



The **PILGRIM**

Vol. 9 No. 2

Pilgrims of Faith Marian Center (PFMC)

February 1998

Our Lady's MESSAGE of 1/25/98 via Marija Pavlovic Lunetti and the *Franciscans* at Medjugorje

Dear children! Today again I call all of you to prayer. Only with prayer, dear children, will your heart change, become better, and be more sensitive to the Word of God. Little children, do not permit Satan to pull you apart and to do with you what he wants. I call you to be responsible and determined and to consecrate each day to God in prayer. May Holy Mass, little children, not be a habit for you, but life. By living Holy Mass each day, you will feel the need for holiness and you will grow in holiness. I am close to you and intercede before God for each of you, so that He may give you strength to change your heart. Thank you for having responded to my call.

Father Slavko Barbaric's REFLECTION starts on page 12.

A PRAYER

Lord Jesus Christ, Son of the eternal and merciful Father, Blessed above all on earth, in the sky and in the universe, we come before you as broken poor and hurting sinners, longing for Your total healing and Your peace. Our lives are prompted to long suffering through Your Holy Spirit.

Lord, we are at war in an unchristian world overshadowed by the demonic darkness of immorality, lies, deceptions, anger, and unforgiveness, and all of Satan's plots that are like flaming missiles that jab with intense pain to destroy our souls.

Let our hearts look beyond in Hope of breaking these devastating patterns of sin. Open hearts to Truth. Strike with Your power so that through repentance, the Sacraments, and Holy Mass and Eucharist we will be enabled to seek You daily and stay in Your Light.

Give us the fortitude to stand strong with all the Heavenly weapons and grace to fight off temptation. Let not the evil one overcome us, frighten us, or wear us down. You, O Lord, are stronger than Satan, who constantly prowls the world seeking souls. How we underestimate his evil destructive tactics!

Abide in us deeply, Jesus. Wash us clean continually with Your Eucharistic Body and Blood. Encamp your angels about us.

We offer this prayer through the Immaculate Heart of Our Mother Mary, and through your most Sacred and Adored Heart. AMEN

(Over the years, during the editing of each periodical, Kathleen prays for the prayer of the heart that is to be printed on the front page. Monthly she shares what the Lord has put in her heart)

"The PILGRIM" Theme for February 1998 is *"Mary, Mother Renewing the World."* Page 3 contains the Table of Contents or **"IN THIS ISSUE . . ."** block.

1998 Pilgrims of Faith Marian Center (PFMC) RETREAT- CONFERENCE "THE LORD HATH DONE GREAT THINGS FOR ME (Luke 1:49)"

THIS IS YOUR LAST CHANCE TO SIGN UP. It's time to fill out the reservation form enclosed for the **1998 PFMC RETREAT CONFERENCE, FRIDAY thru SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 27, 28 and MARCH 1, 1998.**

This is a full spiritually filled weekend at \$75 per person or \$140 for a husband and wife, or \$170 for a family, i.e. parent(s) with children.

We are planning a Young Adult / Teen track (ages 13-18) and will be able to accommodate about 40 persons at \$25 each for the whole weekend..

A large room and tables will be available for vendors.

Our speakers are filled with the Holy Spirit, and will share with you the wisdom, direction and truth of your faith. It will be a time of physical, emotional and spiritual healing. The music and concert will fill you with God's joy. Please refer to our enclosed information sheet, fill out the reservation application and send it in right away. Call (609) 768-9228 if you need additional information.

PILGRIMAGE of a LIFETIME - SEE the SHROUD of TURIN EXHIBIT in PERSON, VISIT MEDJUGORJE, SHRINE of PADRE PIO. and see the HOLY FATHER in ROME.

We depart *May 1, 1998*, and return *May 15, 1998*. Our Spiritual Director will be **Father Jim Sauchelli**. He was the pastor of *Saint Joachim* Parish in **Trenton, NJ** and was the Spiritual Director for the **PFMC**. He is our personal friend and joined us as Spiritual Director on several previous pilgrimages. His love of Our Lady and his fire in the Holy

**EARLY RESERVATIONS ARE an ACT of
MERCY for LOCAL MINISTRIES**

It is important for all the ministries in the **Delaware Valley** that our supporters give us more consideration with **EARLY RESERVATIONS** for events and pilgrimages. It makes it very difficult to plan for a crowd and then not have it or, vice versa, to have more people show up for an event than the facility can handle. Please be considerate and sign up early. This is now critical for pilgrimages since a large deposit is necessary to save seat reservations on airlines, trains and boats.

Spirit is magnetic. He has a beautiful gift of teaching and of sharing contemplative life and prayer.

This once in a lifetime pilgrimage is now limited to space available only, but it is not impossible to get you a seat. Once we get your reservation and deposit you will be in a pending confirmation of availability status for flights, ferry and tickets to the Shroud of Turin Exhibit, etc. Once confirmed, you will hold a guaranteed seat, but you must respond as soon as possible. The **Shroud of Turin** was last placed on display in 1978. Before that it was exhibited twice in the 1930s.

Because we have such an interest in *Our Lady* and the **Eucharist** we are combining attendance at the **Shroud of Turin Exhibit** with **Eucharistic** and *Marian* shrines in **Italy** and in **Medjugorje (STM)**.

The pilgrimage schedule is as follows:

We depart on this **STM** pilgrimage from **Philadelphia, PA** on **Friday, 1 May 1998** arriving in **Milan, Italy** on **Saturday, 2 May 1998**. After a city tour, with a focus on the Cathedral dedicated to *Our Lady (Maria Nascente)*, the Church of *Santa Maria delle Grazie* to see **Da Vinci's "The Last Supper"** as well as the Basilica and Crypt of *Saint Ambrose*, we transfer to **Turin, Italy**. Here the **Shroud of Turin** will be on exhibit for the first time in nearly 20 years. Two overnights with dinner in **Turin**.

On **Monday, 4 May 1998**, we depart for **Padua** via **Verona** for a brief visit to the home of **Romeo and Juliet** and their church followed by a stop at **Montechiari**, the site of *Rosa Mystica* shrine. Arrive **Padua** for afternoon tour and visit to **Basilica of Saint Anthony**. Overnight with dinner in **Padua**.

On **Tuesday, 5 May 1998**, we depart for **Loreto** and a visit to the **Holy House of Nazareth** followed by an overnight ferry to **Split, Croatia** from **Ancona, Italy**. Enroute to **Loreto** we visit **Bologna**, to see the **Church of Saint Luke**, and **Ravenna**, to see some beautiful mosaics.

On **Wednesday, 6 May 1998**, we traverse the beautiful **Adriatic Sea** coastline to **Medjugorje, Bosnia-Herzegovina** for **4 nights** with breakfast and dinner daily.

On **Sunday, 10 May 1998**, we bus to the beautiful city of **Dubrovnik** for Holy Mass at the **Church of Saint Blaise** and a city tour concluding with the overnight ferry to **Bari, Italy**.

On **Monday, 11 May 1998**, we travel by bus to the **Gargano Peninsula**, or spur on the boot, of **Italy**. We visit **Saint Michael's Grotto**, then stay overnight in **San Giovanni Rotondo**, the home of **Padre Pio**.

On **Tuesday, 12 May 1998**, we'll depart for **Rome, Italy** stopping in **Lanciano, Italy** to see the **Miracle of the Eucharist**.

On **Wednesday, 13 May 1998**, we'll enjoy a **Papal Audience** and tour of **Christian Rome** and on **Thursday, 14 May 1998**, have some free time in **Rome**, or some might want to take the optional tour (\$25) to the **Vatican Museum**. We will have a musical farewell dinner in a **Roman** restaurant.

We return on **Friday, 15 May 1998**, physically exhausted but spiritually refreshed and invigorated with experiences within the **Body of Christ**.

THE PACKAGE PRICE of \$2499 PLUS \$79 TAXES DOUBLE OCCUPANCY INCLUDES: ROUND TRIP AIR, BUSES, FERRY BOAT RIDE AND BERTH, GUIDES, HOTELS, ALL TRANSFERS, BAGGAGE HANDLING, BREAKFASTS and DINNERS.

A travel / cancellation insurance policy of \$60 is required upon registration for the pilgrimage. The cancellation portion takes effect upon payment, and the other travel coverages at 12:01 AM local time at your location on the departure date of your trip. This insurance has helped get injured pilgrims home at no additional expense.

Call us or refer to the last 4 newsletters for an application. You can fully charge this pilgrimage on Visa, Mastercard or Discover. Sorry, **WE DO NOT** take American Express.

If you are interested in making this once in a lifetime pilgrimage, complete the reservation form and send it with your deposit of \$500 and \$60 travel insurance.

Don't lose the opportunity by not registering soon enough.

**APRIL, 1998 PILGRIMAGE to MEDJUGORJE
OVER THE FEAST OF DIVINE MERCY;**

Would you like to spend Divine Mercy Sunday in Medjugorje? Have you ever been called to come there but didn't have enough vacation time? If you are limited to time for vacation, and have always wanted to go to **Medjugorje**, join this pilgrimage to **Medjugorje** leaving **April 15, 1998** and returning, **via overnight in Rome**, on **April 23, 1998**. The cost of **\$1599** plus **\$72** tax includes round trip air from **Newark**, experienced spiritual

We recognize and accept that the final authority regarding the apparitions, locutions and related messages from *Our Lady* at, and to the recipients from, **Medjugorje, Bosnia-Herzegovina**, as well as all other private revelations, rests with the **Holy See of Rome**, to whose judgment we willingly submit. We vow total allegiance to our **One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church**, its **Magisterium (Cardinals, Bishops and Priests)** together with the **Holy Father, Pope John Paul II**.

coordinator, air round trip, all transfers, housing in **Medjugorje**, **English** speaking guide, all breakfasts and suppers and overnight in **Rome** with arrival supper and morning breakfast following Mass in the **Vatican** before departing for the airport.. You will have a full spiritual schedule and visit the visionaries. **See enclosed information sheet with reservation form.**

Please call us immediately to book your seats, as they are limited. You may now charge your entire pilgrimage and airfare on **VISA, MASTERCARD** or **DISCOVER.**

FATHER JOHN FREY, OF VINELAND, NJ WILL LEAD PILGRIMAGE DEPARTING THURSDAY, JULY 2 through JULY 9, 1998 for PILGRIMAGE to PARIS, LISIEUX and LOURDES with OPTIONAL 5 NITES 6 DAYS to MEDJUGORJE, JULY 9 through JULY 14, 1998

Father John Frey, Pastor of *Saint Isidore* Parish in **Vineland, NJ**. will be the spiritual director on this summer pilgrimage. This pilgrimage was designed to enable teachers and those who have limited time for vacation to enjoy a beautiful pilgrimage over a long *July 4th* weekend.

Leaving from **Newark** the basic 7 days 6 nights pilgrimage will include your round trip air fare **Newark** to **Paris** on *Air France*. Price includes all taxes and service charges; 1 full day guided tour **Paris** with Holy Mass in the **Miraculous Medal Chapel** on **Rue de Bac**, near the incorrupt body of *Saint Catherine Laboure*; 3 nites hotel in **Paris**, 3 nites hotel in **Lourdes**. total of 6 nights accommodations in Superior Tourist Class Hotels with twin bedded rooms and private bath; continental breakfast and lovely dinner daily; walking tour of **Lourdes** including the **Grotto, Cachot, Basilica**, and other sites in the village. Enjoy the candlelight processions and the healing waters of the baths; bus and guided full day to **Lisieux** visiting **Les Buissonnets, Carmelite Convent, Saint Therese's Basilica, Saint Pierre Cathedral**

A pilgrimage coordinator from the **PFMC** will accompany pilgrims along with a priest as Spiritual Director and a full program of daily prayer. Cost per person double occupancy is **\$1999** including taxes and baggage handling. Single supplement **\$400** per person.

We will provide an optional pilgrimage to Medjugorje with the **PFMC** coordinator for 5 nites and 6 days **provided we have at least 10 persons to go - \$899..** Includes round trip air from **Paris**, transfers to and from airport, **Medjugorje English** speaking guide, private house with private room double occupancy and private bathroom, full spiritual program daily, all home cooked breakfasts and suppers. Single supplement is an additional **\$100**

Call the **PFMC** at **609-768-9228** for more information. **See enclosed information sheet with reservation form**, and again sign up early for this special summer pilgrimage. Seats again will be limited.

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A PRIEST'S LETTER to COUPLES LIVING TOGETHER

We received several very nice letters from couples planning to get married. They had been given previous issues of **"The PILGRIM"** with articles about living together by their parents. Their response was that they had made the firm decision that they were going to prepare from here on for their marriage by living inabstinence, and were glad that they had another chance to try to rectify their sins, and have hope for a beautiful life together. All four couples had gone to confession and discussed it with a priest who understood, was kind, but who was also firm in helping them to understand and fulfill their new committment.

Then, we received this letter from a priest, and we simply felt we should continue with a few articles more that might touch the engaged and dating couples. Only they can make the decisions and the change, and we pray for all engaged and dating couples daily.

It's not easy out there, with peer pressure, and having tasted of the "apple" so to say, but it can be done, and be blessed in God's forgiving and merciful eyes. The

strength you will find together by going through the “pain” of saying “no” till your beautiful day will be well worth it on your beautiful wedding night.

“I am pleased that you wish to be married in the church, but.....”

Dear Friends,

You have asked me to witness your marriage, and I am pleased that you wish to be married in the Church. But before I give you my answer I want to share a few thoughts with you.

I’m sure you know that Our Lord, and the Church does not approve of you living together before marriage. I hope you are not surprised that I also disapprove of it. By asking me to witness your marriage with the usual kind of wedding celebration, you are putting me (as a priest) in an awkward position.

If I do witness the vows in a big celebration, I am giving tacit approval to your present behavior. I would be treating you as I would treat a couple who has not been living together. I am uncomfortable with that because I want to encourage young people to live up to Catholic standards before marriage.

Let me try to explain why I think what you are doing is wrong. I don’t want to talk just about the commandments, though I believe that what you are doing is contrary to them. I would rather talk about your relationship to the community, both the civil community and the Church community. Both disapprove of couples living together prior to marriage.

By your living arrangements you are saying quite publicly that you don’t care very much what these communities think. And yet now you come to me, an official of the Church community, and ask me to treat you in the same way I would treat a couple who has respected the communities customs and rules.

Putting it another way, you have been living as if married, in effect saying to the community, to your friends and your families, that you wish to be treated as if married. But now you come and say you want to be treated as unmarried, and have a big celebration of the fact that you are now marrying. There is some kind of contradiction here and it puts me in a difficult spot. If I say “yes” I seem to be saying that what you are doing is o.k. If I say “no”, I am refusing to help you get back into the community.

I think that living together and sexual relations prior to marriage are wrong. Sexual relations are a sign and symbol of a **TOTAL GIFT OF ONE PERSON TO ANOTHER. THAT TOTAL GIFT IS MADE IN THE MARRIAGE VOWS, WHEN TWO PEOPLE GIVE THEMSELVES TO EACH OTHER PUBLICLY FOR LIFE..** To engage in sexual relations before making that formal, public, permanent gift and commitment in marriage is to falsify the sacred symbol that sexual intercourse is. It is to give yourself in this act that

symbolizes **TOTAL GIVING**, but with the idea that it can be taken back.

God’s laws regarding sexual behavior are not whimsical or arbitrary. They are guidelines to the **SACRED SIGNIFICANCE** of sexuality in our lives. They are directly opposed to the cheap, selfish, and shallow view of sexuality that is found in so much of our culture.

I think I can understand the social and economic pressure and the feelings that have led you to live together. I would like to hear your reasons. But I am convinced that another solution could have been found -- and even still can be, that will permit me to witness your marriage.

I would be happy to witness your marriage in a simple, quiet ceremony with two witnesses and perhaps your immediate families. That is what I would do if you had been married in a civil ceremony and now wished to have the marriage validated in the Church. Since by your living together you seem to be saying, “we want to be like married people,” I would be very happy to treat you like married people and witness you vows simply and quietly.

Another possible solution might be for you to live separately from now until marriage. That would be a public statement to your family, your friends, and to me that you are trying to live your courtship in a Catholic way.

I hope you will think about these things. I also hope you will come to see me again and that we can work out ways that will allow me to witness your marriage.

I am happy that you love each other, and that you wish to marry. I hope we can work out the difficulties that I have with your present living arrangements.

I hope to hear from you soon.

In Christ,

A Priest who loves you.

(from Pastor, Cathedral of the Holy Spirit, Bismarck, N.D.)

THE DIFFERENCE

I got up early one morning and rushed into the day; I had so much to accomplish that I didn’t have time to pray.

Problems just tumbled about me and heavier came each task; “Why doesn’t God help me?” I wondered, He said, “But you didn’t ask.”

I wanted to see joy and beauty but the day toiled on, gray and bleak; I wondered why God didn’t show me. He said, “But you didn’t seek.”

I tried to come into God’s presence; I tried all my keys at the lock. God gently and lovingly chided “My child, you didn’t knock.”

I woke up early this morning and paused before entering the day. I had so much to accomplish that I had to take time to pray.

(Author Unknown)

MARRIAGE IS FOR KEEPS

* *Editor Note: The following article was taken from the Foundations for Christian Marriage - Wedding Edition with Marriage Rite and Readings. We are editing the article to enable couples to read the highlights, but encourage them to read the entire article.*

WHAT IF WE ARE HAVING PRE-MARITAL SEX?

The only Christian answer is “**STOP!**” Sexual relations are intended by God to be at least implicitly a renewal of your marriage covenant. Therefore, sex before or outside of marriage is essentially dishonest; it is a lie. It **PRETENDS** to be what it **CANNOT** be. An engaged couple is no more married and privileged to have sexual intercourse than a deacon is ordained and privileged to celebrate Mass. In both cases, each person has to wait for marriage and ordination respectively.

Waiting until marriage is not just a “Church Rule.” It is not waiting for the Church to give you “permission” to have sexual relations. Instead, the waiting is **FOR YOU**. Sexual intercourse is intended by God to be a marriage act, and you are not morally and spiritually equipped to engage in the marriage act until you are married.

Having sex even occasionally before marriage is a **BAD WAY** to prepare for marriage. Engagement is a time to raise the level of your spiritual intimacy by “exploring and sharing ideas, goals, dreams and hopes, values, and problems.”

Worse yet is the make believe world of “living together as man and wife” before you are married. First of all, it **TRULY IS LIVING IN SIN**” and that’s all any Christian should need to know. Second, it is unrealistic because each party knows that the other can leave at any moment without a trace of legal or marital obligation; so one person or the other or both may try to be just too nice, all the while building up resentment and waiting to really “be herself or himself” once they have made the public commitment of marriage.

Finally, living together (and having sex together planning on marriage” just doesn’t work as a preparation for marriage. Research has shown much higher divorce rates for these couples. (see previous November newsletter)

THE ENGAGEMENT TIME

Engagement is a time to get to know your fiancée (truly know him or her without any pretenses), and to let yourself be known. I’m not advocating a recital of all your past sins. However, if your mom or dad or siblings have been telling you for years that you are too self-centered, to impatient, too hard driving or too lazy, too critical of yourself or others, etc., maybe you should be discussing with your fiancée how he or she can help you to improve in these areas without falling into nagging.

Engagement is a time to share ideas, and that includes finding out and disclosing to each other what each of you reads. If one of you is reading Playboy or other forms of pornographic material, you have a problem now and the potential for a huge problem later on. The annual

swimsuit edition of Sports Illustrated is not harmless; it has nothing to do with a healthy interest in sports; it has everything to do with encouraging men to view women as sex objects and to engage in unrealistic fantasies about what women should look like, etc.

CAN YOU ADMIT YOUR SINFULNESS?

A prime requirement for being an adult Christian is the willingness to admit, “I have sinned.” Even the great saints acknowledge their sinfulness, even if in their cases it was more a recognition of their imperfections and the great distance between themselves and the absolute holiness of god. However, for most of us, it is a matter of admitting that in certain thoughts and desires, words, and actions, we have sinned against god and frequently against our fellow man. Simon peter, when he first recognized that Jesus was truly a man of god after witnessing the miracle of the catch of fish, said to Jesus: “**Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord**” (Lk. 5:8)

It’s relatively easy to admit our sinfulness in very general terms, but for real repentance, sorrow, and a change of heart, it’s necessary for us to accuse ourselves of the specific sins we have committed. (*note: to be honest with oneself, partner, and to God is to be **truthful**, and not a **liar**. No one can lie to God- he knows all and knows the truth all the time, and nothing can be hid from him. It gives one great peace when truth comes out and forgiveness occurs. The forgiveness is most to oneself, as well as God’s forgiveness of us.).

It’s hard for anyone to be in truth and confess, and it takes **HUMILITY**. It’s pretty easy for someone to admit that he or she has been missing Sunday Mass because that’s so obvious to family and friends. It’s something else to accuse oneself of sin against the Third Commandment by such sexual behavior. An employee might openly joke about stealing from his employer by taking “sick days” for just a day off, but it’s hard to accuse oneself of sin by such behavior. Why? I think most of us recognize that when we admit we are sinning, we know that inside we must undergo a change of heart and behavior to which Jesus is calling us.

Self accusation can be particularly hard for some

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engaged persons because they may be committing various sins of impurity -- fornication, (that's the biblical name for unmarried people having sex.) masturbation, deliberately getting oneself or the other aroused, and leading another person into sin. Sins of sex can form very strong and bad habits. It is difficult enough for anyone to be chaste in thought, word and deed; the force of bad habit makes it even more difficult. It is easy to become a slave to one's own sinful habits of sex, and that's all the more reason to turn to Jesus, to answer his call to have a change of heart -- **-NOW-NOT LATER.**

HOW CAN I CHANGE - HOW CAN I DO IT?

If you know the demands of the Christian moral life and are also aware of your own weakness and sins, you may ask, "Well, how can I, weak as I am, walk the narrow way with Jesus?:" The answer is simple: by yourself you can't do it, but with the help of Jesus you can. Saint Paul tells us that he was very unhappy about a certain trial which he called "a messenger of Satan, to harass me, to keep me from being elated. Three times I besought the Lord about this, that it should leave me; but He said to me, **"My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness."** (2 Cor 12 7-9)

What was true for Saint Paul is equally true for me and for you.

WE ARE ASSURED of FORGIVENESS

For many of us sinners, two of the most encouraging parables of Jesus are those of the Good Shepherd and the Prodigal Son. In the first, Jesus tells us of God's pursuit of the sinner and of the joy in Heaven over the repentant sinner (Mt. 18: 12-14). The parable of the Prodigal Son (Lk 15: 111-32) is longer and more complete. The young man leaves home to lead an immoral life. Finally he comes to his senses. Then comes a crucial point: he accuses himself of his sins:

I will arise and go to my father, and I will say to him "Father I have sinned against Heaven and before You; I am no longer worthy to be called your son; treat me as one of your hired servants."

Then he makes his confession to his father, who rejoices to forgive him.

THE SACRAMENT of RECONCILIATION

Because we are sinners, Jesus gave us the Sacrament of Reconciliation to do just what the name says - to reconcile us with God through the good agency of his Church. One of the **BEST** resolutions you can make as an engaged couple is to go to confession at **LEAST ONCE A MONTH STARTING NOW** and for the rest of your life. You don't need to be concerned about telling the priest something he hasn't heard before. Many people find sins of impurity particularly difficult to confess. Well, yes, they are embarrassing and they're such a reminder of our weakness; but, no, **they WON'T BE A SURPRISE TO THE PRIEST.** A priest-reviewer of this book added the rest of this paragraph as follow:

"Even the youngest priest has been trained to expect weakness and falls in such matters and not to judge harshly persons who have been overtaken by sexual impulses in an unguarded moment or out of compulsive habits. Moreover, even if the priest himself has by a special protection of God never fallen into a serious sexual sin (and not all priests have been so fortunate), he is aware enough of his own weakness not to feel morally superior to a brother or sister who has had a fall.

REPENTANCE PLUS HEALING

God's commandments are for our benefit, not His. They spell out some very basic relationships between you and God, and between you and other people. **To violate the Commandments is to act against your very nature as someone created in the image and likeness of God.**

Have you ever heard it said, "What you don't know won't hurt you?" Try telling that to someone who's been poisoned by eating the wrong kind of mushrooms. What a lie! The TRUTH is, what you don't know can hurt you very much indeed.

For example, maybe it's out of ignorance that some couples have sex before they marry. Maybe they don't know it's objectively sinful behavior. (Maybe. But why do they try to "justify" it then? Nobody has to justify honest marital relations.) Regardless, having sex outside of marriage does cause spiritual damage to both persons, and that damage needs healing. Sometimes the psychological damage can be so severe that it affects a person's ability to make the necessary consent to lifelong, faithful marriage. It is no surprise that couples who cohabit before marriage have a higher divorce rate than those who don't.

The point of all this is that if you have been engaging in premarital sex, you need healing. For your own sakes, you need to repent, to be reconciled with God, and to be healed. You need to develop a chaste courtship, perhaps even some separation and some special time with God to facilitate your healing.

If this applies to you and yours, you will find the confessional is a good place to find peace and a fresh start.

WALKING WITH THE LORD TOGETHER

Living out the Sacrament of Matrimony is a special form of Christian discipleship. It is very definitely a **VOCATION**, a calling from the Lord, but it is not a calling just to "get married" and then forget about the active practice of the Faith except for a few big occasions such as Christmas and Easter, Baptisms and Weddings.

When you enter the Sacrament of Matrimony, you and your spouse are **BOTH called to Walk with the Lord** - together. For a mental image, envision yourself and your spouse walking with Jesus. He in the middle and each of you holding one of his hand. That is what successful, happy Christian marriage is all about.

In the Catholic vision of living together as man and wife, you both agree that **the essential purpose of your marriage is to help each other reach your goal of eternal life. You both agree that it's important for you to be aware of the need to help each other on the road to Heaven.**

If such an idea of marriage is meaningless to you or to your intended spouse, then don't you need to ask yourself why you are entering Christian marriage? If you or your intended spouse have entirely different and even unreconcilable opinions about Christian discipleship or about letting Jesus be King and Center of your personal and married lives, then don't you need to ask yourselves if you are being called by the Lord to marry each other?

I can assure you that the glow of the time of courtship will **NOT KEEP YOU ON A CONSTANT HIGH FOR LONG.** Sooner or later, religion, Christian discipleship - will become important either to you or to your spouse. If the fact that Christ died to save you and to bring you to eternal life is important to you, and if you plan to marry someone who is a practical atheist (even if he or she is a baptized Catholic), you can rest assured that your differences will become much more important to you in the years to come. Even if you happen to be a totally non-religious person, a practical atheist, planning to marry a non-practicing Catholic, the spark of faith in that person may not remain dormant forever.

Christian marriage is the vocation to walk together with the Lord, helping each other on the path of salvation, and raising children in the ways of the Lord. It is the way in which most Christians are called to live out their discipleship.

(by John F. Kippley and edited from Foundations for Christian Marriage - Wedding Edition with Marriage Rite and Readings)

THOUGHTS on the MASS and HOLY EUCHARIST

Vatican II tells us: "At the Last Supper, on the night when He was betrayed, our Savior instituted the Eucharistic Sacrifice of His Body and Blood. He did this in order to perpetuate the sacrifice of the Cross throughout the centuries until He should come again, and so to entrust to His beloved spouse, the Church, a memorial of His death and resurrection: a sacrament of love, a sign of unity, a bond of charity, a Paschal banquet in which Christ is consumed, the mind is filled with grace, and a pledge of future glory is given to us.

"The church, therefore, earnestly desires that Christ's faithful, when present at the mystery of faith, should not be there as strangers or silent spectators. On the contrary, through a proper appreciation of the rites and prayers they should participate knowingly, devoutly, and actively. They should be instructed by God's word and be refreshed at the table of the Lord's body; they should give thanks to God; by offering the Immaculate Victim, not only through the hands of the priest, but also with him, they should learn to offer themselves, too. Through Christ the Mediator,

they should be drawn day by day into ever closer union with each other, so that finally God may be all in all."

Here are thoughts from one woman's spiritual journal on the Mass:

"The priest needs to feed the people with the love of God. When people come to the Mass and the sacraments, they are spiritually fed.

"The world cries out to be fed. The Church is the body of Christ. Jesus has chosen each priest and anointed him as Christ alive in this world today. The greatest calling is to be called to be a holy priest by our Lord Himself. How dearly He loves His beloved priests and longs for their love. As he suffered so during His bitter Passion for the lack of love of some of His chosen priests betrothed to Him, He was comforted by His holy priests. Jesus truly loves His sacred priests.

"Jesus must live in the priest. The priest's every action must be one with Jesus. He is a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek.

"When a priest is filled with the love of Jesus, He will unite more deeply with Christ in the great sacrifice being offered to the Father. In the holy sacrifice of the Mass, the faithful will see Jesus through the priest offering sacrifice to the Father. We will lift our eyes and we will feel, at this great sacrifice, the presence of God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. We unite in offering sacrifice to the Father. We all unite as one and give ourselves in such oneness with Jesus, in such love to the Father, in the Holy Spirit. We die to all those things that are not of Him and join in this great miracle taking place. The Father looks down and He sees the sacrifice of His beautiful Son through the consecrated hands of His holy priests. Heaven unites to earth. Earth cries out in such jubilation at the great gift given from the Almighty God, and we unite as creatures giving ourselves as a sacrifice to our beloved Creator. Do we experience the presence of God as His power flows through the hands of a man, the priest who takes ordinary bread and wine and changes them into the Body and Blood

PLEASE HELP the **PFMC** EVERY MONTH

Please, will YOU make a commitment to help us by **TITHING at least \$2 per month** to the **PFMC**. We need your help in the printing and mailing of "**The PILGRIM**". and in the management of the **PFMC**. If everyone who receives "**The PILGRIM**" would tithes \$2 a month we would not have any difficulty in maintaining a monthly newsletter and meeting the **PFMC** expenses. Would you also consider tithing \$5 a month to the building fund? Please fill out your prayer request/donation slip Use the enclosed envelope enclosed monthly and return it to us. We thank you for your help each month..

Your donation slips and prayer intentions are placed beneath the crucifix in the PFMC prayer room and prayed for every day. We then take them with us on our next pilgrimage, usually to Medjugorje. We will place them on the altars where we celebrate Holy Mass and leave them at an apparition site.

of our Lord? Do we hear Jesus cry out, as He did at the last supper, with the intensity in His voice reflecting all knowledge of the upcoming events of His passion and death?

“Do we hear the priest say the words of consecration with the emotion of Jesus, about to give His life for His beloved souls? And the earth stands still. There is, at that moment, the sacrifice of Calvary sacramentally made present through the hands of the priest. Oh, that God so loved this world to give His only Son as a sacrifice and that God wants us in this deep oneness with Him. I give You myself, my beautiful God, as You so willingly gave Yourself to me on Calvary. I want to die with You.

“Love between two persons is mutual giving. It is interaction between two people. It is intimacy. It is dependent on how much we give. We receive intimacy, interaction, according to how much we put into it. God gives His all. We see Him hanging, covered with blood, crowned with thorns, hands and feet pierced. We see His precious heart, font of life and love and mercy, pierced. This is freedom. He shows us the way. We give ourselves. We sacrifice and beg to be made holy, beg to be like Him in this holy sacrifice. The most important aspect of our offering sacrifice is how we are in our heart. Are we one with Jesus, giving ourselves to our beloved Father Who is all worthy of our love? Who are we that God loves us creatures so much that He, Almighty God, becomes present, no less present than the day he walked this earth, through the hands of a man, and we take it so lightly. Think of Jesus calling out. Raise the Host high, beloved priests. This is the Son of God and you have been given the greatest honor on this earth.

“God comes to us. He gives Himself to us. Let us see ourselves as one in Him. Let us unite. Let us look at ourselves, all creatures of our beloved God. God, all Holy, all Magnificent, Almighty, all Powerful, and see what He gives us. Let us see ourselves as His creatures and Him as the Creator, and look at ourselves and see how we, and all men, are offending our precious God. As we unite, we beg, beg, with this holy sacrifice of His Son, for mercy. We watch it flow from the Father, in the Holy Spirit, through the font of grace.

(Author Unknown)

LITANY of REPARATION to OUR LORD in the BLESSED EUCHARIST

Lord, have mercy on us. *Christ, have mercy on us.*

Lord, have mercy on us. *Christ, hear us.*

Christ, graciously hear us.

God the Father of Heaven, *Have mercy on us.*

God the Son, Redeemer of the world,

God the Holy Spirit,

Holy Trinity, One God,

Sacred Host, offered for the salvation of sinners,

Sacred Host, annihilated on the altar for us and by us,

Sacred Host, despised by lukewarm Christians,

Sacred Host, mark of contradiction,

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Sacred Host, delivered over to Jews and heretics,

Sacred Host, insulted by blasphemers,

Sacred Host, Bread of angels, given to animals,

Sacred Host, flung into the mud and trampled underfoot,

Sacred Host, dishonored by unfaithful priests,

Sacred Host, forgotten and abandoned in Thy churches,

Be merciful unto us, *Pardon us, O Lord.*

Be merciful unto us, *Hear us, O Lord.*

For the outrageous contempt of this most wonderful Sacrament, *We offer Thee our reparation.*

For Thine extreme humiliation in Thine admirable Sacrament,

For all unworthy Communions,

For the irreverences of wicked Christians,

For the profanation of Thy sanctuaries,

For the holy ciborium dishonored and carried away by force,

For the continual blasphemies of impious men,

For the obduracy and treachery of heretics,

For the unworthy conversations carried on in Thy holy temples,

For the profaners of Thy churches which they have desecrated by their sacrileges,

That it may please Thee to increase in all Christians the reverence due to this adorable Mystery, *we beseech Thee, hear us.*

That it may please Thee to manifest the Sacrament of Thy Love to heretics,

That it may please Thee to grant us the grace to atone for their hatred by our burning love for Thee,

That it may please Thee that the insults of those who outrage Thee may rather be directed against ourselves,

That it may please Thee graciously to receive this our humble reparation,

That it may please Thee to make our adoration acceptable to Thee,

Pure Host, *hear our prayer.*

Holy Host,

Immaculate Host,

Lamb of God, Who takest away the sins of the world,

Spare us, O Lord.

Lamb of God, Who takest away the sins of the world,

Graciously hear us, O Lord.

Lamb of God, who takest away the sins of the world,

Have mercy on us.

Lord, have mercy on us.

Christ, have mercy on us.

V. See, O Lord, our affliction.

R. *And give glory to Thy Holy Name.*

Let Us Pray

O Lord Jesus Christ, Who dost deign to remain with us in Thy wonderful Sacrament at the end of the world, in order to give to Thy Father, by the memory of Thy Passion,

eternal glory, and to give to us the Bread of life everlasting: Grant us the grace to mourn, with a heart full of sorrow, over the injuries which Thou has received in this adorable Mystery, and over the many sacrileges which are committed by the impious, by heretics and by bad Catholics.

Inflame us with an ardent zeal to repair all these insults to which, in Thine infinite mercy, Thou has preferred to expose Thyself rather than deprive us of Thy Presence on our altars, Who with God the Father and the Holy Spirit livest and reignest one God, world without end. R. Amen.

PBS AIRS CHILDREN'S SHOW with HOST PUSHING HOMOSEXUAL AGENDA

Repeatedly we have taken a stand for truth. One area we have discussed has been the entertainment field. People had been asking me if I had watched "Ellen" and "Nothing Sacred". I had watched "Nothing Sacred" and would not turn it on again. It seems the network is just as determined! Regardless of thousands of petitions to remove it, and one sponsor after another pulling its finances the network is continuing with the show now on prime time Saturday nites.

I just watched "Ellen" and my stomach turned as two women openly hugged and kissed on prime time TV and discussed "moving in" with each other for a "permanent relationship." This Disney/ABC sitcom continues to be controversial as lesbian actress Ellen DeGeneres unashamedly uses it as a vehicle for evangelizing young people with the message that "GAY" is okay!" DeGeneres says that children should be allowed to watch same sex affection as there is nothing wrong with being gay. PBS has joined DeGeneres in targeting children. In November 1997, Ellen DeGeneres was hostess of "Sesame Street and Storytime." What Next?

Unless parents take an active stand, programs such as these will continue to corrupt our children, and who knows what of their own children. It is a sad world of "the silent" that allows TV to continue with its sinful, deviant agendas.

Are you one of the "silent", thinking nothing can come from your one little card or note? Let me tell you, you do count, and it will make a difference? Apathy is in our pockets, and feelings of "what little will it matter if I speak up permeates one conversation after another. Believe me, Your voice is very important to change things. Your voice especially counts if it gets to the pockets of the producers. You can make a difference. The "choice" is yours. Contact "Ellen" Walt Disney Studios, 500 S. Buena Vista, Animation Bldg. Ste. 3D Burbank, California 91521 and Jamie Tarses Entertainment President, ABC., 157 Columbus Avenue, New York, NY 10023

If you wish to write about the inconsistencies with our Catholic Faith represented on "Nothing Sacred" please write "Nothing Sacred 6625 Variel Avenue. Canoga Park, California 91303

OUR CONGRESS "AT WORK"

New York Assembly woman Susan John of Rochester, who is the chairman of the Assembly's Alcohol and Drug Abuse committee, said after pleading guilty to driving while impaired; "This will give me additional insights into the problem of drinking and driving, and I believe, will allow me to do my job even more effectively."

(Reuters, March 1997)

ABORTION and the PRACTICE of MEDICINE: 25 YEARS of INCREASING SCHIZOPHRENIA

In 1973, *Roe v. Wade* shattered the issue of abortion into sharp fragments. We are still dealing with the medical and political fallout of the Supreme Court's willingness to go far beyond the traditional boundaries of medical ethics and practice.

The tenets of Hippocratic medicine have served us well for more than 2,000 years. But the last 25 years of abortion on demand caused the practice of medicine to become increasingly schizophrenic. The tension between valuable traditions and currently legal medical practice is untenable.

My subspecialty of maternal-fetal medicine has been heavily influenced by the 1973 *Roe v. Wade* decision.

I am one of 11 high-risk pregnancy specialists in a busy practice serving a complicated referral population. I also teach medical students and residents.

Our practice is unique in that we care for two patients: the mother and her unborn child. (Sometimes our colleagues involved in the treatment of infertility are so successful we have even more than two patients.) Only on very rare occasions are the medical interests of the mother and child in conflict.

In 1973, fetal ultrasound imaging technology was early in its development. The anatomic development and activities of the fetus were invisible. Today the practice of obstetrics is much more effective because of our ability to obtain detailed views of the fetus inside the uterus.

Current ultrasound imaging techniques reveal the marvelous complexity of prenatal growth and development. Just as parents of newborns mark their baby's developmental progress with milestones of activities, thanks to modern technology we can see similar developmental milestones in unborn babies.

However, this wonderful window on the womb has

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The value of "The PILGRIM" is appreciated in the hearts of you the readers. "The PILGRIM" serves to provide you with overviews to plant seeds in your life to fulfill all the above needs. If you know someone who would enjoy the "The PILGRIM", please ask them to contact us.

become increasingly embarrassing to ardent supporters of abortion who would rather refer to the fetus as “pregnancy tissue” or “the products of conception.”

That is why pro-abortionists so vigorously oppose any requirement for an ultrasound prior to an abortion. Let me offer a personal example.

Ten years ago I was on the faculty at the University of Arizona medical school. After numerous requests, I was finally permitted to give a pro-life counterpoint presentation to a class of first-year medical students. During the planning of my presentations, however I was told that the use of a fetal ultrasound videotape would be “confusing” and “irrelevant.” A discussion of the First Amendment and its extension to academic freedom was enough to allow the use of the ultrasound images.

In the last two and one-half decades our ability to obtain clear images of the fetus has expanded the concept of the fetus as a patient. For example, unborn babies can be treated with medications for irregular heartbeats and receive blood transfusions. Indeed, blood flow patterns in tiny blood vessels can be analyzed using color Doppler techniques. Increasingly, there are surgical procedures that can benefit an unborn baby.

A frequent use of ultrasound is to evaluate the health of our unborn patients. In high-risk situations we recommend weekly ultrasound “checkups” that look for prenatal breathing movements and other activities.

There is inescapable schizophrenia when modern medicine works under an ethical construct in which a fetus is a patient **only** when the mother has conferred this status on him or her. The trouble is that this status can be withdrawn. But how can one fetus at five months deserve abortion when an academic fetus of the same age can undergo a blood transfusion in the next room?

Even abortion supporters are horrified at the possibility of abortions based only on the sex of the unborn child. But why is abortion for the most sexist of reasons any worse than abortion for any other reason?

Likewise, I am concerned by the degree to which modern obstetrics has become an impersonal technospecialty dedicated to the concept of “the perfect baby.” Much of prenatal diagnosis is designed to detect fetal abnormalities early so that the choice of abortion is available. The majority of these abnormalities, such as Down syndrome, are not usually lethal.

So far we do not have an overtly eugenic social policy but we are certainly encouraging family-based eugenics. This use of abortion will unquestionably further weaken society’s commitment to the disabled.

It is troubling that abortion is the only medical “procedure” for which supporters fear full disclosure. Many physicians suspect that multiple abortions lead to an increased incidence of future reproductive problems such as incompetent cervix which increases the chance of miscarriage. Even more concerning is the evidence linking abortion an increased risk of cancer.

The women of America have a right to a calm, factual presentation of the facts about abortion knowledge. The requirement for truly informed consent is long overdue.

History teaches us that medical leaders and experts can be fatally wrong. In the mid-19th century Oliver Wendell Holmes and Ignaz Semmelweiss clearly showed that lethal germs can be transmitted by physicians’ unwashed hands between the anatomy lab and the delivery room. They were both viciously attacked for their willingness to tell the truth.

Today many medical leaders are intent on making the health system into an efficient utilitarian tool serving the god of choice. Unfortunately, genuine compassion and caring will never come from such a system.

American medicine must awaken from the moral anesthesia induced by 25 years of unrestricted abortion. Just as the lithographs of slaves stacked like cordwood in the hold of slave ships led to the end of the British slave trade, I believe that ultrasound technology showing detailed fetal anatomy forces us to honestly face the fetal side of the abortion question.

Dr. Steve Calvin is a practicing perinatologist and co-chair of the Program in Human Rights and Medicine at the University of Minnesota. The program’s web address is www.umn.edu/phrm.

(By Steve Calvin, M.D. “NATIONAL RIGHT TO LIFE NEWS”, Jan. 1998)

A LETTER from a PRISONER for the PRO LIFE CAUSE - Saint John meets Jesus:

They were two fetuses. One fetus leapt with joy at being in the presence of another fetus (**Luke 1:41**). Both were human but one was also a Divine Person, the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity, the Lord God Almighty. That’s why the one human person fetus leapt at being in the presence of the second fetus. They were two fetuses. And one was also God, in fetal form--but completely God and man at every moment from the time of His Incarnation when the Word was made Flesh and God was conceived in the Body of Mary, and came to dwell in her womb. And blessed was the fruit of her womb -- for He was her God, this child of hers...THIS FETUS.

(by Joan Andrews, Women’s Correctional Institute, Claymont, Delaware)

PRAYER for LIFE by POPE JOHN PAUL II

O Mary, bright dawn of the new world, Mother of the living, to you do we entrust the cause of life. Look down, O Mother, upon the vast numbers of babies not allowed to be born, of the poor whose lives are made difficult, of men and women who are victims of brutal violence, of the elderly and the sick killed by indifference or out of misguided mercy. Grant that all who believe in your Son may proclaim the Gospel of life with honesty and love to the people of our time. Obtain for them the grace to accept that Gospel as a gift ever new, the joy of celebrating it

with gratitude throughout their lives and the courage to bear witness to it resolutely, in order to build, together with all people of good will, the civilization of truth and love, to the praise and glory of God, the Creator and lover of life.

(from "GOSPEL of LIFE" by John Paul II, Rome 25 March, 1995 - Solemnity of the Annunciation of the Lord)

A PRIEST IS

The priest is...

The man of prayer...

The life-giver to souls,

The witness to the faith,

The missionary of the Gospel...

And this, therefore, is his title

Humble and sublime: He is

The shepherd of the People of God...

The comforter of the suffering,

The father of souls, the confidant,

The counselor, the friend of everyone,

The man "for the others,"

And, if necessary, the voluntary and silent hero....

(by Father Houle, summing up the words of Pope Paul VI)

THE LEGACY of an ADOPTED CHILD

Once there were two women who never knew each other.

One you do not remember, the other you call mother.

Two different lives shaped to make yours one.

One became your guiding star, the other became your sun.

The first gave you life, the second taught you how to live it.

The first gave you up in love, the second raised you in it.

One gave you a nationality, the other gave you a name.

One gave you the seed of talent, the other gave you an aim.

One gave you emotions, the other calmed your fears.

One saw your first sweet smile, the other dried your tears.

One gave you up--it was all she could do.

The other prayed for a child, and God led her straight to you.

And now you ask me through your tears,

The age-old question through the years...

Heredity or environment--which are you the product of?

Neither, my daughter, neither, just two different kinds of love.

(“VOICES for the UNBORN”, Jan. 1998)

PUBLICLY CALLING ABORTIONISTS to REPENT

One of the most effective ways to stop abortion is to dry up the supply of abortion providers. This happens to a large extent by itself, as the already relatively small band of abortionists grows older and young doctors seem more

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reluctant to use their skills to destroy babies. However, the abortion industry aggressively recruits doctors for its purposes. Incidentally, this is a major reason for the push toward chemical abortions.

There are a number of things the pro-life movement can do to see to it that, although abortion is legal, fewer and fewer people will be willing to provide it.

One of these things is actually a very old practice in the Christian world: admonish the sinner. This one of the spiritual works of mercy. An aspect of charity is to alert the sinner to the harm that sin does to him/her, as well as to the victim. In fact, the Second Vatican Council, in the Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World, says that crimes like abortion do more harm to those who practice them than to the victims themselves!

Abortion is a public activity, and is publicly advertised. There is nothing against charity to publicly call for prayers for the abortion provider, by name, and to publicly call upon the abortionist to repent.

The demands of charity in this case include being absolutely sure that the person in question does in fact provide abortions, and saying nothing untrue about the person. They also include making it clear that we in the pro-life movement and the Church always have the door open to those ready to repent of child-killing, as so many have already done. Approaching the individual, and providing opportunities for confidential dialog, are activities that also need to be included.

Besides the repentance of the individual, however, there is another side to the activity of publicly admonishing abortionists that the Church cannot afford to ignore. Even when a particular abortion provider does not repent, the public identification of that person as an abortionist sends a clear signal to other abortionists and to those in medical school who might consider becoming abortionists. Perform this activity, and he/she will face the spotlight, with all the discomfort that entails! We have evidence that this works in dissuading actual and potential abortion providers.

One thing the abortion movement can never do is to remove the stigma from abortion. When we point out that specific people perform abortions, we capitalize on the biggest weakness of the other side.

It is interesting that many who perform abortions do not want to be called abortionists. Those who practice psychology are psychologists. Those who practice neurology are called neurologists. There is nothing unusual, therefore, if we call those who practice abortion abortionists. The difference, of course, is that abortion carries a stigma which no amount of money or power can take away. That is a fact we should use to our advantage.

(by Father Frank Pavone, International Director, Priests for Life, “VOICES for the UNBORN”, Jan. 1998)

PRO LIFE INSURANCE -- YOUR CHOICE

Not many of us have failed to curse the present condition of U.S. health insurance. Many policies provide coverage

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for abortion, contraceptives, and sterilization, all artifacts of the Death Culture. Every company we have examined, with two exceptions, will provide this coverage. Thus, **every policy holder, regardless of their own coverage, is subsidizing these great evils.** The two family oriented insurance companies, Valu Sure Corporation and Golden Rule, have actually combined to now offer Medical Savings Accounts, an efficient way to procure health insurance. Write to Valu Sure Corp, 3707 W. Maple Avenue, Bloomfield Hills, MI 48301. Call them at 1-810-594-8664. This is a door opening to family people.

(from "PRO LIFE UNION INC." June, 1997)

REFLECTION on the MESSAGE of 1/25/98

I greet you all and wish you a good New Year, also much strength and joy in following on the path to Jesus with Mary. Let us again think back to the Christmas 1997 message, and to ask ourselves the questions -- where is God in our lives? Is He in the first place? Have we done anything in the direction that Mary suggested to us? To place God in the first place. Is there goodness in our hearts? Can we offer peace to others? And it is especially important that we ask ourselves whether we wish goodness to all those around us. Do we have the inner strength, which comes out of love, to say to every person, especially to those who have caused us difficulties, "I wish you goodness", and to ask those whom we have wounded for forgiveness. This is the fundamental condition for peace. Mary also called us to be joyful and to extend our hands to Jesus who is goodness. I hope that our answer is positive. If not then we ought to think about it and again ask God that He may retake the first place in our heart, and that He may free us of everything that hinders us from letting Him do so.

At the moment Vicka and Jacov are in Italy, as is Marija. Mirjana and Ivanka are here in Medjugorje. As we know Ivanka has secluded herself completely with her family and she does not meet with pilgrims. She lives a quiet life, just as a mother with three children can also do. Regarding pilgrims, this is a really quiet time as always, but still there are smaller groups from Poland, France, Italy, England and Germany. I was in Poland from January 12 to 24 with two young men from Sr. Elvira's Community. Every day we had several meetings and there were many people wherever we went. Especially interesting was taking part in the Polish Radio Maria. It is a radio station that came about by way of experiences that people have had in Medjugorje, and today it covers all of Poland and has also gone as far as Russia, the Ukraine, Canada and the United States. It is a true work of Mary's, for they spread the message, they pray 3 Rosaries every day, and it is really 'Mary's Voice in the Family' as they call themselves.

Mary has again given us a message on the 25th of this month. We can easily just attach this message to the last sentence of the Christmas message in which Mary calls us to extend our hands to Jesus who is only Goodness.

TODAY AGAIN I CALL ALL OF YOU TO PRAYER

She is really untiring with us, as she also told us in a message. How often and how many times has she invited us to prayer?! I am certain that many people also try to respond to this fully. All over the world there are people who started to pray because they had made contact with Medjugorje, and who also are continuing untiringly to pray. Here I again wish to speak a bit about prayer. Prayer is a meeting with God, and for this meeting one needs time. The great excuse that we so often give is that I have no time. Let's not forget that this is never true when we accuse time -- there is time. The only problem is a lack of love toward God. The problem is our relationship toward God. Then it is important that we are careful not to let prayer become an egotistic activity such as when we need something, only then do we suddenly have time for prayer. When we are in need of nothing, then we do not pray. It is only possible with love toward God that we change our prayer. Prayer is also a language, and to speak a language one must simply practice. Among many Christians it has happened as it also has with many students in school -- they learn some rules and some grammar, but they do not practice the language and so it remains unused and slowly is forgotten. So here again Mary wishes of us that we decide for and then practice our prayer, here not neglecting the word 'again'. Now she tells us...

ONLY WITH PRAYER ... WILL YOUR HEART CHANGE

When we meet the good, the merciful, the loving God, then the good, the merciful and the good will also enter into our hearts. This then is the change in our hearts. With this change then we must become very conscious of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. In Him we will recognize how our heart is meant to be, when He says of Himself that His is of humble and mild heart. Then this too is the path for us to take and the goal for us to reach -- that we stay on the path with Mary. She will teach us the best how Jesus is, and how His Heart is. The Pope says in his 1997 Encyclical MOTHER OF THE REDEEMER that Mary can teach us better who Jesus really is than all the Saints together because she was His mother and His teacher. And therefore with Mary we are in the best school possible for us to come to know Jesus, so that we know His Heart, and that our heart may then also change. There is a saying, "Tell me with whom you associate with, and I will tell you who you are." ...and certainly also how you are. When we are with Jesus who is goodness, then we also will become filled with goodness. When we experience His mercy, His love and His peace, then our hearts too will open themselves to the same and our hearts will become similar to His. Mary also says that our hearts should...

BECOME BETTER

Today more than ever before, we need good people with good hearts. When one wishes to say something positive and kind about another person, quickly then we say that he has a heart. In the same way when one wants to say something negative, then one says that he has no heart. God has shown us that He has a heart for us, and this Jesus revealed to us. We need good parents, parents with hearts

and so too teachers, professors, politicians, and Presidents. We need people who have a heart. A teacher once gave her students the assignment to draw people. As she collected the work, she was astonished how the children experience the world around them. Many had drawn people skinny as skeletons, but with huge muscles. Others were drawn with a large head, while others were drawn with a large wallet. One or two students drew figures who had at their center a heart. Perhaps things are just this way, but they may not stay that way. Our hearts must become good if we expect the others to become good. The problem to...

BE MORE SENSITIVE TO THE WORD OF GOD

...is a constant problem for all of us. Mary expressed this same wish in last November's message when she said toward the end that our heart must become sensitive toward the Word of God. Immediately the question arises what it is that hinders us from listening to and from acting on the Word of God? These are the situations in our hearts and souls as well as the situations in the world. When we are, for instance, concentrating too much upon the material things, then we will not become sensitive toward the Word of God. When we have hate or jealousy in our hearts, then it is very difficult to expect someone to listen and react to the word, "Love and forgive one another." So, we must really work on our becoming sensitive to the Word of God, but even more so, we must pray for it. That is what is the most important, to try to hear God, and then also in meeting with others to react upon the Word of God. Every person whom we meet is in some way a Word of God for us. A poor person calls us to goodness. A sick or sad person, or a person who has lost the purpose for life is for us always a chance to hear the Word of God, and then to specifically to do something with that person. When we act this way, then we will certainly become good witnesses for God's love and mercy. In this message Mary again speaks of Satan's activities. In many earlier messages Mary spoke often of him and his work. Everything that she has said about him can be outlined in four points. She confirms that he exists. She tells us that he is strong and is untiringly in his efforts against sanctity and peace. She tells us that he brings confusion. To all this she says pray and have no fear, and then pray more and everything will turn out for the good. In another message she called us not to cooperate with Satan but to decide for the good. In this message she says...

DO NOT ALLOW SATAN TO PULL YOU APART AND TO DO WITH YOU WHAT HE WANTS

It is not difficult to discover or to feel what Satan wants of us. He wants us to cooperate with him in doing what is bad, and he also wants to hinder us from doing what is good. The mentality, which is so prevalent today, is one where in a way we become ashamed to do what is good, or when one lacks the courage to do so is already a beginning of his success. Or when a curse spoken on the street is more common than a prayer. This too is a success for what is evil. Many people look upon the negative among the others, and then rationalize it and allow their own sin or evil to occur. Then too it becomes Satan's success. He

wants to pull us, our hope, our love, our faith in God, our trust apart like a piece of meat. He wants to destroy our families, our communities, our Church and the whole world. Perhaps we ought to discover especially his work among the young, when so many young live without any kind of joy, but instead in complete sorrow. How many have lost all purpose in life? This is why they so easily fall into alcoholism, drugs, an immoral and irresponsible way of life. Every one of us, when we say, "it is not my responsibility or interest, someone should attend to that", is in some way cooperating with Satan. So we must give God the first place and then very consciously to work along with Him. We must be especially careful that what is bad does not become the norm, and at the same time that we do not become convinced that it is not worth fighting against what is evil. When such a situation takes hold in our hearts, then Satan has torn us back and forth, and he has won. This is clearly not what Mary wishes because she is the mother who with her child fights against what is bad. Everyone who wishes seriously to become a good student in Mary's school must decide to be against Satan and all that is bad, and to fight as St. Paul said "to the blood" so that Satan does not get the upper hand in our lives and in this world. This depends upon every one of us.

I CALL YOU TO BE RESPONSIBLE AND DETERMINED

Our responsibility goes along two paths. First of all to seriously enlist ourselves against all that is negative and evil in our lives and families, our Church and in the world. That we become responsible in our families when we as parents or as mother and father are responsible toward the children, when the children become responsible in school, when our leaders become responsible in politics for justice, for truth, and for love. Therein lies our responsibility, and in a special way our responsibility lies in that we decide for prayer, as Mary tells us over and over again. We must be careful in our decisions. Often perhaps we decide for something that is good, but then we tire and let it go again. The decision can come out of meditation that Mary asked of us in the message before Christmas. Whoever meditates and reflects will always discover what is important, and from what is important he will be able to make his good decisions, and the inner peace is then the assurance that we then also stay with the decision. Mary wishes us...

TO CONSECRATE EACH DAY TO GOD IN PRAYER

Here we are especially being directed to morning prayer where we must very consciously renew our decision to cooperate with God throughout the new day. That we very consciously bring to God all the gifts that we have been given, and that we will want to do everything that day for His glory and honor, no matter what our work may be. Everything ought to be consecrated to God. Once we have acted upon the Christmas message, meaning that God has taken the first place in our lives, then every day and everything that we do will become consecrated to Him. If we decide, for instance, to pray the joyful Mystery of the Rosary at the beginning of the day, then we have all necessary elements for our decision for God, and in so

doing we say to God, "I am here, Thy will be done." In this way we have then consecrated the day to God. Then we will also be able to meet the others as Mary met with Elizabeth. Then God will be born in our midst, and we will then praise God and become people of good will. Then we will also, as Mary did, offer our entire lives for the others, and were it to happen that we might lose contact with God, then, just like Mary, we will again easily find Him. Then Mary touches upon the center of our Christianity.

MAY HOLY MASS ... NOT BE A HABIT FOR YOU, BUT LIFE

This sentence is addressed most especially to those who only come to Mass on Sundays, but also to those who come more often. It is always a danger for us when we live something daily that we then forget or no longer experience how great something is. We easily become blind toward the good in the people around us, and in the same way, we easily become blind toward God's love for us that is shown to us in the Holy Eucharist. Jesus has become bread for us. He gives His whole life for us. He forgives us and He wishes to heal us. He speaks with us and he is Emmanuel -- God with us. This fact -- that God is so close to us and has become our daily sustenance -- should really engage us every day. We really should pray for the grace to discover this enormous love of God every day, and that this love then moves us to live in this same way. Only through Holy Mass, only through our meeting with Jesus as bread, will we...

BY LIVING HOLY MASS EVERY DAY, YOU WILL FEEL THE NEED FOR HOLINESS AND YOU WILL GROW IN HOLINESS

This then is what makes Mary say that Holy Mass ought to become our life. When Jesus forgives us in Mass, when He speaks to us, when he offers Himself for us, when we say before Holy Communion, "speak one word and my soul will be healed", and when we hear the word "go in peace", then we can, once we have left the church, say that our Mass begins for the others. When we forgive, when we speak of God, when we do something or say something good for the others, then Holy Mass continues throughout the day and then it also continues acting for us and through our lives then also for the rest of the world. Here we must be careful however because either we become holy through Holy Mass in being healed, or we become great egotists in that we wish to be healed, we wish to hear the Word of God, we wish to receive Jesus' body and blood, but then when we are outside we again do not wish to forgive, we do not speak of God, we do not give of ourselves for the others, and do not do or say what might heal the others. So, Holy Mass is really a great challenge for us Christians and therefore it should really not develop into a mere habit but rather into our real lives and a real assignment. It is here that we all find our responsibility and our decision, and only in this way can we consecrate each day and our whole lives to God. Then at the end Mary says...

I AM CLOSE TO YOU

It is now 16 years and 7 months that Mary is close to us and makes her pilgrimage with us as the Pope said in MOTHER OF THE REDEEMER. To feel her proximity is certainly a grace that was given to so many people here in Medjugorje, and only for this reason does Medjugorje continue and bring so many fruits in so very many souls throughout the whole world.

AND INTERCEDE BEFORE GOD FOR EACH OF YOU

Mary praying for each of us must be a consolation and a hope for all of us. And the intention of her prayer is...

SO THAT HE MAY GIVE YOU THE STRENGTH TO CHANGE YOUR HEART

What she has said to us at the beginning is here now promised by her, so she will be praying for this intention. We all know that she is our strong intercessor before God, and we hope that therefore really all hearts will be opening themselves and becoming better. Let us pray...

God, our Father, we thank You that You are our Father. We thank You that You through Your Son Jesus revealed Yourself as the good and merciful Father. We thank You for the humble and merciful heart of Your Son Jesus Christ, and we beseech You now along with Mary, Your humble servant, give us the strength so that our hearts will change. Take all hearts of stone from our breasts and give us new hearts. Take all hardness from us and give us Your goodness. Take the lie from us and fill us with Your truth. Take away all hate and jealousy and give us Your love. Free us of all mercilessness so that we may have Your merciful heart. We ask on behalf of all those responsible in the Church and the world that You may change their hearts, that they may become instruments of peace in this world. Send Your Holy Spirit so that He may bring order to wherever there is disorder, light to wherever there is darkness, and love wherever there hate reigns. And make us witnesses of Your love so that we may become responsible for Your Kingdom, and that we may choose the path with You. Lord, we ask You for the Pope, all Bishops, and all Priests that they may come to celebrate Holy Mass with love, that Holy Mass may become life for them. Call through Holy Spirit many young people for their service in the Church, so that they may grow in love for the Holy Mass. We also ask you for all those who come to Holy Mass that they may not attend it by habit but with love, and that everyone who attends Holy Mass may take Holy Communion in the way that will make his life a holy Mass. We beg You, O Lord, give us the strength that we may resist Satan, and that we may become strong in holding with You. Heal the faith, the love and the hope of all people, and especially those who at this moment are being pulled apart by Satan, and free all those to whom Satan is doing what he wants. Free us, our families, and the

whole Church, and especially we beg You for all those who have consecrated themselves to Satan, all satanic groups, free them O Lord, because only You are their God and their Lord! We ask this along with Mary, Your most humble servant, through Your Holy Spirit, and make us witnesses of Your peace. May it be this way.

Amen.

**Fra Slavko
Medjugorje, Jan. 27, 1998**

PRESS BULLETIN 81, December 31, 1997

TRUE ACCOUNTS

Always when one period of time ends and we begin another one, we like to give a full account. Yet we usually know the result ahead of time. We will do everything to make it look favorable for us.

The statement expressed here is confirmed every year when the world celebrates so-called New Year's. Success after success is listed in the public media. And so that everything won't look too dazzling and therefore unconvincing, there will also be some talk about the dark side of life. But still in the end it turns out that our orientation was correct and it will only be necessary to pay better attention next year.

And it seems to me that we had better really pay close attention. As mankind we have been driven into a corner. The theory of liberalism has opened the door to everything and anything. That way they are trying to hide the foundations on which alone mankind and all that it does can rest. Man is no longer a creature that lives on the earth, but a creature that is destroying the earth for the sake of his own convenience. Therefore, it happens that he is by himself driving himself into a corner where he is shivering before the events to come.

Such a condition is in no way pleasing to God. Through the Queen of Peace we are being continuously instructed how to come out into the light of day and not be afraid of anything. We are told to be happy, open, free, and to fully breathe life into us. We have a full right to that. He gave it to us when we were born and He does not want anyone else whosoever to take it away from us. Our Lady like a loving Mother convinces us of it. She leads by the hand so that we would once and for all start walking and comprehend that we can walk this earth with heads lifted high.

In the shrine of the Queen of Peace passing from one year to another is lived out in prayer and song. Joy is really present, only it is different from the 'joy' that dissipated song, food and drink afford. Those who experience this try to place the correct plus or minus sign to their own account. Maybe it isn't so nice, but it's the one that shows the way it is and for sure the next time it will be better.

Fr Miljenko Stojic

THE HUMANITARIAN ORGANIZATION "FRIENDS of the TALENTED"

"The Fund for the Talented" has been operating in Medjugorje for a full seven years. Its founders are people

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who wish to help talented young people develop their gifts and to serve the world with those gifts. The director is Fr. Slavko Barbaric.

With this small text we wish to introduce ourselves and show our aims and invite all associates with similar aims to cooperate. By cooperation new possibilities will be opened to all for working and helping young people on their way of personal improvement and development of the gifts God has entrusted to them, but not just for themselves, but for all people. This fund began its operation under conditions of war and has already helped many young people on path of life.

However, post-war conditions for many young people are very unfavorable both morally and materially and therefore even greater help on all levels is necessary for them. The concrete goals and tasks of the Fund are:

- financing and support of talented children, pupils and students;

- advancing the goals of the Fund for the purpose of stirring the right people by personal contact to set aside means for support and financing the talented.

- cooperation with university and scholastic establishments, with and other funds for the financing of pupils and students, with civic, religious, political and other organizations, and by personal contact with the right people, according to the statutes contained in the basic principles of the Fund.

During this academic year also we are regularly assisting 100 students at various universities of Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina, and we distribute a one-time assistance to families with two or more students. We also endeavor to be of assistance in special social cases.

We hereby heartily invite all organizations in the world with similar aims to contact us so we might be able to cooperate in this charitable effort.

Sincere greetings from Medjugorje.

Contact us at the following address or telephone:

"Friends of the Talented" Fund, Domus Pacis,
88266 Medjugorje, Bosnia-Herzegovina

tel/fax 00387-88-651-549 (daily from 09:00 - 13:00)

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PRESS BULLETIN 82, January 14, 1998

BLESSED EXISTENCE

The Queen of Peace already for some years in a row is speaking in the parish of Medjugorje and it has become like something completely natural to us. Children who were born at the beginning of the apparitions have already little by little become adults and do not know what it is like when heaven is not speaking. We and they are simply living at a blessed time.

How we will behave at a time like this, of course, only depends on us. Our Lady calls us to long for good. She does not tell us to graduate from expensive schools or to accomplish something significant in life, but simply tells us to form our heart in such a way that good spreads out of

it as from a clear mountain spring. Then both we and the world around us will change.

Today's world really does have to change. It has driven itself to the edge of the cliff. It is intoxicated with a consumer mentality and sees nothing else. For that reason it is consuming more than it is allowed. Earth's resources are therefore disappearing little by little and pollution of all kinds is piling up around us. What a price for progress!

Few of us have a chance personally to do something so things don't go this way still further. We can only consume less and nothing else. At least in that way we can ease the evil consequences.

Even if we cannot make important political and economic decisions, with Our Lady we can make some decisions of a different kind. They are far more meaningful than all the others. We can extend our hands to Jesus and from that act draw strength for everything else in our life. Then doing good will not be difficult for us nor will anything else be hard for us. After a decision like that do we really think that nothing will change? The ones destroying the earth are those who think there is nothing after this life and therefore today they have to grab as much as possible. Anyone thinking it over a little will see that they are wrong.

Those who believe make of this earth a beautiful habitat. They help God to bless it so that human existence on this earth will have a purpose. Having thought it over, many people have said that they want their existence to be blessed.

Fra Miljenko Stojic

VISIT of MEXICAN BISHOP

At the beginning of November 1997 together with a group of pilgrims from Mexico Bishop Lazaro Perez also visited Medjugorje. He is the bishop of the Mexican diocese of De Autlan Jalisco. In a short conversation with us he spoke about his experiences, first of all in his own country and of his impressions about Medjugorje. We here present his impressions about pilgrimage to Medjugorje:

"Medjugorje is very well known in Mexico. I heard of Medjugorje for the first time about fifteen years ago when Medjugorje first began to be spoken of a little. I have to be honest and say that when we bishops hear news about apparitions and similar phenomena we are cautious in our statements. Usually it happens that in the first instance we say that it is impossible, we want to immediately oppose it. We are always afraid to confirm news about apparitions immediately since we are afraid that this view of belief will be fragile and grow into fanaticism. That was my personal conviction at the very beginning. After that I went to Italy in 1985. I met with a married couple that had been on a visit to Medjugorje. From then on I began to be take more and more interest. Well, I usually said that it cannot be the truth. I held that after the apparitions in Guadalupe there could not be any more talk about other apparitions because Mary from Guadalupe was Queen of Mexico. But all the more and more they began to talk about Mary's mission here, about her talking through the

children. I was concerned so that some kind of religious fanaticism would not be created. My great interest began from that moment when completely by accident I came across the book of theologian Rene Laurentin in which he writes about apparitions in the whole world. I read the book with great interest just from the fact that the author was a priest and my former professor in Rome where I heard his lectures on Mariology. I thought that he was indeed a serious and well known theologian and that it was not a matter of fanaticism. For that reason I continued reading with still greater interest. In that book I found a very touching sentence in which Fr. Laurentin says: '...we are passing through a period during which ecclesiastical gardens have been become infertile and it was time that Our Lady come to renew them and give them a new freshness. . .' I came to the conclusion that the problems that exist in the Church are not solved and perhaps the pastors in the Church are responsible for that. I felt that I was one of them. We need more holy priests and pastors who are disposed to live according to Jesus.

Christ the Good Shepherd and the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus. All these events opened the doors to atheism, secularism, a consumer society, which together make a culture of values that are contrary to the teaching of the gospel. Reading the experiences of Fr. Laurentin I said: 'Certainly this is not some imagination, he is speaking the truth.' On one occasion I was conversing with a friend who was a theologian. He counseled me not to go to Medjugorje and said that he would not risk his theological honor. Fr. Laurentin told me that this type of theologian talks a lot about Mary, but does not genuinely love her. They use Mariology for teaching, but they do not have a felt relationship with Mary. All of this helped awaken in me a great interest in Our Lady although I feel that Our Lady held a significant place throughout my entire life. In the coat of arms of our diocese we have a star that represents Our Lady. I wanted that Our Lady's symbol by all means be put into the coat of arms of our diocese. After reading Laurentin's book my interest for these events grew all the more. In addition to that, I met with many pilgrims who had been to Medjugorje. Upon their return to Mexico they were religiously richer and more ready to live a life of doing good in the spirit of the gospel. All that shows the fruits of Medjugorje, even if the official Church still continues to look with caution at this phenomenon. I think that above all one has to pay great attention to the fruits of Medjugorje. At this moment I am here with 108 pilgrims from Mexico and already I can say that I have observed many good fruits.

I will invite my faithful to come to Medjugorje. It's too bad that it is so far away from Mexico. We have a well known religious culture, and devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary holds a special place. As the Second Vatican Council says, I think that Mary both prays and intercedes together with Christ and that is what I have experienced here in Medjugorje. This morning we talked with a visionary, Vicka. She presented to us Our Lady's messages on conversion, fasting, prayer, forgiveness and holy confession, about all these values that are gradually being

lost today. I personally believe the following: If Our Lady through Christ is endeavoring to quicken these values then that ought to be the fundamental duty of a priest, especially of us bishops. We have to tell our faithful that this world has a way of salvation because Christ is our way. Christ is our Savior and here we see that the Mother of Christ calls us to this: to enliven the values that lead to salvation. They are prayer, reconciliation, conversion, and fasting in such a way that we can be closer to the cross of Christ. In today's time as also then in the time of St. Paul, the cross becomes a sign of scandal and not only for unbelievers. Sad to say, the cross has become a scandal also for Christians. Everyone would like an easy life, people are afraid of trials, they try to remove the presence of the cross from sight. Therefore I think Our Lady wants to give us great advice: Renew all the removed Christian values, and especially prayer and you will experience conversion. All of us have to reconcile with God and the Church through the sacrament of holy confession so that if we sincerely reconcile with God we can more easily follow the way of Christ. To follow Christ not just in any way, but to be ready to take our cross and witness the faith of Christ.

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THE WHATEVER PRAYER

Give God permission to do what he wants to do in your life.

Remember Archie Bunker on the TV sitcom "*All In The Family?*" He continually mispronounced the name of their pastor. When his wife, Edith, corrected him, he'd toss his head and respond, "Whatever!" It was Archie's way of saying, "I don't care. It's not important to me." But here is another meaning to the word "whatever." In my life "whatever" has taken on spiritual significance. Let me explain.

"Have you ever heard of a 'whatever' prayer?" I asked some friends recently. No one knew what I was talking about. And that's not surprising. Your see, I coined the phrase myself...a "whatever" prayer. It's the kind of prayer the Holy Spirit has been leading me to more and more these days. In a "whatever" prayer I say this to Jesus: "Whatever you want, I want. Whatever you choose, I choose. Whatever you say, I'll do. Whatever you give, I'll receive. Whatever you withhold, I'll accept. Whatever you plan, I'll rejoice in. Whatever, Lord. Whatever."

This is an attitude that the saints call abandonment to divine providence or total surrender to God. My spiritual director tells me that this kind of abandonment and confident trust in Jesus is better than choosing one thing or

another. It's "giving God permission," so to speak, to do with me what he wants. If I'm really allowing Jesus to be the Lord and Master of my life, I've got to be ready to give up my will for his will, my plans for his plans, and my timetable for his as well.

When I was newly baptized in the Holy Spirit, I tacked up a note above my desk that read: UNCONDITIONAL SURRENDER. I knew I needed a constant reminder of what conversion to Jesus required of me. It's like signing a blank check and handing it over for someone else to fill in the amount. Kinda scary, isn't it?

Yet, because our Lord is so good and kind, surrendering to him is actually the most sensible and safe thing a person can do. When we place ourselves in his loving providence we can be perfectly secure. He's God. Everything belongs to him. And he knows how to care for his people, as the psalmist David wrote, **"In your plans for us there is none to equal you." (Ps. 40:5).**

A wise Christian friend once told me, "Patti, there's no limit to what God can do in the life of someone who totally sells out for him." And it's absolutely true. Just look at the Gospels and you'll see. A simple virgin named Mary became the mother of God. A carpenter named Joseph became guardian of the Redeemer. Simon Peter the fisherman became pope. A tax collector named Matthew became an evangelist. Mary Magdalene, a prostitute, became the first to proclaim the Resurrection. A persecutor named Saul became Paul, the apostle to the Gentiles. And the list goes on.

Every one of us who surrenders unconditionally, who signs the blank check, who abandons himself to divine providence, who prays that "whatever" prayer will be transformed beyond his wildest dreams. An antiphon in the Divine Office puts it this way: "Surrender to God, and he will do everything for you." Everything!

Perhaps the Holy Spirit has been reminding me of the importance of abandonment to God's will because these are such critical times in the church. The Lord needs people who are sold out for him, attentive to his voice, and willing to do whatever he directs.

As we begin a new year, it's time for a fresh start. The Holy Spirit is breathing over us, urging us to abandon ourselves completely. Let's say with all our hearts, "Whatever, Lord, whatever." Then watch what he will do.

After I taught our prayer group about a "whatever: prayer, a woman told me that she had just made a silent petition. It was one word, but it spoke volumes..."Whatever." Can you surrender?

(from "NOTEBOOK" by Patti Mansfield)

A LETTER of TESTIMONY - HEALING through OUR LADY QUEEN of PEACE - HOLY OIL of GLADNESS

Dear Kathleen,

I am writing to tell you about my father, Charles G. He has had torn cartilage and ligaments in his knee for over a year. An MRI study showed this. He is unable to have

surgery to correct it because of a serious heart condition. His knee had gotten so bad that he could not walk without a limp and he was falling a lot because the knee was giving out on him. Falling for a 79 year old man is dangerous!

I gave him the Holy Oil of Gladness from Medjugorje. About two weeks ago he started using it on his knee daily. My father also attends Mass daily, receives Communion daily, and says the rosary daily. About 1 1/2 weeks after he started to use the oil he was at Mass and suddenly was able to stand without pain, and walk without a limp. He was so very moved that after Mass he spoke with the priest about it (Father Murtha, at Saint Ann's Parish, Phoenixville, Pa.), who also was very taken aback by it.

My father could hardly get up the steps of the church without limping badly. His foot was dragging. He was falling. Since that day he has had no problem at all with his knee. He spoke with the nurse at his doctor's office who told him that it would be impossible for his knee condition to heal without surgery. We believe this to truly be a miracle. Thanks be to God!

I presented a bottle of oil to Father Murtha from you. Thank you for everything. May God bless you for the work you do.

Sincerely, Carol G.

*(*note we have received numerous calls regarding healings related to anointing with Holy Oil of Gladness. If you have a story to tell, please write us so we can share it. We will not use your name unless you give us permission.)*

PATIENCE

If lonely or forsaken,
By friends thou art forgot,
Thy Spouse, she doth remind thee
"Is one that changeth not."
When hope within thee wavers,
And distant seems the goal,
How patience winneth all things
She tells they weary soul.
That nothing in the wide world
is needful unto one
Whose happy soul possesses
God's own Eternal Son.
To drink the living waters
At any cost or price,
To quench thy thirst she whispers
"God only doth suffice."
O sweet, Seraphic Mother,
May these dear words of thine
Help to unite me closer
Unto my Spouse divine!

(from "ANONYMOUS")

GIVING UP PATIENCE for LENT

On the virtue I haven't got

Virtue is a shy plant, a night blooming cactus, a blossom not easy to observe but all the more beautiful on that account. If we have virtues, it may be better not to know too much about them in case we somehow imagine they are all our own work, rather than the fruition of all the love given to us.

Failings are rather different. Failings are the fascinating glimpse we get of ourselves now and then, like an unexpected reflection in a shop window. Whether shocking, sad, humiliating, or wryly amusing, they are always as rivetingly interesting as they are unflattering. (I had no idea I was like *that*; I'd always thought I was rather nice.)

For years, I believed I was placid, tranquil, one of Nature's contemplatives, who liked nothing better than a quiet afternoon. I thought I could wait with the utmost calm, peaceful, unruffled. I thought, in short, that I was patient.

Only gradually, and late in life, have I come to face the fact that impatience is actually woven into my being's fabric. So let me come clean. I am a toe tapper, a finger drummer, a watch glancer, a strider up and down station platforms, a looker out of windows, a "when's the mail coming-er," a basket case in a traffic jam, a worrier, a planner and list maker, a fanatically punctual person who has the conviction she is forever waiting for a world full of the Idle Unready.

For the reasons, I am easily bored, longing for the play, film, dinner party, conversation to be over because I am no longer amused. Even my relaxation has a certain briskness about it--an hour's walk, a swim carved from a busy day, a quick look at the news before it is time to do the next thing.

Beneath all this inflation--that person I've got to see, this thing I've got to write, that I call I must make--there is a sharp pin poised. It is the feat that I might go pop! Once, I uttered this dreadful thought to a psychoanalyst (who happened to be a Buddhist). "And would that matter so much?" she replied. For a while, her gentle sanity swung my prison door open. I might not exist in the way I kept pretending I did, and it would not matter.

There have been other times when the shades of the prison house of impatience have lifted. I once had a flu that kept me in bed for six weeks. The hours flowed by, unnoticed by me, partly because I felt too ill to care. I got up from that long pause a changed woman--temporarily.

Another chink of light came when I discovered deserts--the Mojave, Sinai, and the Great Sandy Desert in Australia. In deserts, as the Alexandrian Fathers noticed, there is nothing at all to do except the most basic human functions; into this vacuum of busyness flows grace. Occasionally, too, when I have been in love, the terrible need for justification has evaporated, and all has been peace and satisfaction.

The more I think about it, the more I see impatience as the very core of my spiritual malaise. To be patient means simply to have a vivid sense of eternity. It is not about doing, or proving anything, it is about being no more than

a significant drop whose passing is only an eddy on the surface. Yet within, the whole pattern of love is present, redemption already achieved. Within this love, it is possible to rest in utter relaxation as a content baby sleeps on its mother's lap.

Then question is: What difference does this make to my life now? I think it means a good many changes. It means swimming hard against the "time is money" culture, deliberately cultivating tracts of time and space to put myself back into timelessness.

It means moving from my little ego capsule into a bigger vision and, in so doing, recognizing my significance.

(Lying on a blanket in the backyard to watch shooting stars, I heard myself groan aloud as the realization came to me.) It also means working at the skills--cooking, sewing, housework, gardening, talking to small children, listening properly to one's friends--to rediscover the particular pleasures of patience.

It means, so far as circumstances allow, living with a lot of silence and absence of stimulus, steeping oneself in the blissful quiet like a sort of balm. It may mean giving attention to my overtired body. It certainly means refusing invitations, banishing busyness; it means not keeping up with the latest trends, and deciding not to be "smart."

Perhaps by not being so smart, I will have time to grow wise.

("CATHOLIC DIGEST" Monica Furlong March 1997)

MOTHER TERESA on PRAYER

"Jesus made Himself the Bread of Life in order to give us life. Adoration is the awareness of this living presence of Christ. And it's very important that we should be alone with Jesus, just as the Apostles, who saw Him in the flesh, alone with Him. In exactly the same way, we see Jesus in the Bread of Life. This being alone with Jesus is very important. It is important to speak to Him, to listen to Him, to love Him, and to be loved by Him.

You need a pure heart in order to hear God speaking in the stillness of your heart. And listening is also the start of prayer. **When you have listened and heard the voice of God in your hearts, prayer begins, and you answer God and speak to Him in the fullness of your heart.** And then you listen again, and God speaks. Then *you speak*, and *God* hears. This speaking and listening is prayer. That's why adoration is so wonderful, because God is always there to speak--and to listen.

Let Jesus pray in you! Yes, really, He must pray in us, because He knows what we most need. And again, in order to listen, we need a pure heart. A pure hear means stillness and inner freedom."

(by Mother Teresa)

OUR LORD'S SUFFERINGS

Be it known that the number of armed soldiers were 150; those who trailed me while I was bound were 23. The executioners of justice were 83; the blows received on my head were 150; those on my stomach, 108; kicks on my

shoulders, 80. I was led, bound with cords by the hair, 24 times; spits in the face were 180; I was beaten on the body 6666 times; beaten on the head, 110 times. I was roughly pushed, and at 12 o'clock was lifted up by the hair; pricked with thorns and pulled by the beard 23 times; received 20 wounds on the head; thorns of marine junks, 72; pricks of thorns in the head, 110; mortal thorns in the forehead, 3. I was afterwards flogged and dressed as a mocked king; wounds in the body, 1000. the soldiers who led me to the Calvary were 608; those who watched me were 3, and those who mocked me were 1008; the drops of blood which I lost were 28,430.

(from Benedetta DA S.S., Pope Leo XIII, 5 April 1890)

THE FIFTEEN SECRET TORTURES of OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST

((Revealed to the pious, God-loving Sister May Magdalen of the Sancta Clara Order, Franciscan, who lived, died and was beatified in Rome).

Jesus fulfilled the wish of this Sister who desired ardently to know something about the secret tortures which He endured the night before His death. "The Jews considered Me as the most wretched man living on earth so that is why:

1. They fastened My feet with a rope and dragged Me over the stepping stones of the staircase, down into a filthy, nauseating cellar.
2. They took off my clothes and stung My body with iron joints.
3. The attached a rope around my body and pulled Me along the ground, from end to end.
4. They hanged Me on a wooden piece with a slipknot until I slipped out and fell down. Overwhelmed by this torture, I wept bloody tears.
5. They tied Me to a post and pierced My body with arms.
6. They struck Me with stones and burnt Me with blazing embers and torches.
7. They pierced Me with awls: sharp spears tore My skin, flesh and arteries out of My body.
8. They tied Me to a post and made Me stand, barefoot, on an incandescent metal sheet.
9. They crowned Me with an iron crown and wrapped My eyes with the dirtiest possible rags.
10. They made Me sit on a chair covered with sharp pointed nails, causing deeps wound in My body.
11. They poured on My wounds liquid lead and resin and, after this torture, they pressed Me on the nailed chair, so the nails went deeper and deeper into my flesh.
12. For shame and affliction, they drove needles into the holes of my uprooted beard. They then tied My hands behind My back and led Me walking out of prison with strikes and blows.
13. They threw Me upon a cross and attached Me so tightly that I could hardly breathe any more.

14. They threw Me at My head as I lay on the earth, and they stepped on Me, hurting My breast.

15. They poured into My mouth the most immodest excretions, as they uttered the most infamous expressions about Me.

Then Jesus added:

“My daughter, I desire that you let everyone know these fifteen secret tortures, in order that every one of them be honored.”

“Anyone who daily offers Me, with love, one of these sufferings and says with fervor the following prayer, will be rewarded with eternal glory on the day of judgment.”

Prayer

“My Lord and My God, it is my unchangeable will to honor You in these fifteen secret torments when You shed Your Precious Blood. As many times as there are grains of sand around the seas, as grains of wheat in the fields, as blades of grass in the meadows, as fruit in the orchards, as leaves on the trees, as flowers in the gardens, as stars in the sky, as angels in Heaven, as creatures on earth: so many thousands of times may You be glorified, praised and honored, O most love-worthy Lord Jesus Christ--Your Holiest Heart, Your Precious Blood, Your Divine Sacrifice for mankind, the Holiest Sacrament of the Altar, The Most Holy Virgin Mary, the nine glorious choirs of Angels and the Blessed Phalanx of the Saints, from myself and everyone, now and forever, and in the eternal ages.”

(This devotion was approved and recommended by His Holiness Clement II, 1730-1740.)

Please make this *Devotion to the Passion of Jesus* a part of your daily prayer life. Remember also that by reverently offering the 14 Stations of the Cross one can still daily receive a Plenary Indulgence for a suffering soul in Purgatory.

There is an important prayer which is called the “Jesus Prayer” that can be said on each bead of the Rosary beads. It should be recited devoutly every day and is as follows:

“Lord Jesus Christ, have mercy on me, a sinner.”

Many beautiful changes have occurred through repeated use of this power prayer.

(from “RADIO ROSARY”)

PRAYER to the SHOULDER WOUND of CHRIST

O Loving Jesus, meek Lamb of God, I, a miserable sinner, salute and worship the most Sacred Wound of Thy Shoulder on which Thou didst bear Thy heavy Cross, which so tore Thy flesh and laid bare Thy Bones as to inflict on Thee an anguish greater than any other wound of Thy Most Blessed Body. I adore Thee, O Jesus most sorrowful; I praise and glorify Thee, and give Thee thanks for this most sacred and painful Wound, beseeching Thee by that exceeding

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pain, and by the crushing burden of Thy heavy Cross to be merciful to me, a sinner, to forgive me all my mortal and venial sins, and to lead me on towards Heaven along the Way of Thy Cross. Amen.

Imprimatur: Thomas D. Beven, Bishop of Springfield

It is related in the annals of Clairvaux that Saint Bernard asked our Lord which was His truest unrecorded suffering, and Our Lord answered: “I had on My Shoulder, while I bore My Cross on the Way of Sorrows, a grievous Wound, which was more painful than the others, and which is not recorded by men. Honor this wound with thy devotion, and I will grant thee whatsoever thou dost ask through its virtue and merit. And in regard to all those who shall venerate this Wound, I will remit to them all their venial sins, and will no longer remember their mortal sins.”

“Jesus, Mary, I love You, Save Souls”

PRAYER to JESUS

Jesus, I confess that I am a sinner, That I have done wrong in the sight of our Father. I'm sorry for my transgressions, and all the hurts I have caused you through them.

Thank you, Jesus, for dying on the cross and saving me. Because of what you have done for me, I acknowledge that I am a child of our Father, and you are my dear Brother.

Jesus, send me your Spirit, that I might live a life always pleasing to our Father and salvific for me and others. Thank you, Lord Jesus, for loving me.

(from “PECOS BENEDICTINE MONASTERY”)

OUR GOD IS a GOD of HOPE

Hope is one of the most beautiful words in the English Language. It is a good and joyful word because hope has to do with the expectation or confident desire of some good that is to be attained in the future. So hope points to the future in an optimistic way.

As Catholic Christians we must distinguish between natural or worldly hope and supernatural hope. Natural hope concerns some temporal good to be attained in the future. Thus a married man may hope that his wife will get pregnant and give him a son; or an investor may hope that his stock will go up. These are worldly hopes and we all have them. Hope therefore concerns a good that is not possessed, but expected to be obtained some time in the future.

The Christian virtue of hope is a confident desire to attain the face to face vision of God in heaven for all eternity. It is one of the theological virtues which are infused into the soul at baptism, along with faith and charity. It is important to realize that Christian hope is supernatural because its object, the possession of God in knowledge and love for all eternity, is absolutely beyond the capacities of our human nature. As a creature man has no right to intimacy with God in the sense that he can deal with God

as a father. such a relationship is a gratuitous gift from God to man in addition to the first gift of creation.

What Adam lost by his sin for all mankind, Jesus restored by his death and resurrection. Through offering himself to the Father as a propitiation for our sins, Jesus merited for us sanctifying grace which raises us to the supernatural level and so makes us children of God and heirs of heaven. All of these supernatural treasures are communicated to each one through faith and Baptism, and Baptism confers the right to the other Sacraments which either increase grace or restore it for those who have lost it through serious sin.

By faith we believe that God exists, that he has revealed himself to us in Jesus Christ, and that he will reward us if we remain faithful to him. Faith gives birth to hope because God has promised us eternal life and the means to attain it. Faith and hope give rise to charity in the soul which is a virtue of the will which desires the glory and goodness of God for its own sake.

The main point I want to make here is that hope is the basis of Christian joy. St. Paul says that we should rejoice in our hope (**Rom. 12:12**). IN another place he says that hope is our safe and secure anchor (**Heb. 6:18**). Hope is also a motive for patience in trials and suffering, because the Christian knows that God is in control of things by his Providence, that he is faithful to his promises, and that good will eventually triumph over evil--if not in this life that in the next life. It is for this reason that the Apostles (see **Acts 5:41** and martyrs who followed them could endure horrible sufferings and still remain joyful. Jesus Christ was their hope just as he is ours.

In our day a certain amount of secular humanism, promoting worldly hope, has invaded parts of the Church and some intellectuals. For them hope seems to be reduced to striving for an earthly utopia, while forgetting about eternal life. This worldly hope is not Christian hope. It is laudable for Christians to work for a better world, which they have always done, but they must not substitute worldly hope for supernatural hope--the desire for heaven.

Non-believers are without God and without hope (EPA. 2:12). We who are believers rejoice in hope and love of God. So thank God for the hope that is in you. Finally, St. Peter urges us: **“Always be prepared to make a defense to any one who calls you to account for the hope that is in you, yet do it with gentleness and reverence” (1 Pet. 3:15).**

(from **“HOMILETIC & PASTORAL REVIEW”** dated November, 1997 by Kenneth Baker, S.J., Editor)

TRUST HIM

Trust Him when dark doubts assail you,
Trust him when your strength is small,
Trust Him when to simply trust Him
Seems the hardest thing of all.
Trust Him, He is ever faithful;
Trust Him for His will be best,
Trust Him, for the Heart of Jesus

Is the only place of rest.

Trust Him, then, through doubts and sunshine,
All your cares upon Him cast,
Till the storm of life is over,
And your trusting days are past.

(from **“THE 101 TIMES”** dated Summer, 1997)

THE VALUE of the MORNING OFFERING of REPARATION

The jewels of the Church are those who suffer; those who carry their crosses and endure their penances while being united to God. Father Pio, the famed stigmatist, once said: “If you knew the value of suffering you would never give it up.” Whether an individual believes in God or not, a certain amount of suffering must enter every life. A person who offers his trials to God finds peace and purpose, even in his trials. One who does not unite himself to God becomes bitter and despairs.

Graces to endure our daily trials, can be obtained so easily by reciting this daily prayer, “The Morning Offering of Reparation.” Imagine the countless graces being lost in hospitals and homes for the aged by neglecting this prayer. Graces which could be used to free souls from purgatory, convert sinners and strengthen the Church.

In 1945, Jesus told Lucia, the seer of Fatima. “The sacrifice and penance I now seek and require is the fulfillment of your state in life and the observance of my laws.” Whatever your state in life may be you can sanctify all your daily actions if upon arising you recite sincerely the morning offering prayer. Through the “Morning Offering of Reparation” every act you do becomes a sacrifice. The word “sacrifice” means to make “holy.” Once you have made your morning offering you make “holy” every act you do throughout the day. Whatever trial God permits to pass your way during the day becomes a penance--whether it be work, bad weather, rebellious children, sickness in the family, tight economic conditions or misunderstandings by relatives or friends. All these sacrifices and penances obtain graces the Blessed Virgin needs for the conversion of sinners. At Fatima, when showing the children a vision of hell, Our Lady told them: “See my children, the souls of poor sinners because there was no one to pray for them or make sacrifices for them” If you do not say your morning offering prayer you have wasted the day as far as many graces are concerned and have lost opportunities to help in the salvation of souls.

One day a person visiting the shrine of Fatima, Portugal, was present during the blessing of the sick and afflicted. She saw before her people in wheel chairs, on crutches, lying on stretchers and cots. Moved with compassion for these afflicted, she closed her eyes to pray for them. While praying she envisioned souls dressed in white leaving purgatory and going to heaven. This incident clearly shows how the suffering of all those afflicted with the instrument God was using to free souls in purgatory.

Be sure to recite the “Morning Offering of Reparation” every day and try to renew it often throughout the day.

You can place this prayer by your bedside, on your mirror or on your kitchen wall as a reminder to say it. By being faithful to your morning offering, God will send graces upon you, your family, the souls in purgatory and throughout His Church.

(Source unknown)

WORDS for QUIET MOMENTS

Thus, anyone, married or unmarried, who lives with integrity towards God in the deepest level of their being may not, like Mary, bear the son of God in the flesh, but they can and do become like her, both virgin and mother, and will be God bearers to humankind.

-- Aelred Squire

When you hear a direct no in response to your prayers, remind yourself that there will always be a better yes. God is for you, motivated by a love so strong, so undying, and so wise that we have nothing and no one to fear.

-- Kathy Troccoli

In thy wind--in thy light--how insignificant is everything else, how small are we--and how happy in that which alone is great.

-- Dag Hammarskjold

If you desire to be really happy, you must make God your final and ultimate goal.

-- Thomas a Kempis

Jesus Christ has brought every need, every joy, every gratitude, every hope before God. He accompanies us and brings us into the presence of God.

-- Dietrich Bonhoeffer

Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable to You, O Lord, my rock and my redeemer.

-- Psalms 19:14

Love is an act of endless forgiveness, a tender look which becomes a habit.

-- Peter Ustinov

The essential beauty of each snowflake is not its texture or its pure whiteness or its silence on the delivery of its touch; it is the perfection of the filigree design, the intricate yet simple liveliness of it, its balance and proportion and rhythm. It is a symbol of the beauty of the law of divine love.

-- Caryl Houselander

In every real person, the will for life is also the will for joy.

-- Karl Barth

So much of what people call atheism is not so much the negation of God as the deification of the ego. All atheists believe in God, but the god is themselves.

-- Fulton J. Sheen

We have what we seek. It is there all the time, and if we give it time it will make itself known to us.

-- Thomas Merton

The sitting (academic) theologian must be in dialogue with the kneeling theologian.

-- Hans Urs von Bathasar

We do not possess our homes, our children, or even our own body. They are given to us for a short while to treat with care and respect.

-- Jack Kornfield

God warms me and makes me fat, and all the leanness of longing is put away.

-- Richard Rolle

"Just so, I tell you, there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who need no repentance."

-- Luke 15:7

Loving the negative in people. Loving it in the certainty that tomorrow the positive will prevail. Seen like this, the world no longer frightens me. Loving the negative in people, loving what is not yet in them.

-- Carl Carretto

Do not plan long journeys, because whatever you believe in, you have already seen. When a thing is everywhere, the way to find it is not to travel, but to love.

-- St. Augustine

A brother who committed a fault was chased out of the church by the priest. So Abbas Bessarion got us and left as well, saying, "I, too, am a sinner."

-- Saying of the Desert Fathers

The only ones among you who will be really happy are those who have sought and found how to serve.

-- Albert Schweitzer

Listen to your life. See it for the fathomless mystery it is. In the boredom and pain of it no less than in the excitement and gladness: Touch, taste, smell your way to the holy and hidden heart of it because in the last analysis all moments are key moments, and life itself is grace.

-- Frederick Buechner

The saints are the lights of the world, but the light which shines in them is borrowed.

-- Ronald Knox

I would rather walk with God in the dark than go alone in the light.

-- Mary Gardner Brainard

Christ condemns the sin, but not the sinner. His love for us is so much greater, his compassion so much broader, than ours for one another.

-- Johann Christoph Arnold

You must not only be suitably devotional and lead a spiritual life, but make it acceptable to everyone around you. They will certainly respect it if you make it helpful and pleasant.

-- St. Francis de Sales

I the Lord test the mind and search the heart, to vie to all according to their ways, according to the fruit of their doings.

-- Jeremiah 17:9-10

The way of human life is not the avoidance of pain: The way of human life is to move through pain into love, to see ourselves in the suffering of others and others in our own suffering.

-- Edmond Lee Browning

God speaks in the Gospels. God also speaks through life-- that new gospel to which we ourselves add a page every day.

-- Michel Quoist

The more we love God, the more we will want to love God.

-- St. Joaquina

What would you attempt to do if you knew you could not fail?

-- Robert Schuller

My commonest attitude is this simple attentiveness, an habitual, loving turning of my eyes to God.

-- Brother Lawrence

Whoever says, "**I am in the light,**" while hating a brother or sister, is still in the darkness.

-- 1 John 2:9

(from "CATHOLIC DIGEST" dated January, 1998)

PILGRIMS of FAITH MARIAN CENTER (PFMC)

We are not a store. We operate like a church pamphlet rack where you make selections and offer a donation based on value posted or received. We are NOW able to accept credit card payments. Please patronize your local Catholic Book Store as well as the **PFMC**.

See *November* or earlier issue of "**The PILGRIM**" for an order form with list of books available, or call us at (609) 768-9228 with your needs.

If you wish to order something from the **PFMC**, simply mark the items you need on either or both forms and mail your order to the **PFMC** with your donation check or correctly complete charge card information and signature.

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We appreciate the communication so that we can correct our mailing labels and list. ORDER and SPONSOR "**The PILGRIM**" for your favorite religious or priest.

BLESSED OIL

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

Read the articles in the *November* and *December 1994* issues as well as the **Bible** readings for the **Holy Week Chrism Mass** about Blessed Oil and Oil of Gladness.

Oil from **Medjugorje and other shrines** is a sacramental and should be handled as such. It is NOT the same as the oils blessed by the Bishop for official church ceremonies or during administration of the sacraments by a priest.

We request a \$5 donation per small bottle, this covers \$4 for the bottle, packaging and special handling plus \$1 mailing or postage expense.

BULLETIN NOTICES

We need YOUR HELP, with your **Parish Bulletin Coordinator**. Would you be so kind as to take the following BULLETIN NOTICES to your **Pastor** and / or **Parish Bulletin Coordinator** and ask them to publish these notices for your interest and because you an active parishioner has asked.

Thank you.

1998 Pilgrims of Faith Marian Center RETREAT CONFERENCE features **Father Robert DeGrandis**,
2/27/98 - 3/1/98.

Enjoy a weekend retreat from *Friday, 27 February 1998* thru *Sunday, 1 March 1998* at the *Four Points Inn* by *Sheraton*, Route 70 and Interstate 295, **Cherry Hill, NJ**. Daily Holy Mass, Perpetual Adoration, Private Rooms for Reconciliation, and much more. Call the **Pilgrims of Faith Marian Center (PFMC)**, (609) 768-9228, for information sheet and reservation form.

Pilgrimage to Medjugorje, 4/15/98 -4/23/98

Depart from **Newark** via **Rome** and **Split / Dubrovnik**, 4/15/98 and return to **Rome** for overnight on 4/22/98 and return to the **USA** on 4/23/98. Package price: \$1599 plus \$72 transfer fees. Call the **Pilgrims of Faith Marian Center (PFMC)**, (609) 768-9228, for information sheet and reservation form.

DONATIONS by CHARGE CARD AVAILABLE

We now accept **DISCOVER/PRIVATE ISSUE, MASTER CARD** and **VISA** for all donations to the **PFMC** for books, pilgrimages, retreats, and for **"The PILGRIM"** or the building fund.

This availability does not come without its cost to us. Every charge card use costs us about 3% of the total charged. Since we had to invest heavily in new equipment and must pay fees beyond the per charge cost to us, there will be 3% **PROCESSING FEE, non-refundable if credit is necessary**, added to each charge card bill that is processed.

AROUND THE PFMC AREA

CHILDRENS ROSARY

Friday, 20 February 1998 at 5:30 PM **Father Hartman** will lead the children in the Rosary at the **Dibrino Home**. Call (609) 273-5897 for more information.

1998 PFMC RETREAT CONFERENCE

Friday, 27 February 1998 thru Sunday, 1 March 1998 1998 **PFMC** RETREAT CONFERENCE at the **Four Points Inn** by **Sheraton**, Route 70 and Interstate 295, **Cherry Hill, NJ**. Daily Holy Mass, Perpetual Adoration, Private Rooms for Reconciliation, and much more. Call the **PFMC**, (609) 768-9228, for information not on the enclosed information sheet and reservation form.

RETREAT with DAVID HAGGERTY

Friday evening, Saturday and Sunday afternoon, May 29-31, 1998: Retreat with David Haggerty. **Pius X Retreat House**. Cost per person double occupancy of \$165 includes supper Friday and Saturday, Breakfast and Lunch Saturday and Sunday. Call **PFMC**, (609) 768-9228, for reservations.

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

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If there is no time to read it all right now, please put it with other reading material in a place where you can read at least an article per day until the next issue arrives.

We operate on divine providence and the kind donations of those who can afford to support us.

PRIESTS! Please note that **HOMILY** ideas have come from priests reading articles in **"The PILGRIM!"**



MARIAN PILGRIMAGE PRESENTATIONS

Keith and **Kathleen** are always willing to schedule presentations to prayer group, **Altar Rosary Society, Legion of Mary** or other parish group meetings. The experiences and continuation of ministry for **Our Lady** in this time of graces and manifestation of Our Lord's Mercy are shared through videotape, witness and/or slide presentations followed by a question and answer session.

There is no charge. Free will offerings are accepted especially for books, tapes and religious articles which are made available at the presentation sites just like they are at the **PFMC** which operates like a church book rack.

CALENDARS:

In February, the Church celebrates the Solemnity of **Ash Wednesday (25)**, the Feast of **Presentation of the Lord (2)**, the Memorials of **Saints Blase (3), Ansgar (3), Agatha (5), Paul Miki and Companions (6), Scholastica (10) Cyril and Methodius (14), Peter Damian (21) and Polycarp (23)** as well as the **Our Lady of Lourdes (11)** and **Seven Founders of the Order of Servites (17)**. Church calendars show **Presidents' Day (16)** and **Saint Valentine's Day (14)**. **DON'T FORGET the PFMC RETREAT CONFERENCE, 2/27 thru 3/1/1998**

In March, the Church celebrates the Solemnities of **SAINT JOSEPH, HUSBAND of MARY (19)** and the **ANNUNCIATION of the LORD (25)**, the Memorials of **Saints Casimir (4), Perpetua and Felicity (7), Frances of Rome (8), Patrick (17), Cyril of Jerusalem (18)** and **Toribio de Mogrovejo (23)** as well as **Blessed Katherine Drexel (3)**.