



# The **PILGRIM**

Vol. 9 No. 3

*Pilgrims of Faith Marian Center (PFMC)*

March 1998

*Our Lady's MESSAGE of 2/25/98 via Marija Pavlovic Lunetti and the Franciscans at Medjugorje*

*Dear children! Also today I am with you and I, again, call all of you to come closer to me through your prayers. In a special way, I call you to renunciation in this time of grace. Little children, meditate on and live, through your little sacrifices, the passion and death of Jesus for each of you. Only if you come closer to Jesus will you comprehend the immeasurable love He has for each of you. Through prayer and your renunciation you will become more open to the gift of faith and love towards the Church and the people who are around you. I love you and bless you. Thank you for having responded to my call.*

Father Slavko Barbaric's REFLECTION starts on page 11.

## A PRAYER

Lord Jesus, we stand here helpless and in need of Your healing and an awareness of Your presence in our busy over committed lives.

O Lord, in silence You speak to us so gently, and daily call us to Your arms. We thank You Lord, for placing Your healing hands upon each of us. We are grateful for your patience in waiting for us to lay our lives in surrender into Your most Sacred Heart. Take each day, Lord, and make it Yours.

Through the power of the Holy Spirit fill us with a renewed zeal to commit without our own convenience entering in. Help all in lay ministries to find the support, prayer and strength they need to minister to others. Allow Your priests to recognize that they are small sparks assisting in the fulfillment of the Church's needs in evangelization. Without Your help and the help of the Church Lord, they cannot survive to help our Holy Church grow, heal, and survive. Use them Lord, and fill them with all the gifts of the Holy Spirit. Use each of us feverishly without our permission. 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)

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

One of the greatest set of experiences for those who associate with and volunteer for the *Pilgrims of Faith Marian Center (PFMC)* the 1998 PFMC RETREAT CONFERENCE, FRIDAY thru SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 27, 28 and MARCH 1, 1998 really showed that "THE LORD HATH DONE GREAT THINGS FOR ME (Luke 1:49)"

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

The teaming of Dorothea DeGrandis Sudol with her brother, Father Robert DeGrandis, was indeed a double blessing for all the attendees. What Father explained scripturally and theologically, Dorothea brought down to her own experiences from her own life and her ministry to others. Father Michael Semana again touched everyone with his beautiful music and singing, and brought ministry to the Youth Track. Father Louis Marucci provide his gift of music on the harp, and was the tremendous example of a true vocation being lived in the adversity of multiple sclerosis. He brought new meaning of Mary's "yes" to all in attendance. One could hear a pin drop at his presentation. Father Brendan Williams brought to life the gift of reconciliation as Sacrament. Father John McFadden showed how the Holy Spirit where the Evil One has fomented such strife in the our lives. His prayer of deliverance was powerful and brought the opening of the conference with blessings of openness to listen and learn. Father John said the opening mass since Bishop McHugh was unable to come to the opening. Tom Petrisko and Tom Rutkowski cam all the way from Pittsburgh to share what they have experienced in investigating what has been going on in our world with regard to the visitation of heavenly beings particularly Our Blessed Virgin Mother, Mary. Their witness was dynamic and compelling, and challenged us to live Scripture daily.

The Young Adult / Teen track (ages 13-18) was fully booked with nearly 60 young people experiencing the love of Jesus Christ and the indwelling of His Holy Spirit. This was such a successful endeavor that it will be repeated next year with the possible splitting of the group by more age definitions. It was clear that the group got a lot out of the adult sessions but enjoyed the personal focus on youth issues.

The vendors put on great displays showing the fullness of diversity in religious articles and books to nourish our spiritual lives.

**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.

The dates and speakers for next year could not be confirmed before the end of this year's event. Father DeGrandis and his sister were pleased that we would invite them back and will look at their schedules for the last weekend in February 1999. We will publish the speakers and the dates as soon as we have them. Call (609) 768-9228 if you need additional information.

**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 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**.

**ABSOLUTELY LAST CHANCE TO JOIN OUR  
PILGRIMAGE of a LIFETIME - SEE the  
SHROUD of TURIN EXHIBIT in PERSON,  
VISIT PADUA, LORETO, MEDJUGORJE,  
SHRINE of PADRE PIO, CAVE of SAINT  
MICHAEL the ARCHANGEL, THE  
EUCCHARISTIC MIRACLE at LANCIANO 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 Spirit is magnetic. He has a beautiful gift of teaching and of sharing contemplative life and prayer. We have 8 seats still available for this pilgrimage. Full payment is due upon registration, and you will be confirmed and will hold a guaranteed seat, but you must respond **NOW**. 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** for afternoon tour and visit to **Basilica of Saint Anthony**. We will then stop at **Montechiari**, the site of **Rosa Mystica** shrine. In Verona we will visit the cathedral. 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 Ancona

On *Monday, 11 May 1998*, we travel by bus along the sea coast of Italy to the **Gargano Peninsula**, or spur on the boat, 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**

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**.

**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, AND \$79 TRAVEL INSURANCE, DOUBLE OCCUPANCY INCLUDES: ROUND TRIP AIR, BUSES, FERRY BOAT RIDE AND BERTH, GUIDES, HOTELS, ALL TRANSFERS, BAGGAGE HANDLING, BREAKFASTS and DINNERS THROUGHOUT THE PILGRIMAGE..**

A travel / cancellation insurance policy of \$79 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.

**Don't loose the opportunity by not registering soon enough.**

**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 \$150 includes *Friday and Saturday overnight in the Retreat house, Breakfast and Lunch and Supper on Saturday and Breakfast and lunch on Sunday.*

David Haggerty is an exceptionally well known Catholic counselor in the Delaware Valley, who ministers in the areas of family and marriage counseling. His healing ministry is gentle and filled with the Holy Spirit and Mary's loving mantle. Father Cadmus Mazzarella will coordinate Holy Mass and Confessions with David's talks. Father is the Spiritual Director at Rowen College, and is active in the healing ministry. He has helped many young people and ministers to all who seek prayer through reconciliation...

Individuals and couples are invited to make this silent retreat. There will be time for private prayer, and individual spiritual guidance during this retreat We have **limited** rooms available, and will require full payment upon registration. **PLEASE SEE INFORMATION SHEET AND RESERVATION FORM ON PAGE 23, FILL OUT AND SEND IN IMMEDIATELY.** Should you need more information please call the **PFMC**, (609) 768-9228.

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**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 Continental. 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 ADD ON 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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### **IN the SPIRIT of SAINT JOSEPH**

Saint Joseph is presented to us as an incomparable witness of that contemplative silence, full of listening to the Word of God, which emanates from the Gospels as the characteristic atmosphere of the house of Nazareth. Joseph's silence was an active silence, which accompanied his daily work at the service of the Holy Family.

Following Saint Joseph's example, may all believers achieve in their own life a deep harmony between prayer and work, between mediation on the Word of God and their daily occupations. May an intimate and vital relationship with Jesus, the Incarnate Word, and with His Holy Mother, always be at the heart of everything.

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### **PRAYER for UNION WITH JESUS**

*Come to me, Lord, and possess my soul. Come into my heart and permeate my soul. Help me to sit in silence with You and let You work in my heart.*

*I am Yours to possess. I am Yours to use. I want to be selfless and only exist in You. Help me to spoon out all that is me, and be an empty vessel ready to be filled by You. Help me to die to myself and live only for You. Use me as You will. Let me never draw my attention back to myself. I only want to operate as You do, dwelling within me.*

*I am Yours, Lord. I want to have my life in You. I want to do the will of the Father. Give me the strength to put aside the world and let You operate*

**The PILGRIM**

*my very being. Help me to act as You desire. Strengthen me against the distractions of the devil to take me from Your work.*

*When I worry, I have taken my focus off of You and placed it on myself. Help me not to give in to the promptings of others to change what in my heart You are making very clear to me. I worship You. I adore You. And, I love You. Come and dwell in me now.*

**(God's Blue Book, January 17, 1994)**

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### **IT'S a MATTER of MORALS**

Bryan Griffin's words have the ability to inspire the youngest among us, and the youngest among us have enough sense to recognize that the goodness and truth portrayed by leadership and cultural acceptance don't quite have a solid ring to it. "In practical terms," Griffen continues, "it is the battle between those who would preserve and extend the highest values of civilization, and those who would use the tools of civilization- education and knowledge and liberty and peace- to salvage those values."

One wonders if this won't be the Clinton legacy as we move toward the millennium. "It is the battle between the host and the parasite, between those who seek and those who drift: the battle between those who stand for something and those who will tolerate anything, between those who speak of good and evil and those who speak of Alternative Lifestyles, between those who find happiness in the pursuit of goodness and those who become miserable in the pursuit of happiness."

Look around, America. There's a lot of unhappiness out there. "It is the battle between those who draw the lines and those who draw no lines, between the life directed and the life merely endured: the battle between those who tame the worst within themselves and those who indulge it, between those who believe in purpose and those who believe only in freedom, between those who yield not and those who yield always."

**(by Monsignor Thomas McIntyre, Catholic Star Herald, February 6,1998)**

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### **SAINT JOSEPH WAS a CARPENTER but HE HAD a BIGGER JOB**

Saint Joseph may be the forgotten saint. We know so little about him. We hear of him in the first few chapters of Matthew and Luke. Then he fades out of sight.

In 1955, responding to the communist celebration of May Day, Pope Pius XII instituted the feast of Saint Joseph the worker on May 1. The Blessed Mother must have rejoiced when her husband's feast was placed on the first day of the month May.

Now, with the collapse of the Soviet empire around the world, the communist threat is much lessened. But we still can learn an important lesson from Saint Joseph the worker.

He was a simple carpenter, but don't think that being a carpenter was his most important work. He was the foster father of the Christ Child and that was surely his major work in life. Joseph didn't just stumble into that special calling because his bride had conceived. God the Father chose Joseph to take his own place as father of his only Son, Jesus Christ. Thus, Joseph is drawn into salvation history. He is no longer just Mary's husband. He is the guardian and protector of the Son of God, directly appointed by God. That was Joseph's Life work.

Perhaps we need to redefine our understanding of work. It is much more than just the way we earn a paycheck. God's greatest work of creation was us, yet he never got paid for it. Homemakers spend far more than 40 hours weekly working in the house, yet they never get paid. Parents work hard and even exhaust themselves in raising their children, yet they are never paid.

Work is the effort and energy we use to do something. For most of us, it is a lot more than just our job. Look to where you put your energy to identify your life's work.

Joseph was a carpenter, but his life's work was guardian of the messiah. So, too, with many of us. We are not just salesmen or secretaries. We have other, more important works that take our energy and effort.

Like Joseph, we are called to be guardians of the people in our lives, especially the children. Christ continues to live in all these people. We should be as trustworthy as Joseph in guarding the Christ whom we meet in others.

Joseph's life work was protecting the Christ Child. Parents especially should protect and guard the children in their family. Don't lose yourself in your work to the point that you neglect your children. It really doesn't make sense to work 70 hours a week so you can afford a Florida vacation with the family. Forget the vacation and spend the extra time with the kid. They will always remember the time you spent with them.

For parents, their most important duty is to their children. They are more important than a parish council meeting or your Legion of Mary or Marriage Encounter. They are certainly more important than your job. So many influences are destroying their happy times and denying them their carefree years of childhood. Protect your children from the harsh realities of life in America in the 1990s.

Put your energy and effort into what is really important, especially the children in your life. Don't let your paycheck control your understanding of work. Our life's work should bring us to life. It is more than just a job. It is a vacation, our mission in life. It can heal us and bring us purpose in life. Make it a reflection of your faith, your integrity, your ideals.

Certainly as we come to the start of the pleasant weather, let, Saint Joseph the Worker remind us that some things are more important than our job...leisure, faith, family, friends.

*Father Murray is rector of San Alfonso Retreat House, West End.*

("THE MONITOR", May 1, 1997)

## MARRIAGE PREPARATION

Last Sunday *The Philadelphia Inquirer* ran a very informative article on marriage preparation programs in the Diocese of Camden and Wilmington and the Archdiocese of Philadelphia. Marriage preparation programs are becoming longer in duration and more carefully directed to the needs of the couples. Actually, the Catholic Church has a long history of marriage preparation. It is based on the Church's belief that marriage is a sacrament, a God-given vocation, and for each couple, a part of God's plan. The content of pre-marriage instruction has always been focused on the sacred nature of marriage and the fundamental qualities of Christian marriage—unity, fidelity, indissolubility and responsible parenthood. But those in the marriage apostolate also recognized that engaged couples needed time and opportunity to reflect on their relationship and the demands that marriage and family life would bring. As a result, what had originally been a brief session with the parish priest "to fill out the papers," which was, to set the date and obtain the basic information about the religious background and freedom to marry of the two partners, gradually became a series of meetings which also included married couples and specialists in fiscal management, medicine and psychology.

The new programs stretch over a six-month to one year span and involve meetings with married couples who speak from personal experience more than professional background. The meetings are informal dialogues, allowing the engaged couples to raise their own concerns and to take away some sound advice they can discuss in terms of their own relationship.

No doubt one of the factors that has prompted the emphasis on marriage preparation has been the increasing rates of divorce in the United States. There have always been difficulties for some couples, but there have also been

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clergy, marriage counselors, doctors and lawyers who helped people resolve their problems. More and more though we see couples walk away from their marriages after only two or three years, with no attempt to seek outside help to stabilize and strengthen the relationship. And for some, no matter how good the counselors are, it becomes clear that the problems are too complex and the breakdown is too deep to be repaired. In effect, there are some marriages that should never have taken place.

There is still some resistance to marriage preparation on the part of some couples. Priests tell of couples who assume that all they need to do is call the Rectory and arrange a date for the wedding. Others are uncomfortable with the questions about religious practice. Increasingly, couples want a priest "to perform their wedding" at a restaurant, a hotel or on the beach.

But a wedding is different from a marriage. The wedding is a brief, highly public, easily forgotten ceremony that too often involves many details of no serious consequence—indeed, often nothing more than irrelevant distractions. For Catholics the centerpiece of the wedding is the Nuptial Mass or marriage ceremony at which the vows are exchanged and the sacrament is conferred. The Catholic wedding is a solemn proclamation of faith and trust in God's providence. It is a promise of mutual love and fidelity, and also of deepened commitment to a life together in faith and hope. Limos, gowns and tuxes, receptions and photo-ops, honeymoons, all take time, planning and considerable expense, but they do not insure marital success or happiness. Too often priorities are out of balance. A couple sets the wedding date after lining up the reception hall, and then, some months later calls the Rectory to arrange the wedding. Occasionally, someone else has already reserved the church and there is great unhappiness as the plans have to be revised.

The longer and more comprehensive marriage preparation programs allow a couple to think about their marriage and the more important plans for their life together. It helps them see the need to strengthen their values, to clear away some of the non-essentials in their relationship, to set clear and mutually agreed on priorities. It also gives them a chance to see how the Church's teaching on marriage and family life enriches them and solidifies their commitment.

As I read the Inquirer story I could see another value to the new programs. Recently a research group issued a report on the poor approach to marriage and family life presented in some college textbooks. For many young people, this is the only thing they learned academically. The report was a good warning signal. But the hostile reaction from academic specialists surprised me. The critics included persons who had written books on divorce or on gender issues. Many argued that marriage is undergoing change and so we have to accept divorce, adultery, living together, children out of wedlock and one-parent families. No doubt these all occur, but it's pretty sad stuff to give young people who out to have some hopes and dreams.

The new programs are promising. They are carefully and competently planned, rich in the knowledge of human experience and based on faith in God and the grace of the sacrament. They give a couple time for reflection, dialogue and the strengthening of their love and relationship. Most of all, they also have a proven record of success.

(From Bishop James T. McHugh, "Catholic Star Herald,"  
February 13, 1998)

## COME, HOLY SPIRIT

*"When Jesus promised the Holy Spirit He told His apostles and all of us to pray for this grace. The Holy Spirit has come but we must continue to pray that our souls may be open to receive the Holy Spirit and that we may become better instruments to bring His gifts of Peace, Love and Healing to the world.*

*As you pray this prayer please include in your intentions the Healing and Restoration Ministry. Pray that God may use this Ministry to bring His Peace & Healing to the World. Pray with us for all those sick and suffering who seek our help and prayers."*

Let us turn our minds and our hearts to God who is the answer to all our problems. May the love of God, our Father bless us. May Jesus be our Lord, our Savior and our Good Shepherd. O Holy Spirit, fill us with Your graces and gifts. In the words and sentiments of the church, we ask Your help.

Come, Holy Spirit, and direct on our minds and hearts and on our bodies and souls, the rays of Your light.

Come, Father of the poor!

Come, Giver of God's gifts!

Come, Light of men's hearts!

Ever kind Paraclete, visit our souls. In Your gracious visits, bring us Your consolation and relief in our sickness, suffering, fear and turmoil. Fill us with Your divine consolation.

In life's temptations, fill us with Your Divine Power. In life's sorrows, fill us with hope and peace. In all of life's problems, be with us as our Advocate.

Come, Holy Spirit, we need You. Without Your and Your divine help, we can do nothing good and everything in our life is sinful.

Be our guide, our light, our consolation and our strength.

Forgive us our sins! Wash clean our sinful souls and make them Your temples! Fill our minds with Your peace and joy! Heal our broken and sick bodies! Heal our broken hearts! Soften our hard hearts! Give us a new heart, filled with Divine Love!

Let our hearts filled with Divine Love be Your fountains to bring this living water of Divine Love to thirsting souls.

Give us a new spirit. Breathe on us Your spirit of wisdom, understanding, fortitude, knowledge, counsel, piety and fear of the Lord.

O Holy Spirit, fill us with Your charismatic gifts. Grant us that special charism Your Wisdom knows is best suited to our talents and personality. Through this charism use us to build up God's Kingdom.

O Holy Spirit, grant us a spirit of Love, Joy and Peace. Give us a spirit of kindness, goodness and gentleness. Impart to us a spirit of self-control, so that all we do or say may be directed to the glory of Our Heavenly Father.

O Holy Spirit, grant us Your gift of healing. May this healing bring us wholeness in body, mind and soul and make us Your instruments to bring healing to others by our prayers.

O Holy Spirit, grant us the greatest of all healings -- the grace of a happy death. It was You, O Holy Spirit, who entered into the tomb of Jesus, on the first Easter. It was Your Divine Power that brought Jesus back to His Glorious Resurrection. Let us share in the Resurrection Victory of Jesus. Let us share in His victory over sickness, sin, death, every evil and every power of the devil now and eternally.

O Mary, the Mother of Jesus and our mother, pray for us. Pray with us and for us as with the apostles and disciples in the first Pentecost. Pray that we may experience a new Pentecost in our own lives, in the church and throughout the world.

May we go forth as instruments of the Holy Spirit filled with Divine Wisdom and Power to bring God's Love and Healing to the world. Pray for us poor sinners, O Mary, that like you, we may be God's instruments to bring His peace and healing to the world. Be to us always a loving Mother of Perpetual Help.

(by Ricardo Bretto and Debra Bohin)

## THE HOLY FAMILY and the FIAT of SAINT JOSEPH

We all know about Mary's *fiat*: "Let it be done to me according to your word" (Lk. 1:38). But what about Saint Joseph? The Holy Family of Nazareth, the prototype and example for all Christian families, would not have become the universal model of the "domestic Church" unless Saint Joseph--like the Blessed Virgin Mary--had agreed to make the Will of God his own.

At the moment of the Annunciation, Mary was "betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David" (Lk. 1:27). Under Jewish law, betrothal (*qiddusin*) conferred upon a couple that status of husband and wife. Any child conceived during the betrothal period was considered to be legitimate unless the child was disowned. The couple's marriage was regarded as incomplete, however, until the husband "took possession" (*nissu'in*) of his bride by taking her to his home (see Fr. A. Jones, "The Gospel of Jesus Christ according to Saint Matthew," in *A Catholic Commentary on Holy Scripture*, Nelson and Sons, 1953, p. 855). Following her three-month stay with Elizabeth, Mary returned "to her own house" in Nazareth (Lk. 1:56), and it was only then--before Mary and Joseph

"came together" in one household--that "she was found to be with child" (Mt. 1:18).

With respect to the perplexing situation which now confronted Joseph, there were three possible courses of action for him to take. The Mosaic law (cf. Deut. 24:1) permitted a man to divorce his wife if he found in her a "shameful thing," and adultery was the clearest case. Joseph, therefore, could have referred the matter to the village court in Nazareth. However, he had already recognized the holiness of his wife, and he was aware of the facts concerning her pregnancy. It was also open to Joseph simply to celebrate the *nissu'in* and take Mary into his home, thereby acknowledging her child as his own. But this solution, as Fr. Jones notes in his commentary on Saint Matthew's Gospel cited above, would have put Joseph in a false position publicly, given his understanding at the time.

Instead. "Joseph, being a just man and unwilling to put her to shame, resolved to send her away quietly" (Mt. 1:19). This would be accomplished in private by giving Mary a bill of divorce before two witnesses, without recourse to court. Thus Joseph opted for this third solution, one might say, almost by default, and it was still "while he thought on these things" (in Msgr. Ronald Knox's translation, hardly had this thought come to his mind") that an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, Son of David, do not fear to take Mary your wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit; she will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins" (Mt. 1:20-21).

On the strength of this revelation, with the circumstances of Mary's virginal conception of Jesus now clear to him, Joseph swiftly and decisively accepted the will of God and assumed his responsibilities as the husband of Mary (by completing their marriage under Jewish law) and as the earthly father of Jesus (by accepting the unborn child and naming Him after His birth): "So Joseph, arising from

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sleep, did as the angel of the Lord had commended him and took unto him his wife. . . . And he called his name Jesus” (Mt. 1:24). Fr. Jones points out that Joseph could now adopt this course without scruple, “because the child, although not his, was his more than any man’s. It was the child of his betrothed.”

Commenting on this *fiat* of Joseph, who thereby became the “Guardian of the Redeemer,” Pope John Paul II observes in his apostolic exhortation *Redemptoris Custos* (no. 4):

One can say that *what Joseph did* united him in an altogether special way to the faith of Mary. *He accepted* as truth coming from God *the very thing that she had already accepted* at the Annunciation. [Vatican II] teaches: “ ‘The obedience of faith’ must be given to God as He reveals Himself. By this obedience of faith man freely commits himself entirely to God, making ‘the full submission of his intellect and will to God who reveals,’ and willingly assenting to the revelation given by Him” (citation omitted). *This statement, which touches the very essence of faith, is perfectly applicable to Joseph of Nazareth.*

Like Mary, Saint Joseph had been chosen from all eternity for his role in salvation history. God desired that this “just man” (Mt. 1:19) become the Head of the Holy Family by accepting the grave and humanly paradoxical responsibilities of Spouse of the Mother of God and Foster Father of the Son of God (three of his titles in the Litany of Saint Joseph). Had he chosen to rely upon natural explanations for Mary’s condition, Joseph would not have taken the steps necessary to assume these duties, and the Savior of the world may have grown up without a father on earth. But the angel had told him not to fear, for as Mary’s adopted “son” Saint John the Evangelist (cf. Jn. 19:26) later was to declare, “Perfect love casts out fear” (1 Jn. 4:18). And so in an act of perfect love, Joseph said “let it be done,” but the carpenter said it with actions which spoke far louder than words. The *fiat* of Saint Joseph brought about the formation of the Holy Family, whose members are always ready to assist other families in fulfilling their fourfold mission, as outlined in *Familiaris Consortio* (no. 17), of forming communities of persons, serving life, participating in the development of society, and sharing in the life and mission of the Church. His *fiat* is what gave Jesus Christ, “the one Savior of the world,” a home, where He could “grow and become strong, filled with wisdom” (Lk. 2:40).

(“LAY WITNESS”, John F. Wagner, May, 1997)

## HOW TO BE A REAL MAN

### Catholics should consider Saint Joseph

Sometime after I was old enough to understand what the word *virgin* meant, I began to wonder about Saint Joseph’s role in the morality picture.

At the coed Catholic high school I attended, the nuns taught us that sexual conduct could lead to everything

from pregnancy to the eternal damnation of our date’s soul, should he, for example, happen to die in a car accident on the way home. Moreover, they said, it was up to the female to hold the line (that is, good Catholic girls didn’t do “it”).

So we endured pre-prom dress inspections that ensured we didn’t bare more of our bodies than vulnerable male hormones could withstand. And of course, we were given the Virgin Mary as our perpetual model of behavior. But I began to wonder: *Who did our dates have to imitate?* As far as we knew, Jesus never dated.

Later, taking courses at a Catholic women’s college on the Bible, adolescent psychology, and marriage, I wondered even more why Catholic males had been so abandoned when it came to supernatural help. There were, after all, patron saints for soldiers, gardeners, and river crossers. But apparently, no one special looked after ripening or overripe males.

Immediately, I thought of Saint Joseph. Wouldn’t it have been a struggle to maintain a celibate relationship with Mary? For sure, he knew how tough it was to love up close but not too personal. Yet we’ve never heard: “For males being tempted, pray for us, O Virgin Saint Joseph.”

Over the years, these random thoughts stayed with me, surfacing occasionally as I heard increasing concern that the needs and views of women are often discounted--if not totally ignored. I also realized that with the absence of a male sexual role model, there’s been a void in emphasizing commitment to responsible husbandhood and fatherhood. Half an essential human equation, it seems, has been overlooked, while implicitly placing responsibility for sexual conduct and consequences on the other half.

Then, in Beijing, China, at the United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women, the Vatican’s representative expressed concern about possible weakening of the traditional roles of women as wives and mothers. When, I wondered in disbelief, will representatives of the Vatican express parallel concern about the roles of men as husbands and fathers?

Indeed sociologists and psychologists increasingly cite the absence of men committed to their families as a major factor in some of the most significant social problems of our times: teenage pregnancy, abortion, single-parent households, domestic violence, children living in poverty, and adolescent criminal gang memberships. Yet there has been a scarcity of sermons on issues of male responsibility: the need to be present, involved, and supportive whenever a pregnancy occurs; the deplorable nature and moral gravity of domestic violence; and the moral imperative to provide adequate, regular financial support for dependent children.

We Catholics need to hear in our Church that male responsibility is not something to be avoided or given lip service, that moral standards are not gender-dependent.



Instead of sending mixed signals when the Church upholds only Mary as a virgin, let's emphasize Joseph's virginity, too. When we honor Mary as the Mother of Jesus, let us equally esteem Joseph as the earthly mentor of his foster son.

Without a doubt, our society needs to receive a powerful dose of "admiration." We need strong, committed, faithful husbands and fathers to be praised, emulated, and put on pedestals. We need to give teenage males moral role models and to acknowledge that husbands and fathers need encouragement and inspiration as much as wives and mothers do.

For all this, pray for us, Saint Joseph--whether in your virginal, spousal, or paternal state.

**("CATHOLIC DIGEST", Patricia Schudy, March 1997)**

## **FATHER and JESUS**

Our Lord and God, Jesus Christ, Who was with the Eternal Father in the creation of the world, called Saint Joseph *Father* when He came into the world. For this is too awesome a reality to pass over so quickly. Our Lord did not do so only ceremoniously or perfunctorily, as though merely out of regard for His Foster Father as the husband of His true and natural Mother. Rather, saints in countless number insist He loved Saint Joseph as His earthly Father scarcely any differently than He loved Mary, who was, in every sense and meaning of the word, His Mother. And indeed He loved him--loves him now!--above all other creatures after the most holy Virgin. As just one proof of this we need only to consider that Jesus is the only Person Who, being born into the world, could choose His earthly father. From all mankind He chose Joseph, "*and was subject*" to him (Luke 2:51).

Sacred Scripture teaches: *Gloria filiorum patres eorum--*"The glory of the sons are their fathers." (Prov. 27:6). How incomprehensible great, therefore, must have been Saint Joseph's glory, if Jesus chose to be known in the world as his Son!

We are assured, in short, that Saint Joseph was to Christ Our Lord, the God-man, a father in every respect, excepting natural generation, such that the following verse from Holy Scripture well may be applied to the Head of the Holy Family as much as to the First Person of the Blessed Trinity: *I will be to Him a Father, and He shall be to me a Son.* (Heb. 1:5.)

**("FROM THE HOusetops", Serial No. 39, 1997)**

## **GIVING A CHILD UP for ADOPTION IS A PAINFUL EXPERIENCE**

I was leaving the hospital one recent Sunday afternoon, just after anointing a dying man. A woman stopped me on my way across the lobby. "Are you nondenominational?" she asked.

"No," I answered to this rather odd question, "I am a Catholic."

"You'll do," she said. I looked puzzled.

She followed up. "Can you say an adoption prayer? There is a couple giving up their baby for adoption. They need, like, a prayer." She was from the adoption agency.

I followed her to the maternity ward where a young couple was about to give up their 2-day-old baby. the adopting parents were standing by in the waiting room.

When we got to the room, I saw a teenage boy and girl seated by the window. An older couple probably the new baby's grandparents, were standing near the bed.

They all were looking at the new baby, a darling baby boy with a full head of dark hair. The name they had given him was "Matty." The new mother was crying. It was a painful moment.

The parents couldn't have been more than 19 years old. The father looked especially young because he still had his teen age skin problems. the mother looked frightened. They had not finished their education. They were not married. They could not support this baby. they knew this was the right decision for everybody. But it still hurt. I T'S A OF MORALS

It was true love.

Real love is concerned not with its own welfare but with another's. These young people had learned that lesson. They were worried about the baby and its future, not what would be the easiest for them.

I praised them for giving the child a chance for life. I also praised them for recognizing that they could not care for this tiny, perfect little boy.

I told them that they would give enormous joy to an older couple that may not be able to have children of their own. That no one could give a greater gift than they were giving and God would bless their selfishness.

I told them of the many people looking for children to adopt and of the great difficulty in finding healthy children of adoption. I mentioned that one in eight couples has fertility problems.

I know that none of this could console them for their loss.

In the prayer I asked God to send a holy angel to watch over this child and preserve him into life eternal. We prayed that some day he might know the great love that his birth parents had for him that caused them to think of his welfare not their own desires.

I praised God for this miracle of life and prayed for all infertile couples who desired to become parents. We finished with the Our Father together.

The young mother and father nodded along through the prayer, brushing back tears. At the end they collapsed into a hug of each other and the baby, sobbing as he was about to be carried away.

The image of the couple stays with me. They had done a courageous thing. They had, no doubt, matured a lot through what they had suffered.

They had learned that love is not without cost and that every Christian carries the cross. They also had learned what a tremendous gift from God every life is.

I am sure they will be better parents for this experience.

Of course the pain of abstaining from sex would have been less than the pain of giving the baby away. But I was glad they had walked the path to life.

**(by Father Peter Daly "The Monitor" January 29, 1998)**

## **BLESSED SACRAMENT PRAYER**

Jesus, increase our faith in Your Real Presence in the Blessed Sacrament, the mystery of faith, that like the disciples who came to know You 'in the breaking of the Bread', we may come to know You in the Eucharist in an intimate and personal way with a deep and living faith that grows to 'conviction about the things we do not see' and enables us to experience the sweetness of Your Love "which surpasses all knowledge."

We pray through the Immaculate Heart of Mary that You help our parish and all parishes to become a faith community by responding to Your appeal to be loved day and night in this most Blessed Sacrament, where You call us to "pray without ceasing", for this is where You, Our Risen Savior, dwell, helping us by the power flowing from Your resurrection to share in the pattern of Your sufferings, that we may share also in the glory of Your resurrection.

On each bead of this mystery, deepen our union with You until our single-hearted prayer becomes "ALL I WANT IS TO KNOW CHRIST JESUS."

**("THY KINGDOM COME", Volume 97, No. 3)**

## **THE HOLY SACRIFICE of the MASS – A LETTER from FATHER EDWIN KARLOVICH, CR**

On January 4, 1998, Feast of the Holy Family, Fr. Edwin Karlovich, CR, Associate Pastor of Saint John Cantius parish in Chicago, celebrated the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of his ordination to the priesthood. At the beautiful Tridentine Mass he gave a stirring sermon on the worth, dignity and splendor of each Holy Mass. We offer it below for your Lenten meditation.

On this beautiful day dedicated to the Holy Family of Nazareth, I have the pleasure of being able to celebrate my 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of ordination to the Priesthood, to offer this Tridentine Mass and join with my parish family in the very church in which I was baptized - made a child of God! Christ has spoken to each of us about our family life in the words we heard in today's Epistle and Gospel. Nazareth is a kind of school where we may begin to discover what Christ's life was like and even to understand the Gospel a little better. Here we learn how God's Son came to be known, so full of hidden meanings. And gradually we ought to learn how to imitate Jesus in our own life. It was God Himself who created the human family. He then sent His Son to dwell in time in a human family to teach all of us so many important truths. He

wanted to teach us the sanctity of human love, to show us the true value of family life and help us to live at peace with one another so that we may share in His life forever in Heaven.

What a privilege for me to be able to celebrate this Eucharist, this Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. The celebration of a Mass is the greatest privilege the world has known. It is the means of supplying the spiritual food of grace to our souls. It is the means of physically uniting ourselves with Christ, our Redeemer and our God.

The Eucharist is a privilege the priest shares with the laity, but in sharing it, a priest is honored and exalted. The priest is honored because Christ has called him to be ordained and made him a concelebrant with Jesus in offering this unbloody sacrifice of the cross.

The Eucharist is a continuing testimony of the boundless love Christ has for men. It is Christ's response of love to man's ingratitude of sin. The Eucharist is a hidden treasure. It's greatest value is hidden beneath the whiteness of Bread. It saturates our soul with grace, as much as our souls are capable of holding. The Eucharist is a treasure that makes all earthly treasures pale into insignificance when compared to it.

The Eucharist is the reason why Jesus called every individual priest to the priesthood. He lovingly invites each priest to share in its celebration. Despite one's sinfulness and unworthiness Christ has summoned him to stand beside Him at the altar. How I wish to thank almighty God for this great honor. Assist me, God, that I may humbly continue to celebrate the Eucharist and bring its saving graces to your flock here below!

It was on Holy Thursday night that Jesus prayed for His apostles and their successors, "Father, these men you gave me were yours. They have kept your word. For these I pray...I do not ask you to take them out of the world, but to guard them from the evil one...Consecrate them by means of truth."

Each and every day as a priest of God, I am privileged to celebrate Mass. I am able to hold in my hands each day what appears to be a small white host, but which really is the body and blood of Christ. By my words of consecration, I bring down from Heaven to be present on the altar.

This one act of celebrating Mass is so holy and so powerful that the celebration of just one Mass would be sufficient to sanctify and save a thousand worlds. But God in His goodness permits me to celebrate Mass every day, to repeat this host of sacrifices in an unbloody manner.

The Mass is an offering of both Christ and the priest together. It should be the main event in a priest's day. It is the holiest action He can perform. The Mass is the occasion when a priest is a concelebrant with Jesus. Allow each Mass not only to be a PART of my day, may it become the very HEART OF MY DAY!

At every Mass Jesus speaks through the lips of the priest, Jesus, Who is the author and main celebrant of every Mass, is also its victim. Jesus is sacrificed in an unbloody manner upon the altar. He is the source of an unending fountain of grace flowing to us in every Mass, an inexhaustible fountain. His body and blood become our spiritual food.

The Mass taps a keg of graces and blessings God has stored up for us in Heaven. It is the funnel Christ uses for pouring this grace into my soul. Neither the gates of hell nor any force on earth will ever succeed in blocking off this river of grace flowing from Heaven. When the priest receives Holy Communion at Mass, a physical union occurs between Christ and the priest. The priest in his human nature is physically united to Christ in His divine nature. For a short period of time before the host is dissolved in the body of the priest, his human nature is elevated to a divine level. What a beautiful opportunity the priest shares in Christ's humility, His meekness and His patience.

The Mass contains as many riches and graces as there are drops of water in the ocean. They are inexhaustible. It is the perfect sacrifice; we have no need of any other. **THERE IS NOTHING THE DEVIL HATES MORE THAN THE MASS. IF HE CAN DISSUADE A PERSON FROM ATTENDING SUNDAY MASS, THE DEVIL CONSIDERS HIMSELF TO HAVE WON A MAJOR VICTORY!**

There is nothing that will endear a priest more to the Hearts of Jesus and Mary than a fervent recitation of the Holy Mass. It is the richest of jewels. It is a treasure to put all other treasures to shame. Its dignity, its grandeur and its glory have no equal. It is part of the glory of Heaven that Christ let escape to earth!

How each one of us should cherish the Mass. Love it, cling to it. Rejoice each time you are present at it. The Mass is our spiritual life; it is the reason Christ called the priests to follow Him. It is the means Jesus chose to unite Himself with each one of us. It is a real foretaste of Heaven.

On this very special anniversary may Jesus Christ be praised. I praise Him with my lips, praise Him with my heart. God does not hear as we hear; He does not require audible sound. He reads the heart, and is content with our good will! "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and never forget all He has done for me." (Psalm 102,1). "I will bless the Lord at all times; His praise shall always be in my mouth." (Psalm 33,2) Lord, I love You. Help me to continue to love You and to serve Your flock.

May God reward each one of you as only He can. You will continue to be remembered by me in my prayers and in my Masses. God love you and bless you!

(from *Coalition in Support of Ecclesia Dei*, Glenview, Ill. Feb, 2, 1998)

## REFLECTION on *Our Lady's* MESSAGE of 2/25/98

I greet all those who read this reflection and who follow *Our Lady's* messages. I also hope that this message, that Mary gave us on Ash Wednesday, will become a renewed impulse and a good beginning for this holy time of graces. As usual I first wish to remind us of January's message. In it Mary called us to improve our heart in prayer so that it will become more open for and thereby filled by the Word of God. She also called us to be careful that Satan cannot do with us what he wants. But the central point was her reminder that Mass should not become a habit, but that Mass can become life. This means when those who forgive at home, who reconcile and who speak and read of God, those who pray with the others and who offer themselves for the others, those who are ready to speak with the others, those who bring supportive words to those who are sad, those who bring hopeful words to those who feel hopeless -- all these are teaching the Mass and Mass has become their life. This is because all that is contained in and happens with us during Holy Mass should then, through us, also happen with the others -- forgiveness, speaking of God, and offering oneself up for the others. This is how, as Mary says, we will grow in holiness and then feel the need for holiness. So, we may never forget that we either become holy because we participate at Holy Mass, or we remain the biggest egotists. This is because at Mass we ask for forgiveness, we hear the Word of God, we ask that He give Himself to us, and that He says one word and heals us, but then in life we are no longer ready to do the same for the others. God protect and hinder us from this type of egoism and give us the grace that we may live Holy Mass the way we ought to and the way it is worthy of God.

At the moment Vicka, Jacov, Mirjana and Ivanka are all here in Medugorje, while Marija is in Italy and Ivan in the U.S. Ivan should be returning the end of February and certainly Marija and her family too will be returning sometime during Lent. We believe that the apparitions are continuing for the four, and also nothing has changed with either Mirjana or Ivanka. These two have their apparitions on a yearly basis and Mirjana has an encounter with Mary on the 2nd of every month where they pray together for

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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.

non-believers.

At the moment there are a good number of pilgrims here but, because it has been quiet now for some time, the real season has yet to begin. As far as we know there will be a very large number of groups coming this next season. We just had an Auxiliary Bishop here from Canberra, Australia -- Mon. Patrick Power -- and this was already his second time here while the first time he came incognito. This time he came with pilgrims and at the evening Mass on Ash Wednesday he spoke with us before the blessing. He gave us his testimony and then expressed his gratitude for all the good experiences that he, his pilgrims and members of his own family had while here in Medjugorje. Then he gave us all his Bishop's blessing. We are grateful for his presence among us, and hope that from now on more Bishops will begin to come along with their faithful. As usual Our Lady gave us a message in which she says...

### ***ALSO TODAY I AM WITH YOU***

...and this was also the last thought that she expressed in January's message -- that she is with us and that she intercedes before God for us that we may change our hearts. Here however, when she repeats this, we should also understand it in respect to Lent. Mary was present throughout Jesus' entire life -- from the Annunciation all the way to His Burial and His Resurrection. Here it is good to consider, for all those who pray the 'Way of the Cross' on Kri\_evac, that the artist Carmello Puzzolo incorporated something in his bronze reliefs that the classical 'Way of the Cross' normally does not have. Normally Mary is only pictured in perhaps three or four of the Stations, but in Carmello's 'Way of the Cross' she is present in every one, except during the agony in the Garden of Gethsemane. The artist says that he discovered Mary, here in Medjugorje, as the mother who is present everywhere, but had she been in the Garden of Gethsemane, Carmello says convincingly, then the agony would not have been possible. So, Mary is with Jesus everywhere and she is loyal. So this is how we should understand these words and especially so when we are suffering or having difficulties. This time Mary again calls us to prayer, yet this time not only that, but...

### ***AGAIN I CALL ALL OF YOU TO COME CLOSER TO ME THROUGH YOUR PRAYERS***

This is another criterion with which to understand our prayer and find another reason for our prayer. There is always the danger that we in prayer do not come any closer to God or to Mary because we are not seeking God or seeking Mary, but we are only seeking help and asking for resolutions to our problems. In this way our problems, our difficulties or our intentions remain between ourselves and God, between ourselves and Mary, and we thereby do not meet them and so our hearts do not change. So through prayer this 'coming closer', or 'being closer' should also be occurring. The closer we come to Mary or to God Himself the more peace, joy, faith and hope there will be in our hearts. Mary now calls us...

### ***IN A SPECIAL WAY I CALL YOU TO RENUNCIATION IN THIS TIME OF GRACE***

I know that in many languages this idea of 'renunciation' is in fact something negative, but this is wrong, for it is absolutely something positive. For instance, just think that you are working on something and your hands are full of things and suddenly, unexpectedly, out there on the horizon, you see a very much loved and yearned for person. What do you then do? You put everything away, or the things just drop out of your hands onto the floor. You throw everything aside that hinders you from them and you run toward that much loved person. Here too there is a purpose -- we put away things so that we may meet with that person. THAT is the purpose of renunciation. It means a freedom in our hearts from things, from dependencies, or from people that may be hindering us from meeting with God or with Mary. It is in this freedom and in this love that one can meet them and then to stay close to one another. Here we should very specifically ask ourselves what it may be right now that hinders us from coming closer to God or to Mary, and what causes a distance between us and the others. This then is what I must renounce so that I may become free. Every one of us has certainly already thought about what we will do in this respect during this time of Lent, this time of grace. This is a time of grace because during this time we want to be especially close to the suffering Jesus.

### ***LITTLE CHILDREN, MEDITATE ON***

To mediate means to try to find the center of things, and in this message meditation has already or will become possible when we renounce. Whoever renounces, practices renunciation, will leave away all that distracts him, what pulls him apart, and thereby remains balanced and then seeks what is central. We are all in danger of remaining superficial, so taking time for mediation means to concentrate on what is important, and through renunciation,-- to distance and free oneself from all that which is not.

### ***AND LIVE, THROUGH YOUR LITTLE SACRIFICES,***

Mary calls our sacrifices our "little sacrifices" that will then help us to live...

### ***THE PASSION AND DEATH OF JESUS FOR EACH ONE OF YOU***

Again, when we renounce and free ourselves we will, through these offerings and renunciation, discover the Passion and Death of Jesus.

### ***ONLY IF YOU COME CLOSER TO JESUS WILL YOU COMPREHEND THE IMMEASURABLE LOVE HE HAS FOR EACH OF YOU***

Here we actually discover the purpose of Lent, the purpose of the 'Way of the Cross', and the purpose of the Sorrowful Mysteries. Here it absolutely does NOT mean that we should only think of Jesus' suffering and all that He suffered for each of us, but rather that we, in His suffering,

in His Cross and in His Death, discover His love for each of us. He did not save the world by way of His suffering, but by way of His love which was and still is ready to suffer for us. Someone once wrote that the only credible love is crucified love. All those who say that they love someone but who, when the problems and difficulties arise, are not ready to offer themselves show in such situations that they never did love and do not know what love is. True love, Jesus' love, is not only ready to suffer but is ready to die. When we discover that Jesus really loved and still loves us in this way, then our hearts too will be healed and be ready to open themselves toward the others. This is why Mary tells us...

***THROUGH PRAYER AND YOUR RENUNCIATION  
YOU WILL BECOME MORE OPEN TO THE GIFT OF  
FAITH***

Faith means to entrust oneself to God, to let oneself be led by Him, to let one be spoken to by Him, and to become more sensitive toward His Word. This is the faith that we all need and especially so when we are suffering. When the heart opens itself to faith, then at the same time the heart opens itself for love. In this message Mary emphasizes....

***AND LOVE TOWARDS THE CHURCH AND THE  
PEOPLE WHO ARE AROUND YOU***

We are the Church, all of us, but also the entire hierarchy. We know that in particular countries, and in some ways everywhere, the Church today is being attacked and criticized because mistakes and weaknesses within the Church are being uncovered and given great emphasis in the press. This way distrust comes into the hearts of the faithful and many leave the Church, many no longer wish to work along with the Priests, the Bishops and the Pope, even though they were baptized Catholic and practicing Catholics before. Here it does not concern a criticism but merely a call that we, during this Lent, may think about and can deal with all these problems and in so doing may grow in love for the Church. When we succeed at this we will also be able to love all the people around us. Then at the end Mary says...

***I LOVE YOU AND BLESS YOU***

This is the love, a motherly love, that can move our heart and that, in these 16 years and 8 months, has helped so very, very many pilgrims to open themselves to God and to thereby turn onto a new path. Mary's blessing, being a mother's blessing, will certainly follow us and especially so during this time of Lent. I think it is again important to emphasize here that prayer and fasting do not serve their own purpose, but are rather ways or means to open the heart for the gifts of faith and of love that are given to us by God through Mary and which then carry their fruits in our love for the Church and toward all the people around us. Therefore it is so very important that we, during this time of grace, really live in such a way that our hearts may change, that our families renew themselves, that in this

Year of the Holy Spirit, the Holy Spirit may really show Himself through us. I wish for every one of you an enriching Lent, and in this spirit I now wish to pray with and for all of you.

*God, our Father, we thank You that You gave us Your Son, Jesus Christ, and sent Him into this world as our Messiah, Savior and Redeemer. We thank You for His Passion, Cross and Death. Give us the grace that we may come closer to Him in this time, that we may comprehend His immeasurable Love, that His Love touches us in such a way that our hearts change. Along with Mary, we ask for the grace, O Father, of strength to renounce everything that bothers or hinders us on the path to You, to Mary, to the Church and to the people around us. We, along with Mary ask You, O Father, for the strength to live our small sacrifices so that we may follow Jesus. Give us Your Spirit of Wisdom and Love that we may also be able to meditate and concentrate on what is important in life and so that we may become witnesses for Your Love. We ask You, O Father, for the gift of faith for all those who have lost their faith, and especially for those who, due to suffering, have lost their faith and hope. We bring before You the entire Church, all people who at this moment are leading the Church in Your name -- the Pope, all Bishops, all Priests and members of the Orders. We bring before You all those who have left the Church, all those who are criticizing, accusing or fighting against the Church, that their hearts may be healed so that the Church may achieve its assignment during these times. Lord, let all people who are in conflicts with one another have the gift of reconciliation. By way of Your Spirit heal everything that hinders their reconciliation. Give us the grace that we may feel Your Love also through Mary and that we may receive her blessing. Bless our sick, bless the youth and all those who at this moment do not believe in Your love and mercy. Bless all those who do not believe that everything turns out for the good. Bless all those who are unable to believe in eternal life and resurrection, and that through the path of suffering all of us will reach You in Your Glory. Bless us, protect us and give us peace. In the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.*

**Amen.**

**Fra Slavko**

**Medugorje, Feb. 27, 1998**

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**PRESS BULLETIN #84 - 02/11/98**

**MEDITATION**

**PRAY SO to BECOME SENSITIVE to GOD'S WORD**

The message of Our Lady that stirs us to prayer so that we would become sensitive to God's word is a continuation of her message to read Sacred Scripture, to live it and keep it

in a visible place in our home. The word of God contained in the Bible is the subject of the daily liturgical life of the Church. At the celebration of the sacraments reading and listening to Sacred Scripture is indispensable. Nothing significant can take place in the life of the Church without Sacred Scripture. It is not some kind of obligatory burden, ordinary reading or handbook. For the life of the Church it represents much more. Sacred Scripture is the Constitution of the life, the activity, and the proclamation of the Church. Our Lady recommends it for reading and living so that we would get to know Jesus Christ, the history of salvation and thus accustom ourselves to its meaning not only for the life of faith, but also for social and interpersonal life.

I said that Sacred Scripture is the Constitution of Christian behavior. Accordingly one should remember that it is important not only to accept its worth, but to accept and appreciate its demands. Man is inclined to look for loop holes in the law and the weak spots of constitutional regulations. He seems to himself to be more important than the generally binding regulation, and puts his personal advantage before observation of the law. All of us already know well the consequences of taking justice into our own hands. Man is in the greatest temptation to sin when he appropriates the right of taking the law into his own hands. And surely also then when it has obviously been done.

Interpreting and breaking up Sacred Scripture we hold correctly that there are less important and very important places. But it isn't so easy to be sure that we have recognized those very important ones. We are inclined to proclaim that some things also in Sacred Scripture are not so important and to think that we understand them better than those who recorded and wrote them down. There is a subsequent great temptation and we are not allowed to think that by interpreting individual things we are not pouring grit into our own mill. Pouring grit into our own mill is usually a bad solution in all forms of human activity and surely in spiritual activity. Spirituality is one of the most sensitive areas of a human being and mistakes made there provoke immeasurable harm in personal and community life.

Pray, therefore, Our Lady exhorts. Incoherence in prayer, work, communication with people, affairs, no longer makes any sense. Get to work on God's word! Prayer will certainly help you in sensitivity to God's word.

**Fr. Ivan Landeka**

## NEWS

### NUMBER of HOLY COMMUNIONS and CONCELEBRANTS

During the month of January in the Shrine of the Queen of Peace in Medjugorje 21000 Holy Communion were distributed and there were 661 concelebrations by priests from home and abroad, that is, 21 priests daily.

We will enumerate some of the countries from which pilgrims visited Medjugorje during the month of

December: Poland, Italy, France, Korea, United States and, of course, Croatia.

### LETTER to the HOLY FATHER

In January the following letter was delivered to the Holy Father:

Medjugorje,

January 1, 1998

Feast of the Divine Maternity of Mary

### HIS HOLINESS JOHN PAUL II

#### Holy Father,

From the heart of Bosnia-Herzegovina, from the Parish of Medjugorje, here where not one bomb fell during the dramatic years of the war, we Franciscans send You this message of peace and joy for Your Apostolic Ministry. We do not wish to sadden You with bad news but to give You joy with the promise that we have made to the Queen of Peace, who for more than sixteen years is appearing in this place that has become an international center of prayer and conversion, visited by millions of pilgrims, hundreds of bishops and tens of thousands of priests.

Your Holiness, this is our promise to You: With the approach of the Great Jubilee the Parish of Medjugorje wishes to support the Holy Father by a special daily prayer for Your universal ministry with this intention: that John Paul II may open the Holy Doors at Christmas 1999.

Our Lady in her messages from the very beginning called us to pray in a special way for the Holy Father, because She has a special plan for You, Holy Father. Today we are more conscious than ever of that great spiritual battle that we in Bosnia-Herzegovina have lived through in the war, which can be won only with the weapons of the gospel to which Our Lady calls us: prayer, fasting, conversion of heart, sacramental life, the rosary, consecration to Her Immaculate Heart. . .

Conscious of our pastoral responsibility, which is increased by the apparitions that have attracted millions of pilgrims, we feel the responsibility to petition the pilgrims who come here to pray in a special way for You, Holy Father. We truly think that this inspiration comes from the Queen of Peace who requests that we put Medjugorje at the spiritual service of Your Holiness through prayer until the grace of prayer of the many hearts that have obtained it here shall be poured out on the whole world as a contribution of Medjugorje in support of John Paul II, the Marian Pope, so You may finish the task that God has entrusted to You.

Your Holiness requested the faithful in Poland, on Your last pastoral visit, to implore God on bended knee for the grace to finish that which Cardinal Wyszyński, of blessed memory, prophesied to You: "You must lead the Church into the third millennium". The parish of Medjugorje has accepted Your invitation addressed to Poland and desires to spread it to all pilgrims that Providence has not ceased

to lead to the Queen of Peace. We wish that, in the Franciscans who work in this blessed parish, they recognize the desire to support Your Holiness in these years of preparation for the Great Jubilee. We wish to make a contribution with the prayer of the Most Holy Virgin for the intention that She has for Her Pope "Totus Tuus".

May Your Holiness accept our humble gift.

**The Friars and pilgrims of Medjugorje**  
**(Published by: Information Center MIR - Shrine of the Queen of Peace, 88266 Medjugorje, BiH)**

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## **PRESS BULLETIN #85, 2/25/98**

### **ASH WEDNESDAY**

When the carnival and masquerades have already entertained, disposed and made us laugh, and maybe showed us how to be happy and only entertain ourselves and it isn't real enjoyment, I would regret for us to have to be educated by what follows after than and what is closely connected with that. The truth is that today all carnival events are no longer connected, as they were at one time, with the religious events of the church calendar. But we Christians don't have to be ashamed of either the carnival or of Ash Wednesday.

Ash Wednesday and the Lenten season are demanding things. Demanding because they turn our attention back onto our own life to find out what our own condition is. There's too much around us of what turns our attention to others, mainly to their bad condition.

A Spanish proverb says: "Nobody is bothered by their own breath". But are others? Does it bother others? It frequently does, as we well know.

We readily consider ourselves more or less without fault, but the facts know how to say something completely different. Namely, we are not fault free neither when we maintain it ourselves nor when others suggest that to us. The opinion of others is by all means important, we are not allowed to forget that.

Ash Wednesday is just the beginning of a season. But let's not forget that is the beginning and that, as such, it serves as a test. A test of what we know or don't know about ourselves and thereby of what we are willing to undertake. A Lenten program has to clearly lead us to Easter.

The deceased Croatian theologian Josip Turcinovic used the General Intercessions of the First Sunday of Lent in order briefly to condense the directives that lead through Lent to Easter. In the prayer of the First Sunday of Lent the Church prays for God to help it get to know the mystery of Christ in order to then be able to carry it out into life. "That means it prays to come to know, to realize, to experience all of what happened with Jesus Christ. In his own person, among men, and for all of history. So that we might be able to direct our lives in that flow and on that way and in that direction." (Josip Turcinovic)

The task of Lent is, according to that, to direct our live in such a way that we get to know Jesus Christ. What happened with him and what that means for us. A few Christians will say they would not like to get to know that. And a few of us will also not want to ask, in what way? About the way "how" not much new can be said. A life that is directed by prayer and conversion, fasting and concern for others, a just disposition for what is good and the rejection of what weakens our spiritual life, is already a well tested recipe. Our Lady, for her part, wholeheartedly recommends it to us. Once more: don't delay with the beginning!

**Fr. Ivan Landeka**

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### **NEWS**

#### **STATEMENT of the HOLY FATHER ABOUT MEDJUGORJE to BISHOP ROBERT CAVALLER**

This written testimony was sent to us October 9, 1997 by Mr. Marcello Pierucci, Via Castiglione 154, Bologna, Italy.

"During the Eucharistic Congress that was held recently in Bologna, I hosted Archbishop Msgr. Maria Rizzi, former apostolic nuncio in Bulgaria, and now stationed in Rome where he works on the cause for beatification of servants of God. During a supper in the presence of my wife Anna and Msgr. Novello Pedezini, Archbishop Rizzi narrated the following:

'I found myself in the private chapel of the Holy Father at morning mass. At the end of Holy Mass the Holy Father approached us and personally greeted all those present. Near me was Msgr. Robert Cavallero from the Shrine of Our Lady of Chiavari. When the Pope got close to us with the intention of greeting us, Msgr Cavallero said: Holy Father I am just now coming from Medjugorje.

The Pope said; Monsignor, do you believe?

The Monsignor answered: Yes, Holy Father!

After that Bishop Cavallero asked the Pope: And You, Holy Father, do You believe?

Then after that question the Pope stopped for a moment in silence and then said at intervals: I believe. . .I believe. . .I believe. . .'

The next evening at my request Archbishop Rizzi repeated this testimony in the presence of Msgr Novello Pedezini and the bishop of Prato, Msgr. Gastone Simoni."

I confirm the authenticity of this testimony with my own signature.

**Medjugorje, October 9, 1997 Marcello Pierucci [signature]**

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#### **TESTIMONY of FATHER MICHAEL O'CARROLL**

Father Michael O'Carroll is of Irish nationality. He is a member of the Congregation of the Holy Spirit. For many years he is a professor and well known Mariologist. He is the author of several books. Theotokos (Mother of God) is one of most well known books, and the book about

Medjugorje Medjugorje, Fats, Documents and Theology. Is Medjugorje Approved?

Last year he came again with a large group of pilgrims from Ireland. This is what he told us then about Medjugorje:

"Medjugorje is a great gift to the Church of today. It is constantly growing and spreading. It is wonderful to see the zeal for prayer and the strong faith of the people, and the multitude of penitents and confessors. Our Lady's intercession and power is evident everywhere here. The Pope also acknowledges that. When, for example, Bishop Kim of South Korea told the Pope how grateful he was to him for the liberation of Eastern Europe from communism, the Pope answered: 'No thanks to me, but rather to Our Lady of Fatima and of Medjugorje.' I personally always experience a renewal of my faith and spirit of prayer in Medjugorje." To the question as to how he as a theologian interprets so much opposition in the Church to this kind of event, he answered: 'In the Church an apostasy is taking place. And I personally, like some other Mariologists also, see in Medjugorje the continuation of Fatima. With us in Ireland through Medjugorje many people have again found faith, prayer, the sacraments, especially confession and Holy mass. Our Lady leads us to Jesus. She teaches us how to be open to the Holy Spirit. Knowing all these facts, so obvious, it is also a real mystery to me why the official church does not see and acknowledge that. In the meantime, that should not be a problem for us. Let us continue to respond to the calls of Mary, Queen of Peace, and all the rest will take place at the time when Providence will it to be. Take care of Medjugorje. It is hope for everyone!'"

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## WHAT IS THIS BREAD?

Saint Augustine asks, "Why is this mystery of Eucharist accomplished with bread?" He answers himself: "Let us offer no reason of our own invention, but listen to the Apostle speak of this sacrament, 'We are one bread, one body.' Understand this and rejoice. Unity, truth, piety, charity. 'One bread.' What is this one bread? It is one body formed of many. Remember that bread is not made of one wheat; at baptism water was poured over you, as flour is mingled with water, and the Holy Spirit entered into you like the fire which bakes the bread. Be what you see, and receive what you are. ...

"...Thus did the Lord Christ manifest us in Himself. He willed that we should belong to Him, and He has consecrated on His altar the mystery of our peace and unity. (Sermon 272 in Migne's *Patrologia Latina*, vol. 38)

Saint Cyril of Alexandria, the heroic defender of our Lady's Divine Maternity at the Council of Ephesus, has much to say about her Son's mystical members too, and how we are "one body." He says, "For if we all eat of the one bread we all become one body, since there can be no division in Christ. For this reason is the Church called the body of Christ, and we severally His members, according to the teaching of Saint Paul. Since we are all united with the one Christ through His sacred Body, and since we all receive Him Who is one and indivisible into our own bodies, we as belonging to Him rather than to ourselves." (Commenting on Saint John's Gospel in Migne's *Patrologia Graecae*, vol. 74, p. 557)

(**"FROM THE HOUSETOPS"** Serial No. 39, 1997)

## TWELVE BIBLICAL REASONS for WANTING to SPEND ONE HOUR EACH WEEK with JESUS in the BLESSED SACRAMENT

1. HE IS REALLY THERE! **"I Myself Am the Living Bread come down from heaven." (Jn. 6:35)**
2. Day and night Jesus dwells in the Blessed Sacrament BECAUSE OF HIS INFINITE LOVE FOR YOU! **"Behold I will be with you always even to the end of the world," because "I have loved you with an everlasting love, and constant is my affection for you." (Mt. 28:20; Jer. 31:3)**
3. The specific way that Jesus asks you to love Him in return is to spend ONE QUIET HOUR WITH HIM EACH WEEK in the Blessed Sacrament. **"Where your treasure is, there is your heart . . ." "Could you not watch one hour with Me?" (Mt. 6:21;26:40)**
4. When you look upon the Sacred Host, YOU LOOK UPON JESUS, the Son of God. **"Indeed. this is the will of My Father, that everyone who looks upon the Son and believes in Him shall have eternal life. I will raise up on the last day." (Jn. 6:40)**
5. Each moment that you spend in His Eucharistic Presence will INCREASE HIS DIVINE LIFE WITHIN YOU and deepen your personal relationship and friendship with Him,. **"I have come that you may have life, and have it more abundantly." "I am the Vine and you are the branches. Whoever remains in union with Me shall bear much fruit for without Me, you can do nothing." (Jn. 10:10;15:5)**
6. Each hour you spend with Jesus will DEEPEN HIS DIVINE PEACE within your heart. **"Come to Me all of you who are weary and find life burdensome and I will refresh you . . ." "Cast all of your anxieties upon the Lord, who cares for you." (Mt. 11:28; 1 Pt. 5:7; Jn. 14:17)**
7. Jesus will give you ALL THE GRACES YOU NEED to be happy in life. **"The Lamb on the Throne will shepherd them. He will lead them to springs of life-giving water." (Rev. 7:17)**
8. Jesus is infinitely DESERVING OF OUR UNCEASING THANKSGIVING and adoration for all He



has done for our salvation. **“Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive honor, glory and praise.” (Rev. 5:12)**

9. For PEACE in our country! **“When My people humble themselves and seek My Presence, I will revive their land.” (2 Ch. 7:14)**

10. Each hour you spend with Jesus on earth will leave your soul EVERLASTINGLY MORE BEAUTIFUL AND GLORIOUS in heaven. **“They who humble themselves shall be exalted . . .” “All of us, gazing on the Lord’s glory with unveiled faces, are being transformed from glory to glory into His very image.” (Lk. 18:14; 2 Cor. 3:18)**

11. JESUS WILL BLESS YOU, your family and the whole world for this hour of faith you spend with Him in the Blessed Sacrament. **“Blessed are they who do not see and yet believe . . .” “Faith can move mountains . . .” “Behold I come to make all things new.” (Jn. 20:29; Mk. 11:23; Mk. 5:36; Rev. 21:5)**

12. Each moment you spend with Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament BRINGS JOY, PLEASURE AND DELIGHT TO HIS SACRED HEART! **“My joy, My pleasure, My delight is to be with you.” (Prov. 8:31)**

**(“MISSIONARIES OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT”,  
Plattsburgh, NY)**

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## **ON EUCHARISTIC ADORATION--POINTS to REMEMBER**

This hour Jesus wants you to spend with Him is spent any way you want. You may bring your own prayerbooks, use the books in the chapel, read the Bible, pray the Rosary, or just sit, relax and enjoy the sweet peace that comes from simply being in the Presence of God. You may feel you can’t pray well. Don’t let this discourage you. The mere fact that you take time out at a specific time each week to spend an hour with Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament pleases Him very much, and is in itself a prayer of faith.

Please remember that perpetual adoration in a parish is not just for a day, for a week, a month, or a year. Rather, it is for always. It is not temporary, but ongoing, lasting, permanent. Pope John Paul II says that: *“Our essential commitment in life is to grow spiritually in the climate of the Holy Eucharist.”*

If anyone should ask you, therefore, how long perpetual adoration lasts in a parish, please tell him that perpetual adoration lasts as long as Our Lord’s love for us in the Blessed Sacrament lasts, which is forever. As long as Jesus loves us enough to want to be with us day and night, then we want to love Him enough to be with Him day and night.

**(“MISSIONARIES OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT”,  
Plattsburgh, NY)**

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## **PRAYER to the VIRGIN MARY**

*Mary, Holy Virgin Mother, we have received your Son, Jesus Christ. With love, you became His*

*mother, gave birth to Him, nursed Him and helped Him grow to manhood. With love, we return Him to you, to hold once more, to love with all your heart.*

*Mother, ask God to forgive our sins and help us serve Him more faithfully. Keep us true to Christ until death, and let us come to praise Him with you forever and ever. AMEN.*

## **ABOUT PRAYER**

You owe it to your children to pray, asking God to bless them every day, showing them the example of the need for prayer. It is the most important thing we do. The false notion today of disregarding God makes no sense whatsoever. We must have divine assistance. Your children need very, very much your prayers. You need your prayers.

Knowledge is not wisdom. It is prayer that brings wisdom. You may know everything there is to know that schools have to teach--but that does not make you wise. All the saints said prayer must come first. To cut ourselves off from the saints who were the wisest humans to walk in this world is folly.

Your home and family need your prayers. You can give them everything that money can buy and feel very proud. But you haven’t given them half enough. You have only provided for their bodies. But not for their souls. Which are far more precious in the eyes of God.

Prayer brings the blessings of God on your loved ones. It helps so very much those who are dear to you. You can send them gifts and that is nice, but the greatest gift of all that you can give them is to pray for them. To give your children everything else except prayer shows that you are not wise.

Wise men in every age prayed for their loved ones. In our times we are so unwise we run around so much we don’t have time for prayer. Prayer should come first.

**(from “STAR Magazine” September, 1995 by Father Myers)**

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## **BLESSED FAUSTINA’S PRAYER of CONFIDENCE**

*O will of the Omnipotent God, You are my delight, you are my joy. Whatever the hand of my Lord holds out to me I will accept with gladness, submission and love. Your holy will is my repose; In it is contained all my sanctity, And all my eternal salvation, For doing God’s will is the greatest glory... Do with me as You will, Lord. I place no obstacles, I make no reservations. For You are my whole delight and the love of my soul, And to You, in turn, I pour out the confidences of my heart.*

**(from “THE DIARY OF BLESSED M. FAUSTINA KOWALSKA, 1004) dated March 1, 1937, Krakow)**

## **PRIESTS CALLED to LIVE OUT CHRIST'S SPOUSAL LOVE toward the CHURCH**

Christ's gift of Himself to His Church, the fruit of His love, is described in terms of that unique gift of self made by the bridegroom to the bride, as the sacred texts often suggest. Jesus is the true bridegroom who offers to the Church the wine of salvation (cf **Jn. 2:11**). He who is **"the head of the church, his body, and is himself its savior"** (**Eph. 5:23**) **"loved the church and gave himself up for her, that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, that he might present the church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish"** (**Eph. 5:25-27**). The church is indeed the body in which Christ the head is present and active, but she is also the bride who proceeds like a new Eve from the open side of the redeemer on the cross.

Hence Christ stands **"before"** the church and **"nourishes and cherishes her"** (**Eph. 5:29**), giving his life for her. The priest is called to be the living image of Jesus Christ, the spouse of the church. Of course, he will always remain a member of the community as a believer alongside his other brothers and sisters who have been called by the Spirit, but in virtue of his configuration to Christ, the head and shepherd, the priest stands in this spousal relationship with regard to the community. "Inasmuch as he represents Christ, the head, shepherd and spouse of the church, the priest is placed not only in the church but also in the forefront of the church." In his spiritual life, therefore, he is called to live out Christ's spousal love toward the church, his bride. Therefore, the priest's life ought to radiate this spousal character, which demands that he be a witness to Christ's spousal love and thus be capable of loving people with a heart which is new, generous and pure, with genuine self-detachment, with full, constant and faithful dedication and at the same time with a kind of **"divine jealousy"** (cf. **2 Cor. 11:2**), and even with a kind of maternal tenderness, capable of bearing **"the pangs of birth"** until **"Christ be formed"** in the faithful (cf. **Gal. 4:19**).

(by Pope John Paul, II)

## **SKILLS for LIVING CELIBATELY**

A strong prayer life. The willingness to spend quality time with God and the openness to grow in intimacy with God.

Long term friendships with both men and women is important.

The ability to be alone. To use solitude creatively and constructively.

The gift to love tenderly and to walk humbly with others.

The ability to delay self gratification. The freedom not to be self absorbed, but to reach out to others.

A wholesome balance. An integration of social, physical, intellectual, and spiritual resources.

Ego boundaries. Having a sense of self and knowing one's needs, etc.

(by Father Devlin, Vocation Director, Archdiocese of Philadelphia)

## **PRAYER to OUR DEAR LORD**

*Jesus, Mary and Joseph, I give You my heart and my soul.*

*Jesus, Mary and Joseph, assist me in my last agony.*

*Jesus, Mary and Joseph, may I bring forth my soul in peace with You.*

*Oh my Jesus, I thank You for having died on the cross for my sins.*

*Merciful Jesus, have mercy on me and save my immortal soul.*

*Sweet Jesus give me your grace, I'd rather die than commit one mortal sin.*

*Sweet heart of Mary, be my salvation.*

*My feet were made to walk to God.*

*My knees were made to kneel in humility.*

*My hands were made to pray in humbleness.*

*My heart was made to love God.*

*My mouth was made to praise God.*

*My eyes were made to see the beauty of God's creation.*

*Holy Mother, with Your loving Child, Bless this day.*

*All for Jesus, through Mary.*

*Our Lady of Fatima, Pray for us.*

## **GREETINGS**

What greeting shall I send you as I think of you today?

For the wish that I would wish you goes beyond what I can say;

Yet unspoken thoughts rise heavenwards in the silence, when we pray.

I will breathe my intercessions before God's Altar Throne, And the best wish I can wish you can be said by Him alone,

And the best thought I can send you is by Him to be made known.

And your name shall be remembered in the Blessed Presence there

Where remembrances are sacred, and each memory holds a prayer,

And where loving thought shall leave you in a loving Father's care.

(**"HOLY SPIRIT ADORATION SISTERS"**)

## WHAT THE NURSE SAW...

"I am a registered nurse with 13 years of experience...I was working for a nursing agency. My employer asked me if I would accept an assignment to the Women's Medical Center, which is an abortion clinic...

One of these cases especially haunts me. The woman was six months pregnant (26-1/2 weeks). The doctor brought in the ultrasound machine, and on the screen I could see the heart beating. As the doctor watched the baby on the ultrasound screen, he went in with forceps and grabbed the baby's legs and brought them down into the birth canal. Then he delivered the body and arms, everything but the head.

At this point, only the baby's head was still inside. The baby's body was moving. His little fingers were clasping and unclasping. He was kicking his feet. All the while his little head was still stuck inside. Then the doctor stuck scissors through the back of the head, and the baby's arms jerked out in a flinch, a startle reaction, like a baby does when he thinks that he might fall. The doctor opened up the scissors, stuck a high-powered suction tube into the hole and sucked the baby's brains out. Now the baby was completely limp. I almost threw up as I watched him do these things.

Next, the doctor delivered the baby's head, cut the umbilical cord and delivered the placenta. He threw the baby in a pan, along with the placenta and the instruments he'd used. I saw the baby move in the pan. I asked another nurse and she said it was "just reflexes."

The mother wanted to see her baby, so they cleaned up the baby and put him in a blanket and handed the baby to her. She cried the whole time, and kept saying, "I'm sorry, please forgive me." I was crying too. I couldn't take it. In all my professional years I had never experienced anything like this. I never went back to the clinic. But I am still haunted by the face of that little boy--it was the most perfect, angelic face I have ever seen."

(**"BRENDA PRATT SHAFER", R.N.**)

## PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

*May the love of God our Creator bless us. May Jesus be our Lord, our Savior and our Good Shepherd. Holy Spirit, fill us with Your graces and gifts. Come Holy Spirit, direct our bodies, mind, hearts and souls to You. Come, God of Timelessness! Come, Giver of God's healing! Come, Light of Our Hearts, Visit our souls. In Your gracious visit, bring us consolation and relief in our family sicknesses, our family suffering, our family fears and turmoils. In life's temptations fill us with Your divine power and mercy. In family sorrows, fill us with hope and peace. In all our family problems, be with us as our advocate. Come, Holy Spirit, we need You. Without You and Your divine help, we can do nothing good, and everything in our life is sinful. Fill our minds*

*with Your peace and joy. Give us new hearts, filled with divine love. Let our hearts be Your fountain to bring this living water of divine love and mercy to thirsting souls in our family.*

*Mary, Mother of Jesus and our Mother, pray with us. Pray that we and the other members of our family may experience a new Pentecost in our own lives, in the Church and throughout the world.*

*May we go forth as instruments of the Holy Spirit, filled with divine wisdom and power to bring God's love and healing to all members of our family, those present to us now, those of our ancestral past and those of our future generations. Pray for us, Mary, that like you, we may be God's instruments to bring His peace and healing. Be to us always a Loving Mother of Perpetual Help. AMEN.*

## MARY IS MODEL of PERSEVERING SILENCE

*The Blessed Virgin invites the Church to meditate constantly on the mystery of Christ and she witnesses to the significance of quiet humility and loving obedience.*

### By Pope John Paul II

*"Our Lady's motherly smile, reproduced in so much Marian iconography, expresses a fullness of grace and peace that seeks to be shared. This expression of her serenity of spirit effectively contributes to giving the Church a joyful face", the Holy Father said at the General Audience on Wednesday 22 November as he continued his reflections on the Virgin Mary. The Pope's catechesis on Mary's influence on the Church's life was the sixth in the series on the Blessed Mother and was given in Italian.*

1. After reflecting on the Marian dimension of ecclesial life, we are now going to cast light on the immense spiritual wealth Mary communicates to the Church by her example and intercession.

We would first like to pause and briefly reflect on some significant aspects of Mary's personality, which offer all believers valuable guidance in accepting and fulfilling their own vocation.

Mary has gone before us on the way of faith: believing the angel's message, she was the first to welcome the mystery of the Incarnation and did so perfectly (cf. Redemptoris Mater, n. 13). Her journey as a believer began even earlier than her divine motherhood and developed more deeply throughout her earthly experience. Hers was a daring faith. At the Annunciation she believed in what was humanly impossible, and at Cana she urged Jesus to work His first miracle, pressing Him to manifest His messianic powers (cf. Jn. 2:1-5).

Mary teaches Christians to live their faith as a demanding and engaging journey which, in every age and situation of life, requires courage and constant perseverance.

### **Mary's was a humble and hidden life**

2. Mary's docility to the divine will was linked to her faith. Believing in God's Word, she could accept it fully in her life and, showing herself receptive to God's sovereign plan, she accepted all that was asked of her from on high.

Our Lady's presence in the Church thus encourages Christians to listen to the Word of the Lord every day, to understand by His loving plan in various daily events, and to cooperate faithfully in bringing it about.

3. This is how Mary teaches the community of believers to look to the future with total abandonment to God. In the Virgin's personal experience, hope is enriched with ever new reasons. Since the Annunciation, Mary concentrates the expectations of ancient Israel on the Son of God, incarnate in her virginal womb. Her hope was strengthened during the successive stages of Jesus' hidden life in Nazareth and His public ministry. Her great faith in the Word of Christ, who had announced His Resurrection on the third day, prevented her from wavering, even when faced with the drama of the Cross. She retained her hope in the fulfillment of the messianic work and steadfastly, after the darkness of Good Friday, awaited the morning of the Resurrection.

On their difficult path through the "already" of salvation received and the "not yet" of its fulfillment, the community of believers know they can count on the "Mother of Hope". After experiencing Christ's victory over the powers of death, she communicates to them an ever new capacity to await God's future and to abandon themselves to the Lord's promises.

4. Mary's example enables the Church better to appreciate the value of silence. Mary's silence is not only moderation in speech, but it is especially a wise capacity for remembering and embracing in a single gaze of faith the mystery of the Word made man and the events of His earthly life.

It is this silence as acceptance of the Word, this ability to meditate on the mystery of Christ, that Mary passes on to believers. In a noisy world filled with messages of all kinds, her witness enables us to appreciate a spiritually rich silence and fosters a contemplative spirit.

Mary witnesses to the value of a humble and hidden life. Everyone usually demands, and sometimes almost claims, to be able to realize fully his own person and qualities. Everyone is sensitive to esteem and honor. The Gospel's frequently mention that the Apostles were ambitious for the most important places in the Kingdom and they argued among themselves as to which of them was the greatest. In this matter Jesus had to teach them the need for humility and service (cf. Mt. 18:1-5; 20:20-28; Mk. 9:33-37; 10:35-45; Lk. 9:46-48; 22:24-27). Mary, on the contrary, never sought honor or the advantages of a privileged position, she always tried to fulfill God's will, leading a life according to the Father's plan of salvation.

To all those who often feel the burden of a seemingly insignificant life Mary reveals how valuable life can be if it is lived for love of Christ and one's brothers and sisters.

5. Mary, moreover, witnesses to the value of a life that is pure and full of tenderness for all men. The beauty of her soul, totally offered to the Lord, is an object of admiration for the Christian people. In Mary, the Christian community has always seen the ideal woman, full of love and tenderness because she lived in purity of mind and body.

Faced with the cynicism of a certain contemporary culture, which too often seems not to recognize the value of chastity and degrades sexuality by separating it from personal dignity and God's plan, the Virgin Mary holds up the witness of a purity that illumines the conscience and leads to a greater love for creatures and for the Lord.

6. Furthermore, Mary appears to Christians of all times as the one who feels deep compassion for the sufferings of humanity. This compassion does not consist only in an emotional sympathy, but is expressed in effective and concrete help when confronted with humanity's material and moral misery.

In following Mary, the Church is called to take on the same attitude towards all the earth's poor and suffering. The maternal attention of the Lord's Mother to the tears, sorrows and hardships of the men and women of all ages must spur Christians, particularly at the dawn of the new millennium, to increase the concrete and visible signs of a love that will enable today's humble and suffering people to share in the promises and hopes of the new world which is born from Easter.

7. Human affection for and devotion to the Mother of Jesus surpasses the Church's visible boundaries and fosters sentiments of reconciliation. As a mother, Mary desires the union of all her children. Her presence in the Church is an invitation to preserve the unanimity of heart which reigned in the first community (cf. Acts 1:14) and, consequently, to seek ways of unity and peace among all men and women of goodwill.

In interceding with her Son, Mary asks the grace of unity for all humanity, in view of building a civilization of love, overcoming tendencies to division, temptations to revenge and hatred, and the perverse fascination of violence.

### **Mary is the cause of our joy**

8. Our Lady's motherly smile, reproduced in so much Marian iconography, expresses a fullness of grace and peace that seeks to be shared. This expression of her serenity of spirit effectively contributes to giving the Church a joyful face.

Welcoming, in the Annunciation, the angel's invitation to "rejoice" (khaire=rejoice: Lk. 1:28), Mary was the first to share in the messianic joy foretold by the Prophets for the "daughter of Zion" (cf. Is 12:6; Zep. 3:14-15; Zec. 9:9), and she passes it on to humanity in every age.

Invoking her as *:causa nostrae laetitia*”, the Christian people find in her the capacity to communicate the joy that is born of hope, even in the midst of life’s trials, and to guide those who commend themselves to her to the joy that knows no end.

(“L’OSSERVATORE ROMANO”, July 21, 1993, Reprinted with permission, “*THY KINGDOM COME*”, Volume 97, No. 3)

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## **WOMEN in the FAMILY**

The Catechism, for reasons that are more than justified, gives ample coverage to the sacrament of Marriage and the family. In this area woman’s dignity and irreplaceable mission are greatly emphasized. Together with the man she is the minister of the sacrament of Marriage (n. 1623) and from that sacrament she receives the grace to love “with a supernatural love that is sensitive and fruitful” (n. 1642) in the bond of indissolubility and chaste fidelity (cf. nn. 1643-1648) and in the generous willingness to welcome life and to care for her children (cf. nn. 1652-1653). Furthermore, by her example of self-denial and active charity, woman--wife and mother--is called to make her family a “domestic church” in which God is known, honored, prayed to and witnessed to in a holy life. In this holy environment she exercises her baptismal priesthood, handing on and nourishing the faith in her children and giving them a Christian upbringing (cf. nn. 1656-1657; 2685). Those who can say that they learned the faith of Mother Church at their own mother’s knee know how important and decisive this is in giving direction to their lives. Often behind great saints there are holy mothers. Most often, however, they remain in the background or--like Mary--they act as a monstrel.

The Catechism does not fail to consider the great perils which today threaten the dignity of woman and thus the integrity of the family. When woman wanders from the way of the Lord she may disfigure the maternal face of God (cf. n. 239); she ceases to be an image of his loving tenderness and, rather than placing herself at the service of life, she rejects it in the name of an ill-conceived emancipation, as though maternity--with all the duties and sacrifices it entails--were a burden and enslavement rather than a gift and an honor. Here then is the scourge of abortion (cf. n. 2271) and, next to it, many other temptations which can distract woman--as much as man--from her noble task and lead her on the road to perversion and self-destruction (cf. n. 2353). Such is not only the rejection of motherhood, but also the pretext of producing children by manipulating the laws of nature (cf. nn. 2376-2378).

### **The consecrated woman**

As if to neutralize the disastrous consequences of these rampant forms of desecrating life, the charism of consecrated virginity also exists in the Church (cf. nn. 918-933). There are woman who, through a special vocation beyond the natural level, offer themselves to God with an

undivided heart and anticipate in time the eternal reality of the mystical marriage of Christ and His Church. The Catechism notes, quoting the rite of the consecration of virgins, that they are “the transcendent sign of love of the Church for Christ, the eschatological image of the heavenly Bride of the life to come” (n. 923). Precisely because of their total dedication to God these women become universal mothers in the order of grace and by their presence they offer the Church and mankind, especially the most materially and spiritually poor and needy, an inexhaustible source of charity, tender compassion and consolation.

Like a spring of water, hidden but full of boundless spiritual life, is the presence of consecrated women in the monastic and contemplative life (cf. nn. 2687-2691). Their radical separation from the world in order to live in God’s presence in pure offering and unceasing prayer, makes them closer to all people and renders them, in a certain way, the soul of every other vocation or mission in the Church, this is so because prayer is the “living source” which nourishes faith and charity and makes their works bear fruit.

The Catechism, however briefly, has not failed to indicate among the guides of the spiritual life and the teachers of prayer, some women who, by sanctifying themselves in the silence of the cloister, have enriched the Church with that “wisdom of the heart” which alone makes us appreciate God (cf. nn. 2558; 2704;2709). Furthermore we are reminded that “in the catacombs the Church is often depicted as a woman in prayer with arms open, raised in prayer...” (cf. n. 1368).

Perhaps this wonderful, touching image--and there are many of them living, visible or hidden--would be sufficient to erase all the deferred images of woman that mar the social environment and make “the world ugly” in the eyes of those who cannot see spiritual beauty: the consoling beauty which is the reflection of the glory of God in the Blessed Virgin Mary and in souls in which the Church is the perpetually young virgin-bride-mother (cf. n. 2502).

(“L’OSSERVATORE ROMANO”, July 21, 1993, Reprinted with permission, “*THY KINGDOM COME*”, Volume 97, No. 3)

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## **New Jersey Right TO LIFE (NJRTL) 26<sup>th</sup> Annual Convention, Saturday, 3/21/98**

At the **Double Tree Hotel, Somerset, NJ**, from 9 AM to 4 PM, Saturday, 3/21/98, *New Jersey Right to LIFE (NJRTL)* will hold its **26<sup>th</sup> Annual Convention** featuring **Alan Keyes, Father Benedict Groeschel, CFR, and Dr. Bernard Nathanson.**

(from “*New Jersey Right to Life (NJRTL) Pro-life Watch*” Winter 1997)

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## **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**.

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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 Christ 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.

### **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.

## **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.**

### **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.

### **Pilgrimage to the Shroud of Turin Exhibit and Medjugorje, 5/1/98 -5/15/98.**

Last chance to take this pilgrimage of a lifetime to see the **Shroud of Turin Exhibit**, Eucharistic and Marian Shrines in **Italy** and **Medjugorje**. Depart from **Newark** on *Friday, 1 May 1998* and return on *Friday, 15 May 1998*. Package price: **\$2499** plus **\$79** transfer fees and **\$60** travel insurance. Call the **Pilgrims of Faith Marian Center (PFMC)**, (609) 768-9228, for information sheet.

### **Pilgrimage to Paris, Lisieux and Lourdes, France, 7/2 - 7/9/98, with option to Medjugorje, 7/9 - 7/14/98**

A breathtaking experience of healing. Package price: **\$1999** including taxes and transfer fees. Option cost is **\$899**. Call the **Pilgrims of Faith Marian Center (PFMC)**, (609) 768-9228, for information sheet.

**“God’s Love for Us” – A RETREAT**

## AROUND THE **PFMC** AREA

### **SAINT PATRICK'S PARADE – Trenton, NJ – 3/14/98**

Join **Father John McFadden** and pray the Rosary in the **Trenton, NJ, Saint Patrick's Day Parade, Saturday, 14 March 1998** starting at **Saint Anthony's Church** on Olden Avenue about **12:30 PM**. The parade will go about 1 mile to **Immaculate Conception Chrch.** The parade **Grand Marshalls** are **Jim and Geraldine McSorley**, dear friends of the **PFMC**.

### **CATHOLIC RADIO**

Listen to **Geraldine McSorley** and her guests on **Irish Aires, WBCB-AM 1490, Saturdays 7:30 AM to 9:30 AM**.

Listen to **Dominic Lettieri** and his guests on **Putting It on the Line, WTMR-AM 800, Monday thru Friday, 5 PM to 6 PM**. Listen for his announcements for the **Catholic Unity Conference and Arts Festival** at the **Valley Forge Convention Center, Thursday, 18 June 1998 thru Sunday, 21 June 1998**.

### **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 \$150 includes Friday and Saturday overnight, Breakfast and Lunch and Supper Saturday, and Breakfast and Lunch on Sunday.** See enclosed flyer and reservation form.

### **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 **The PILGRIM**

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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!"**

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 **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)**.

In **April**, the Church celebrates the Solemnities of **PASSION (PALM) SUNDAY (5)**, and **EASTER SUNDAY (12)**, the Feast of **Saint Mark, Evangelist (25)**, the Memorials of **Saints Francis of Paola (2), Isidore of Seville (4), Anselm (21), George, Martyr (23), Fidelis of Sigmaringen (24), Peter Chanel (28), Louis de Monfort (28), Catherine of Siena (29) and Pius V, Pope (30)**. The **EASTER TRIDUUM** is **Holy Thursday (9), Good Friday (10) and Holy Saturday (11)**.

The **FEAST of DIVINE MERCY**, not yet officially recognized by the **Magisterium** of the **Roman Catholic Church**, is celebrated by many churches as requested by Jesus in his Apparitions to **Blessed Faustina Kawalska** on the **SECOND SUNDAY of EASTER (19)**. The **DIVINE MERCY NOVENA** starts on **Good Friday (4/10/98)**.