to France. He died shortly thereafter at his family home in Lagrunes on July 14, 1907 at the age of 33.

Fr. Roulland was a member of the Society of Foreign Missions. He was born in Cahagnolle, France, near Bayeux, on October 13, 1870. He was ordained a priest on June 28, 1896. That same year, he left for China and was stationed in Su-Tchuen. In 1909, he returned to France and became the Director, then Procurator, of the Seminary of Foreign Missions in Paris. He was asked to be a bishop in 1917 but he declined. He died in May 12, 1934 at the age of 63. Fr. Roulland is Thérèse's second spiritual brother.

Thérèse: A Woman of Her Time

Thérèse was a woman of her time. She lived at a time when priests were highly revered not only in France but also in the rest of the Christian world. Fr. Roulland, for instance, recounts his encounter with four people from his mission area on his initial missionary days in China: "When they learned I was their priest," he recalls, "they genuflected before me one after the other, and I was somewhat embarrassed during this ceremony so novel to me."² Thérèse was undoubtedly aware of the human weakness and fragility of priests. Nonetheless, like many Christians of her time, she maintained her respect and high regard for priests whom she considered as "pure as crystal" and whose "dignity raised them above the angels."³ The esteem she had for priests explains her hesitancy when she was asked by the Carmel Prioress, Mother Marie Gonzague, to be the spiritual sister of

Fr. Roulland. She herself admits that she felt "unworthy to be associated in any way with one of the missionaries of the adorable Jesus."⁴

The reverence with which priests were held during the time of Thérèse can be explained by the prevailing theology of the priesthood. It was a theology centered mainly on the Eucharist and Penance. The preaching of the word is mentioned in a secondary or tangential way. This is, of course, understandable insofar as the Reformers and Protestant theology stressed the centrality of preaching the word as essential to the priesthood. The views of Robert Bellarmine on the sacrament of orders which dominated in the aftermath of the Reformation, bear the same focus. His discussion on priestly functions centered mainly on the Eucharist and Penance. The Tridentine approach to the sacrament of orders prevailed until the time of Vatican II. This, however, does not mean that there were no significant historical studies and important progress made in the interregnum. However, the Church maintained an apologetic and conservative stance in the face of the Protestant position and the Modernist challenge.⁵

In many ways, the priest, during the time of Thérèse, was a "cultic-man." Priesthood was understood in relation to the Eucharist. Thérèse as a woman of her time shared in this understanding. The priest, for her, is a man by whose voice "Jesus deigns to descend from heaven."⁶ Thus, she made that request to his spiritual brother, Fr. Roulland, "to make each day at the holy altar a memento for me."⁷ The prevailing theology of the priesthood definitely finds its echoes in many of the things Thérèse writes.

(By Most Rev. Paciano B. Aniceto, the Archbishop of San Fernando, Pampanga, Philippines. He co-founded with Sister Jeanne Marie the Missionaries of Eucharistic Love—a new semi-contemplative congregation serving the ill and the poor.)

FASTING

This is helpful in fasting:

"All Jesus Christ did, He did for us. His prayers, His tears, His watchings, His fasting, His preaching, His journeys, His conversations, His miracles - all those were for us." from booklet "**Thoughts of the Cure d'Ars**" (*Saint John Vianney*)

Makes me WANT to fast for Him. I'm still struggling with it too. Some days are better than others.

Kathleen

Kykathleen@aol.com 1/14/06

THANKS for YOUR PRAYERS

Thanks for your prayers for **Kathleen** and our son, **Kurt**, and his girl friend, **Merissa**, as her grandmother, **Nellie McCartney** passed away in **February**. There are a lot of issues in this extended part of our family and we pray for their resolution.

FRIENDS or RELATIVES NOT RECEIVING “**The PILGRIM**”

We have received several notes from people concerned about why they have stopped getting regular bulk mailings of “**The PILGRIM**.”

Please tell all your friends and relatives who wish to receive “**The PILGRIM**” to review the information in the blocks on **pages 3 and 7, 9 or 11** for “**PLEASE RESPOND to THIS NOTICE and STAY ON the BULK MAILING**” in their past issues.

We do need to hear from someone at each address **in writing at least once a year** in order to keep them on our bulk mailing list. Bulk Mail is not required to be returned if the delivery name or address is incorrect.

There is no “subscription” fee. However, we do ask for free will donations monthly, quarterly, semi-annually or annually to support “**The PILGRIM**” and the other activities and operations of the **PFMC**.

With increasing costs for production and mailing as well as declining numbers and levels of donations we have been forced to watch the bulk mailing list very closely and remove those names and addresses where there has been **no written contact in the last year**.

PILGRIMS of FAITH MARIAN CENTER (PFMC)

The **PFMC** is not a church, store or travel agency but has aspects of all three. The **PFMC** operates as a non-profit, with 501(c)(3) tax exempt status, religious association and ministry whose volunteers are lay persons professing a belief in Jesus Christ, Our Lord and Savior, as the Only Begotten Son of God the Father, Creator of the Universe.

Most **PFMC** volunteers profess that faith through the apostolic and universal teachings of the Roman Catholic Church. Those volunteers who are practicing Roman Catholics profess allegiance to the Magisterium of the Church founded upon the Rock

(Kephas / Cephas or Petros depending on original or translation) of Simon bar Jonah and led by his apostolic successor **Pope Benedict XVI**.

The **PFMC** was established in the home of **Keith and Kathleen Werner** based on pilgrimages to **Medjugorje, Bosnia-Herzegovina**, and other holy places or shrines worthy of pilgrimage. Books, pamphlets, and religious articles brought back from pilgrimages were placed on display for others to view and acquire for themselves based on donations. Our displays and inventory bins are quite extensive.

The **PFMC** is directed and operated by volunteers who monitor the donations made for all activities. These activities include coordination of pilgrimages to holy places and shrines, retreats in local retreat centers or hotels, and days of recollection at the **PFMC** as well as the displays, library, and inventory management described in this article.

Operating for many years on a cash only basis, the **PFMC** now accepts **DISCOVER/PRIVATE ISSUE (NOVUS), MASTER CARD (CIRRUS) and VISA (PLUS)** for all transactions requiring donations to the **PFMC**. This includes for books and religious articles, pilgrimages, retreats, conferences, seminars, “**The PILGRIM**,” or any of the various funds. We ask that those who use credit cards assist us with the costs associated with their use, about 3%.

The **PFMC** is NOT a store and does not sell anything. We strongly support the use of Catholic stores wherever they are convenient to our readers. For books, pamphlets, and religious articles, the **PFMC** operates like a church pamphlet or book rack where selections are made and donations offered based on value posted or received. Most of the other outlets are operating on a for profit basis. Your gifts from the **PFMC** may be a tax break for you.

The **PFMC** has items from inventory on display at **Epiphany House**. The inventory management volunteers, currently **Vince and Livia Nocella**, are always happy to find something for you.

We need volunteers to help us get the entire inventory available for production of order forms. We eventually want to take pictures and load up a shopping cart program so that Internet users can see our Inventory on-line. If you have inventory or computer skills we would love to have your help.

If you wish to order, please determine what you want with as much description as possible. 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. If you have an order form, complete it, make out a check or complete the information for use of a credit card, i.e. card type, number, expiration date, and name on card, sign, and mail everything to the **PFMC** at the address shown on the last page.

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

BULLETIN NOTICES for **PFMC** AREA EVENTS

Would you be so kind as to copy or cut out the following BULLETIN NOTICES and take them to your Pastor or Parish Bulletin Coordinator? Ask them to publish any portion of the notices to support **PFMC** events for which you have an interest.

Please help get the word out on **PFMC** activities, events, and pilgrimages. Ask your pastor to allow information materials to be put out in church. Please do not put material in your church without obtaining permission from the pastor or his representative.

We are trying to network with other ministries in support of bringing people to Jesus either directly, through Mary, or through her spouse, the Holy Spirit.

Thanks in advance for acting on this special request for Bulletin Notice support.

9-11 MAY 2006 BRIDE of CHRIST COMMUNITY RETREAT

Father Marty Jones, Pastor of Saint Francis of Assisi Parish, Middletown, CT will conduct this retreat in the Upper Room at Epiphany House of the PFMC. Lodging is available in nearby hotels. This retreat is open to non-members of the community. Call (856) 768-9228 for an information sheet with registration form or print it from the PFMC web pages at: www.geocities.com/pilgrimsfaith/2006/06BCR05.pdf.

Thanks again for anything you can do to post notices in parish bulletins and with local prayer groups.

CONFERENCE CORNER

We need conference or meeting notices no later than the **25th of the month** before the event. The earlier the better so we can make space for it.

May 26, 27, 28, 2006 - National Conference on Medjugorje, Joyce Center, Notre Dame, Indiana. Speakers: To be announced. For more information contact: **Frances Sain, Queen of Peace Ministries, P.O. Box 761, Notre Dame, IN 46556** Phone: **574-288-8777**; Fax: **574-288-8795**; e-mail: maryconference@sbcglobal.net. Web site: www.QueenofPeaceMinistries.com.

September 15-17, 2006 - Marian/Eucharistic Conference "Mary, Queen of the Angels." Radisson Hotel and Conference Center, 2233 Ventura Street, Fresno CA 93721. Speakers: **Father Stan Fortuna, Father Donald Callaway, Father Andrew Apostoli and Rosalind Moss.** For More Information Contact: Ben or Christy Villas (559) 271-1246, Kathleen Lucas (559) 434-4378, Florisse Raypon (559) 432-8218, Alice Gustin (559) 227-2634, Inez Castro (559) 790-7476 or visit <http://medjugorje.org/medconf.htm>.

MAY 6, 2006: TRENTON DIOCESE CHARISMATIC RALLY

The Trenton Steering Committee for the Catholic Charismatic Renewal will host a Rally, starting at **8 AM** on **May 6, 2006** at **St. Mary of the Lakes School Auditorium**, located on **Rt. 70 East in Medford, NJ 08055**. The theme of the Rally is **"That All May Be One – John 17:11 – in the Spirit of Pentecost."** The Rally celebrates the **125th Anniversary** of the **Diocese of Trenton** and the grace of **Pentecost**.

Speakers: **Mother Nadine, Foundress, Intercessors of the Lamb, Omaha, NE; John Boucher, Director of the Office of Parish Life, Evangelization Ministry, Diocese of Trenton. Father Joseph Tedesco, Director of Research and Planning, Diocese of Trenton; Deacon Jeff DeFrehn, St. Joan of Arc, Marlton; Deacon Leo and Mrs. Vivian Zito, Our Lady Queen of Peace, Hainesport.**

S'elah Song Music Ministry will lead praise and worship.

Adoration available throughout the day.

Vigil Mass begins at **4 PM**.

Registration: **\$15**, with lunch included **\$20** a person.

For more information and registration contact: **Pat Koch**, (609) 859-3860; website address: spiritofpentecost@comcast.net

(bburslev@kwiknet.net Tuesday, March 21, 2006)



SALESIAN YOUNG ADULT RETREAT (YAR)

May 19-21, 2006

**Don Bosco Retreat Center,
Stony Point, NY**

“Don Bosco is the Patron Saint of Youth Ministry and is a master of Youth Spirituality”

The General Theme is: **The Road Less Traveled: Living Out My Christian Life**. It starts in the early evening on **Friday**, so those from the **NYC Metro Area** can still work a full day and make it up to the beautiful property in **Rockland County** near the **Tappan Zee Bridge!** Cost is **\$100 per person**, with several scholarships available.

Please check out our website or contact us direct at the **Salesian Office of Youth Ministry, Province of St. Phillip the Apostle, 315 Self Place, South Orange, NJ 07079**, www.salesianym.com, salymeast@aol.com, (973) 761-0201

Transportation Needs and Questions please call us!

Fr. Steve Ryan, SDB / Kenny Wodzanowski

(KenWodz@aol.com Thursday, March 16, 2006)

CATHOLIC RADIO

J. P. Kasperowicz, who has been coordinator of **Youth Track** events at the **PFMC Retreat Conference** and the **IHS Unity Conference** will be on the air from **6-9 PM** on **Tuesday** on www.CatholicInternetRadio.com.

The format will be as follows:

6 PM - Christian Contemporary Music (People can go to www.Single-hearted.com and choose songs as intercessory prayer for someone else.)

7 PM - Call in or email portion of the show (at times there will be interviews with Catholic Artists)

8 PM - Bible Study (Prepared before hand)

8:30 PM - Divine Mercy Chaplet (Sung as on J.P.'s CD)

(from: johnpaul@single-hearted.com 1/23/06)

OUR LADY *JesusMosaic* or PICTURE



Support the **PFMC** and *JesusMosaics*. Order from either the **PFMC** at (856) 768-9228 or our web site: <http://www.geocities.com/pilgrimsfaith>. See the color information sheet sent out with the **November 2005** issue of **“The PILGRIM”** or via the following link: <http://www.geocities.com/pilgrimsfaith/ImmaculateConceptionJM.pdf> and consider ordering this beautiful *JesusMosaic* or the underlying **Frank Bear** picture of **Our Lady** for yourself or as present to others.

Frank Bear of *JesusMosaics* has gone through his *JesusMosaic* creations and made the base picture available where he could. We can show you how to see both. Call (856) 768-9228 and ask for **Keith**.

ENCLOSED ITEMS

In this **March - April** issue of **“The PILGRIM”** are the following:

A **lilac** information sheet for the **Bride of Christ Community Retreat** in the **Upper Room** at **Epiphany House, Tuesday, 9 May 2006, thru Thursday, 11 May 2006**. Lodging in nearby hotels is available. This retreat is open to non-members of the community. This retreat is further discussed on pages **1, 2, 3, 17, and 35**.

The usual **PFMC** envelope and the new donation coupon explained in the **July 2004 special financial support appeal letter** for the **PFMC**. Please respond if you are able. We need to hear from readers that their addresses are still correct and would love to receive a donation from each reader on a regular basis.

POPE BENEDICT XVI PRAYER INTENTIONS for MARCH 2006

VATICAN CITY, MAR 1, 2006 (VIS) - The Holy Father's general prayer intention for **March** is: **“That young people who are searching for the sense of life may be understood, respected and accompanied with patience and love.”**

His mission intention is: **“That, throughout the Church, there may grow that shared missionary awareness which favors the collaboration and exchange of those who work in the missions.”**

(BXVI-PRAYER INTENTIONS/MARCH/VIS 060301
(80))

CALENDARS:

In **April**, the Church celebrates the Solemnities of **PASSION (PALM) SUNDAY (9)**, **EASTER SUNDAY (16)**, and **DIVINE MERCY SUNDAY (23)**, the Feast of *Saint Mark, Evangelist (25)*, the Memorial of *Saint Catherine of Siena (29)*, and Optional Memorials of *Saints Fidelis of Sigmaringen (24)*, *Peter Chanel (28)*, and *Louis Mary de Monfort (28)*. The **EASTER TRIDUUM** is **Holy Thursday (13)**, **Good Friday (14)** and **Holy Saturday (15)**. The **DIVINE MERCY NOVENA** starts on **Good Friday (14)**.

In **May**, the Church celebrates the Solemnity of **ASCENSION of the LORD (25)**, the Feasts of *Saints Philip and James (3)*, and *Matthias, Apostle (14)*, the Memorials of the *Visitation (31)* and *Saint Philip Neri (26)* and the Optional Memorials of *Saints Joseph the Worker (1)*, *Athanasius (2)*, *Nereus (12)*, *Achilleus (12)*, *Pancras (12)*, *Isidore the Farmer (15)*, *Pope John I (18)*, *Bernardine of Siena (20)*, *Bede the Venerable (25)*, *Pope Gregory VII (25)*, *Mary Magdalene de Pazzi (25)*, and *Augustine of Canterbury (27)*, *Our Lady of Fatima (13)*, and *Blessed Damien Joseph De Vuester of Molokai (10)*. The Church calendar recognizes **Mother Day (14)**, and **Memorial Day (observed) (29)**.

In **June** the Church celebrates the Solemnities of **PENTECOST (4)**, **HOLY TRINITY (11)**, **CORPUS CHRISTI (18)**, **SACRED HEART (23)** and **BIRTH of SAINT JOHN the BAPTIST (24)** and **SAINTS PETER and PAUL (29)**, the Memorials of *Saints Justin (1)*, *Charles Lwanga and Companions (3)*, *Boniface (5)*, *Barnabas, Apostle (11)*, *Anthony of Padua (13)*, *Aloysius Gonzaga (21)*, and *Irenaeus (28)*, and the Optional Memorials of *Saints Marcellinus and Peter (2)*, *Norbert (6)*, *Ephrem of Syria (9)*, *Romuald (19)*, *Paulinus of Nola (22)*, *John Fisher and Thomas More (22)*, *Cyril of Alexandria (27)*, *The First Martyrs of the Church of Rome (30)*, and *The Immaculate Heart of Mary (24)*. The Church calendar recognizes **Fathers Day (18)**

AROUND the **PFMC** AREA

Please review the announcements on **pages 1** through **4**, and on **pages 34** and **35** particularly in **Bulletin Notices** and **Conference Corner**.

Thank you for your support in all we try to do for Jesus Christ, Our Lord and Savior, and His Blessed Virgin Mother, Mary.

Visit our web pages for more information. Please help get the word out on **PFMC** activities, events, and pilgrimages. Pray for us.

Ask your pastor to post bulletin notices and allow information sheets to be put out in church. Please do not put material in your church without obtaining permission from the pastor or his official and authorized representative.

POPE BENEDICT XVI PRAYER INTENTIONS for APRIL 2006

Pope Benedict's general prayer intention for the month of **April** is: "That the individual, social and political rights of women may be respected in every nation."

His mission intention is: "That the Church in China may carry out its evangelizing mission with serenity and in full freedom."

<http://www.apostlesofprayer.org/Catalog.htm>

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

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

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

Kathleen PFMCkmw@comcast.net and

Keith keithwerner@comcast.net Werner, Co-Directors

61 Cooper Road, Voorhees, NJ 08043-4963

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

**PRIORITY DATED
RELIGIOUS MATERIAL**

**Mailed early AM,
Friday, 4/7/2006**

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PERMIT NO. 74
NON PROFIT ORG.

PLEASE DO NOT THROW THIS AWAY!!!!

If you do not desire to read "**The PILGRIM**," please give it to a Marian prayer group or return it to sender. If recipient 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 generous donations of those who can afford to support us. PRIESTS! Please note that HOMILY ideas have come from priests reading articles in "**The PILGRIM**!"

