



The PILGRIM

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January 2003

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

A PRAYER



O Lord, we give You the little pieces of pain in our hearts. We give you the weary moments, and those moments when our heart is tired or worried. We endure that pain for it is the most perfect giving of oneself.

Holy Spirit, You are infinite Love giving Yourself for us. You live and abide in our soul. You illuminate our souls, warm our hearts with celestial tenderness and joy, and fill us with fortitude.

Help us to carry in our hearts an image of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. Teach us the joy in suffering. Allow our spirit to be purified and our soul to glow with Love. Show us the consolations of the Holy Spirit. Sweetly answer our needs. **AMEN**

(Kathleen prays from the heart for each issue)

WANT to LEARN to PRAY the "LITURGY of the HOURS"?

On **Thursday, January 9, 2003**, at 7:30 PM, Father Glenn Hartman will be in the Upper Room of Epiphany House at the PFMC, 61 Cooper Road, Voorhees, NJ. He will teach the "mechanics" of praying the "Liturgy of the Hours." This is the prayer for the Church and the Church's prayer for the laity. It is prayer of psalms, and readings, and teachings to help you "pray always." The only requirement is that each attendee has a "Liturgy of the Hours" book and 2003 Saint Joseph guide if using the single volume book. We have ordered the single volume book and guide books for those already registered.

Please call the PFMC at (856) 768-9228 if you have not yet signed up for this class.

The MESSAGE alleged to be from the GOSPA, Our Lady, Queen of Peace, to an alleged visionary from Medjugorje, Bosnia-Herzegovina for December is presented beginning on page 12 (on the centerfold pages) with the respective REFLECTION article and PRESS BULLETIN.

A follow-up class will be held on **Thursday, January 30, 2003**, beginning promptly at 7:30 PM. See "Food for Thought" on page 20.

"DAUGHTERS of RUTH"

Group I of the "Daughters of Ruth" support group will resume weekly meetings on **Tuesday, January 14, 2003** at 10 AM promptly. It will again be led by Irene Atwell, certified therapist.

This group discussing women's issues will be made up of those women who previously attended the Tuesday sessions. Group II, previously meeting on Wednesday, has disbanded. Group I has decided to accept new women to the group during the January sessions. Anyone requesting to join this group should call the PFMC at (856) 768-9228.

(Kathleen for Irene and the "Daughters of Ruth")

FATHER BILL McCARTHY to TEACH a TRIDUUM SEMINAR JANUARY 25, 26, AND 27, 2003

The PFMC will host Father Bill McCarthy, M.Ss.A., co-founder of My Father's House, www.myfathershouse.com, in a Triduum study of "THE TABERNACLE (OLD TESTAMENT TO NEW TESTAMENT), THE LAMB'S SUPPER, THE 7 COVENANTS OF THE OLD TESTAMENT AND ONE OF THE NEW TESTAMENT, THE EUCHARIST, and the SACRAMENTAL SYSTEM".

We can accommodate 80 persons in the Upper Rood of the Epiphany House at 61 Cooper Road in Voorhees, NJ. So please sign up for this wonderful weekend NOW. The time of this teaching will be from 9 AM to about 5 PM on Saturday, 1/25/2003,

"The PILGRIM" for January 2003 is dedicated to "Mary, whose brightness illumines the darkness of the world." See page 3 for Table of Contents / "IN THIS ISSUE".

and Sunday, 1/26/2003, but 9 AM to about 3 PM on Monday, 1/27/2003.

The donation for the three days is planned at \$70 per person and will include a light lunch Saturday, Sunday and Monday. (If anyone knows someone who will donate the lunches for the people on retreat, we could reduce the program to \$45 per person.)

You may charge this or any other event donation on your Visa, MasterCard, or Discover credit card.

A ONE DAY RETREAT with FATHER ROBERT DeGRANDIS – WEDNESDAY, 12 FEBRUARY 2003

**A DAY of PRAYER for FORGIVENESS and
HEALING for SEXUALLY, EMOTIONALLY,
and PHYSICALLY ABUSED WOMEN**

On WEDNESDAY, February 12, 2003, Father Robert DeGrandis will hold a day of prayer, forgiveness, and healing for women who have been abused physically, emotionally, or sexually. Social workers, counselors, crisis pregnancy staff and physicians working in this area are also welcome and encouraged to come.

It will be held at the PFMC, Epiphany House from 8:30 AM and close with Healing Holy Mass at 4 PM.

If you are interested in such a day, please call the PFMC, 1-800-788-MARY [6279] or (856) 768-9228 for more information, and for a registration form if you do not find one enclosed in this issue of "The PILGRIM." This will be limited to about 50 women.

RETREAT CONFERENCE (RC) and 3 DAY EXTENSION (3DX), March 14th through 19th 2003 – PLEASE MAKE RESERVATIONS NOW

The theme will be "He must increase; I must decrease." (John 3:30) [NAB].

The Hilton Hotel, Cherry Hill, NJ will be the site for the PFMC March 14th, 15th, and 16th 2003 RETREAT CONFERENCE (RC) and the 3 day extension (3DX)

March 17th, 18th, and 19th, 2003. Music for the RC will be provided by "REFUGE" the Metuchen Diocese Charismatic Prayer Group musicians who play for the New Jersey Charismatic Conference at Seton Hall. "VOYAGE" will present a short concert and sing for Holy Mass on Friday night, 3/14/03.

Guest speakers will be Father Bill Halbing, Father Andrew Apostoli, and Father Robert DeGrandis.

Joseph Terelya and his interpreter will be featured before the Concert with Father Michael Semana on Saturday night.

The 3DX speakers will again be Dorothea DeGrandis Sudol and Father Robert DeGrandis. Our 3DX theme will be "*INNER HEALING and GIFTS of the HOLY SPIRIT.*" Carl and Martie Granieri with Hearts Afire will provide the music for the 3DX.

The Hilton Hotel is accepting room reservations for the 2003 PFMC RC and 3DX. Please call 1-800-HILTONS or the Hilton Hotel locally at (856) 665-6666 to make your hotel reservation. Rooms are \$92 per room and will accommodate 2 persons in a king bed or up to 4 persons in two double beds. Cots are also available, but **must be arranged for prior to arrival. Refrigerators in rooms must also be arranged for ahead of time.** You must guarantee your room with a one-night charge on your credit card. Cancellation must be **72 hours prior** to the event. Please request smoking or non-smoking rooms ahead of time, but these are not guaranteed. The Hilton Hotel holds to a first-come first-served basis on their non-smoking rooms. Blocks of rooms and, where possible, entire floors are either non-smoking or smoking.

Please note that a youth program will be available. With over 120 youth at our last Youth Track (YT), we know that this is an important part of the program. Please register your youth and young adults.

Please note on the registration form if you want the luncheons or dinners available. These will **ALL be full hot meals**, and are well worth every penny. Those who attended had their fill, and raved about the food and dining atmosphere.

Bishop DiMarzio has given us permission to have daily Holy Mass, 24 hour Eucharistic Adoration, and Confessions available.

A four page green information package with

The volunteer Board of Directors and Staff of the PFMC recognize and accept that the final authority regarding the alleged Marian apparitions, locutions and related messages at, and to the recipients from, Medjugorje, Bosnia-Herzegovina, as well as all other private revelations, rests with the Holy See, to whose judgment we willingly submit. We give total allegiance to our One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church and its Magisterium, particularly Our Holy Father, Pope John Paul II. See page 5 for additional PFMC information. While those presenters who work with the PFMC are selected for their personal qualifications and commitment to the Church, their comments and presentations are those of individual Catholics and no endorsement by ecclesiastical authority is to be presumed.

registration forms is enclosed. Please make your hotel and PFMC reservations EARLY! Please reserve the weekend of 14-16 March 2003 to be with us and, if possible, join us for Saint Patrick's and Saint Joseph's days during the 3DX, 17-19 March 2003.

(Kathleen and Keith for All the PFMC)

PILGRIMAGE to ASSISI, MEDJUGORJE and ROME

Father John Tino from Saint Joan of Arc Parish, Jackson Heights, NY, will be the spiritual director for a pilgrimage of peace departing March 19th, 2002 and returning on March 28th, 2003.

Fly into Rome and transfer by bus to Assisi for 2 days and one night. Then fly to Split on Croatia Air and transfer to a motor coach for the trip to Medjugorje. You will be in Medjugorje until March 26th.

Hotel and house accommodations are planned for double occupancy with private bathroom. Single occupancy requires a single supplement. The house in Medjugorje will be just a short walk away from Saint James Church.

You will have a full daily program of prayer, talks, meeting visionaries, as they are available, climbing Cross Mountain and Apparition Hill. You will be in Medjugorje for the Anniversary on March 25th.

On the 26th you will return to Rome where you will tour the Catacombs and the Major Basilicas, visit the Vatican museum and Sistine Chapel, and pray at a private mass in Saint Peters Basilica.

The cost for airfare, hotels, housing, guides, transfers and taxes and ALL BREAKFASTS AND SUPPERS throughout is \$1696 plus \$99 tax per person. Deposit is \$500. See the light blue information sheet and reservation form enclosed in this issue of "The PILGRIM." If interested call Kathleen at (856) 768-9228 to register. We need names and deposits NOW.

FATHER HAMPSCH TAPES

There have been many requests for the tapes for the 18-20 October 2002 Seminar on Spiritual Warfare given by Father John Hampsch.

Enclosed with this issue of "The PILGRIM" is an order form to be sent to CATHOLIC FOCUS or called in to 1-800-TAPES 123 for ordering one or more of these wonderful tapes.

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FATHER McCARTHY to LEAD a RETREAT WEEKEND for MARRIED COUPLES - MAY 16, 17, and 18, 2003

Take the time as a married couple to explore the marriage covenant, and how the Holy Spirit can and does work in your lives. Do you want something new in your marriage? Are you seeking something more to fulfill you and your marriage? Is there something lacking or something you want to celebrate together? Explore with Father Bill the beauty and richness, the mountains and valleys, the joys and tears of the sacrament of marriage.

We will have special rates for you at the Holiday Inn Express just around the corner from the PFMC. The hours of the Retreat are currently planned to be from

7 PM to 10 PM on FRIDAY, MAY 16, 2003 and 9 AM to 5 PM on SATURDAY and SUNDAY, MAY 17 and 18, 2003. The registration donation is planned at \$80 per couple and includes a delicious lunch each day. We are planning comfortable seating for 40 couples.

If there is sufficient interest, this retreat weekend for married couples may be moved to a local hotel to accommodate more couples with overnight accommodations available on site. Early registration is requested to assist in making this latter decision.

We hope that you will take advantage of this wonderful weekend and **register early**. We accept Visa, MasterCard, and Discover. Call the PFMC at (856) 768-9228 for an information sheet and registration form if you do not find one enclosed in this issue of "The PILGRIM." God bless you.

HUMANITARIAN AID to the DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

There will be a Medical Mission from September 27, 2003 to October 11, 2003. If you are a Doctor (particularly a specialist) or a nurse, and would like to be part of this mission, please call Fay or Edwina or Kathleen or Liz at (856) 768-9228 or 1-800-788-MARY [6279]. The staff has established through the Diocese of Puerto Plata, a Humanitarian Aid Program and a Medical Mission. This program will be directly working with the parishes of the poor and sick. We have three orphanages that we will help, and several clinics and the hospital. We will also be helping with the Seminarian Program.

We have now put in place the ability to continue with aid to this very poor third world country. After talking with a representative from the office of Bishop Gregorio Nicanor Pena Rodriguez, we are asking our readers for help on a regular basis with the following:

Donations of money to support the seminarians, who are studying English. This money will be used to buy the second edition of English books for them to use. It will also help with buying them English Bibles, and Catechisms, and shipping them there.

We are collecting little girls white first communion dresses and veils. Attached to each dress should be the owners name and address and a little note to the girl who would be wearing this dress and veil. Often they will get back a note of thank you.

We need medicines to send to the medical clinic that ministers only to the very poor and destitute. Servas

de Maria is run by the nuns, and Sister Blanca is in charge of the many demands of the clinics.

We also have a long list of medications the Sisters can use, but we need to get a doctor involved in getting them. If you are a doctor and reading this, or if you are a representative / sales person from a drug house, would you please get in contact with Kathleen for a larger list of antibiotics and drugs that are needed.

Please respond to God's call to join us in our Medical Mission, or to help with needed goods to send to the Orphanages and the Medical Clinics. We can use a lot of support. We are especially looking for Pediatricians, Neurologists, Surgeons, and specialists in the area of diabetes. Nurses will help with clinic work, and lay people will help with paperwork or in the Orphanages.

If you can help us collect toys for little girls up to ages 15, or new clothing for children up to this age, please send it or bring it to the PFMC.

If you can help with finances to package and FEDEX packages direct to the Bishop's office, we would be most grateful. A 50 # box costs about \$100. If you know anyone going to Puerto Plata who can hand carry a large duffel bag of goods with them, please have them call Fay or Kathleen.

Since the Bosnian War the PFMC has been involved with many Humanitarian Aid projects. We are quite excited about this particular project, especially since we have seen the true poverty of this country. We ask each of you to look into your hearts and hear God's call to help. We can't do a whole lot, but we sure can make a tiny dent.

Please mail all checks or materials to **PFMC, 61 Cooper Road, Voorhees, NJ 08043**. Thank you.

MAIN SPEAKER for the MARCH 2003 PFMC RC

Father Bill Halbing attended Immaculate Conception Seminary in Mahwah, NJ. Ordained a priest for the Archdiocese of Newark on October 30, 1982. People come from all over the tri-state area and from other areas to attend his Bible Studies, Instruction Classes, and Days of Recollection at Saint Antoninus where he is the pastor. He has been the guest speaker at numerous Youth Conferences at the Franciscan University at Steubenville, Ohio; Days of Renewal; Parish Missions; and Children's Bible Conferences. He has traveled to Guyana and Eastern Europe to preach God's Word. He has been involved

in door to door inner city evangelization and Hispanic Ministry. Father Bill received a Master of Divinity in 1982, and MA in Judeo/Christian Studies in 2000, both from Seton Hall University.

Father Bill's charismatic personality captivates his audience, and instills in them a desire to learn, to and to evangelize. His knowledge and ability to teach is unchallenged. He has a great ability to intertwine his sense of humor with his spiritual knowledge.

We hope that you will make all efforts to EARLY register for our March Retreat Conference. Rooms are filling quickly at the Hilton Hotel. Tell your friends not to miss this wonderful spiritual and healing event.

FATHER ANDREW APOSTOLI, C.F.R - RC SPEAKER

Father Andrew Apostoli is a member of the Community Servants of the Franciscan Friars of the Renewal (CFR). He is well known for his many talks on Eternal Word Television Network (EWTN).

Along with his retreats and parish missions, and prayer groups, millions have been endeared to him for his wisdom, profound Catholic teachings, and his sense of humor.

Young people are especially attracted to him because he "tells it like it is" and is not afraid to challenge them to follow Christ more closely and, inspired by the Spirit, to live the truth in love.

We welcome Father Andrew Apostoli as one of our Major speakers for this retreat conference, and we encourage all to make their room reservations and register to hear his teachings.

FATHER ROBERT DeGRANDIS, S.S.J., RETURNS for RC and 3DX

Faithful is the word that we find for Father Robert. He has been there for the PFMC year after year, and we have all grown to love him and his teachings on forgiveness, and the Gifts of the Holy Spirit.

Father has held retreats and conferences world wide, has conducted priest and seminarian retreats in Rome, other areas in Italy, New Jersey and Brazil.

He has appeared on TV in New York and Los Angeles. And, he has conducted healing services throughout the world.

Father has written over 25 books and the PFMC carries all of his books on healing and ministry.

Father's charismatic gifts are so numerous, and he shares them with all so willingly. We embrace him as he speaks during the first 3 days of the RC, and joins his sister for 3 DX of continued Inner Healing.

Join him and Dottie for the 3 DX on Inner Healing March 17, 18, and 19, 2003.

MEET JOSYP TERELYA

Josyp Jaromyr Terelya is a mystic, a visionary, a suffering soul, and a victim of Communism. He is a nationalist, a rebel, and a Catholic activist. He has fought for the cause of Christianity all his life and in the most hostile of circumstances. He is an author and international speaker.

Presently living in Canada, Josyp grew up in the Ukraine. He suffered incarceration by the Communists, and was sent to mental hospitals where he suffered isolation and solitary confinement.

He is presently working with Pope John Paul for Christian Unity. Josyp will speak on Saturday afternoon and evening prior to the Concert. Josyp is headstrong and controversial. You will be spellbound by the LaSalette like messages and his witness to the resurrection of a Church that has survived the nightmare years of repression.

Don't miss his presentations.

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SPIRITUAL GUIDANCE: Father Glenn Hartman, Father John McFadden, Father Bill McCarthy, MSsA, Father Robert DeGrandis, SSSJ, Father Jim Sauchelli, Father Brendan Williams, Father Joseph Szolack, as well as many of *Mary's* other beloved priests from the

Philadelphia and Newark Archdioceses as well as the Camden, Harrisburg, Metuchen, Norwich, Pittsburgh, Scranton, Trenton and Wilmington Dioceses. Father Hartman is reviewing every issue.

Father Joseph Szolack, szolack@camdendiocese.org, is Dean of Men at Saint Charles Borromeo Seminary, Philadelphia, PA.

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

OUR M/C for the MARCH 2003 RC

Al Barbarino is recognized for his wonderful singing voice and his reverence for our Catholic faith. As a Lay Apostolate Franciscan of the Padre Pio Shelter in New York City, and a member of the Knights of Columbus, Al is a true follower of Jesus Christ. Everywhere he goes, he can be found evangelizing and ministering to the poor.

He and his wife Mary Ann have three grown children, a son in law and two granddaughters. His home parish is one of the foremost pro-life communities on Long Island, Saint Raymond in East Rockaway.

Al is retired from the New York City Board of Education as a Special Education Counselor, but he continues to work on a part time basis as a mentor / counselor in New York City Prisons. He regards this as a means of doing God's work even though he does not officiate in a ministerial capacity.

Over the last ten years, Al has recorded seven albums of spiritual and inspirational music. Sales proceeds are donated to support the less fortunate in society including the poor and homeless at the Padre Pio Shelter, war victims of Croatia and Bosnia, and the poor wherever he ministers.

Al's ministry has taken him across America, Europe, Canada, Philippines, Australia and New Zealand. He brings "the Word of God" through his music and words from his practical living experiences as a Catholic. In all, his great emphasis is on the Eucharist. He is found singing and praising God at some parish every weekend. In the Rockville Center Diocese he has sung in 57 parishes.

We will again welcome Al to our conference. He keeps the schedule going, and keeps all blessed between the talks.

EARLY SIGN UP for HOTEL ROOMS IS ENCOURAGED

We encourage all attending the Conference to sign up for their rooms **NOW**. We have a block of rooms and last year and the year before we sold out those rooms thusly making it necessary to stay outside the facility or to commute.

We encourage you to call the **Hilton Hotel at 1-800-HILTONS or (856) 665-6666 NOW**. Rooms are \$92 per room per night for one to 4 persons in a room. You must request your non-smoking or smoking room.

We have a hot luncheon with the speakers at \$20 per person available, and hot buffet luncheons available Sunday through Wednesday at \$20 each day. These are full all you can eat supper portion meals, and you could consider this your hot meal for the day, and eat lightly for supper. The hotel will also have a sandwich bar in the lobby available on these days, and a breakfast bar in the mornings.

Our YT this year will be fantastic. We have a full professional team that will be fully dedicated to your youth.

Please fully review the green information package with application / registration forms in this issue of "The PILGRIM." Clip out the application / registration form you wish to use, and send it to the PFMC with your check or charge card information with signature. Call the Hilton Hotel and make your overnight reservations. Then mark your calendar for one of the more powerful spiritual events you have ever experienced.

THE 23RD PSALM---EXPLAINED

This is an eye opener; probably we never thought about it nor looked at this Psalm in this way, even though we say it over and over again.

The Lord is my Shepherd ----- That's Relationship!

I shall not want ----- That's Supply!

He maketh me to lie down in green pastures ---- That's Rest!

He leadeth me beside the still waters ----- That's Refreshment!

He restoreth my soul ----- That's Healing!

He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness ----- That's Guidance!

For His name sake ----- That's Purpose!

Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death ----- That's Testing!

I will fear no evil ----- That's Protection!

For Thou art with me ----- That's Faithfulness!

Thy rod and Thy staff they comfort me -----That's Discipline!

Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies -----That's Hope!

Thou annointest my head with oil ----- That's Consecration!

My cup runneth over ----- That's Abundance!

Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life ----That's Blessing!

And I will dwell in the house of the Lord -----That's Security!

Forever ---- That's Eternity!
Face it, the Lord is crazy about you.

(unknown source)

JESUS and SATAN

Jesus and Satan were having an ongoing argument about who was better at using the computer. They had been going at it for days, and God was tired of hearing all the bickering.

Finally, God said, "Cool it. I am going to set up a test which will take two hours and it will judge who does the better job."

So Satan and Jesus sat down at the keyboards and typed away. They moused. They did spreadsheets. They wrote reports. They sent e-mail. They sent out e-mail with attachments. They downloaded. They did some genealogy reports. They made cards. They did every known job. But, ten minutes before the time was up, lightening suddenly flashed across the sky, thunder rolled, the rain poured, and, of course, the electricity went off.

Satan stared at his blank screen and screamed every curse word known in the underworld. Jesus just sighed. The electricity finally flickered back on, and each of them restarted their computers. Satan started searching frantically screaming, "It's gone! It's all gone! I lost everything when the power went out!" Meanwhile, Jesus quietly started printing out all his files from the past two hours. Satan observed this and became even more irate. "Wait! He cheated! How did he do it?"

God just shrugged his shoulders and said:

"JESUS SAVES"

(Bernadette)

REDEEMING GRACE

We sometimes stumble along the way
And we cannot see the truth...
That God must have a reason
For the pain we're going through.
It helps to know we're growing
And each trial will make us strong...
And God will draw us near to Him
Because it's where we all belong.
Don't let the hard times throw you
And cause you to doubt your faith...
God is just to make things right;
He redeems us by His grace.

(Hope for Tomorrow - Jill Lemming)

PRAYER to the IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

O *Immaculate Mother, Queen of our country, Open our hearts, our homes, and our Land to the coming of Jesus, your Divine Son. With Him, reign over us, O Heavenly Lady, so pure and so bright with the radiance of God's Light shining in and about you. Be our Leader against the powers of evil set upon wresting the world of souls, redeemed at such a great cost by the sufferings of your Son and of yourself, in union with Him, from that same Savior, Who loves us with infinite charity.*

We gather about you, O chaste and holy Mother, Virgin Immaculate, Patroness of our beloved Land, determined to fight under your banner of holy purity against the wickedness that would make all the world an abyss of evil, without God and without your loving maternal care. We consecrate our hearts, our homes, our Land to your most pure Heart, O Great Queen, that the kingdom of your Son, our Redeemer and our God, may be firmly established in us. We ask no special sign of you, sweet Mother, for we believe in your great love for us, and we place in you our entire confidence. We promise to honor you by faith, love, and the purity of our lives according to your desire.

Reign over us, then, O Virgin Immaculate, with your Son Jesus Christ. May His Divine Heart and your most chaste Heart be ever enthroned and glorified among us. Use us, your children of America, as your instruments in bringing peace among men and nations. Work your miracles of Grace in us, so that we may be a glory to the Blessed Trinity, Who created, redeemed, and sanctifies us.

May your valiant Spouse, Saint Joseph, with the holy Angels and Saints, assist you and us in 'renewing the face of the earth'. Then when our work is over, come, Holy Immaculate Mother, and as our Victorious Queen, lead us to the eternal kingdom, where your Son reigns forever as King.

Amen.

(Sister Mildred Mary Neuzil at the request of "Our Lady of America" October 5, 1956)

EVERY DAY WE'RE GIVEN the CHANCE to AVOID TRAPS and ADVANCE toward CHRIST - A BIT of SPIRITUAL WARFARE

We live forever! No matter how difficult and depressing life may seem, no matter how sad a situation may appear, there is always — literally — a light at the end of the tunnel!

But, before we view Heaven, we must realize that life is a test, a trial, and a battle. Every minute counts. We're put on this earth to claim Christ's victory. Every minute we're given tests of our love, humility, and trust. Every day we face trials to see if we've gained patience and long-suffering.

In recent days, we've been focusing on supernatural events. That's because the supernatural is at the heart of our Church (however much it is neglected). It is to guide us. Every day we're given opportunities to avoid the traps of Satan and advance toward the virtues of Jesus.

When we think of life as one big test, it becomes all the more meaningful. It makes more sense. It becomes exciting. When we see life as a challenge, those who suffer can comprehend their sufferings and those in pain—any kind of pain—now see it as a mere test that precedes eternity.

The problem in our times is that we try to find a material paradise. That's not in God's plan. There is no earthly utopia. Try as we might, we'll never find perfection in the physical. Such thinking is a deception at a time of great deception, and at a time when mankind is on an incredibly materialistic course.

Life is a test. Everything about us from the moment of conception to our final breath is watched closely by Heaven, and at every juncture there are events that may seem minor or even trivial but can carry tremendous meaning.

The people we meet, the locations in which we live, the work we do, the relatives we have, and the places we go, are all rich in meaning. Every aspect of life counts. God doesn't play with dice. There are no coincidences.

And there is no superiority. Everyone on earth is equal. God equally loves everyone. Everyone is given tests and sufferings (though some sufferings are more visible than others are), and everyone has the same chance to use the incredible opportunity of life to gain a splendid *afterlife*. Every moment is terrifically

precious because every single thing we do, think, or say counts with God.

We don't have this opportunity forever. Life goes by in a flash. While it may seem that seven or eight decades are a long time, to God a thousand years are like a single day (2 *Peter* 3:8).

Think about it. An average person lives about 912 months, or in the area of 27,750 days. Let's break it down further and express it as approximately 665,000 hours or perhaps 40 *million* minutes. Think of the things you can do in a minute. Think of the number of thoughts you can have or words you can say. Every tick of the clock counts, and forty million minutes further reduces to 2.4 *billion* seconds.

That sounds awesome, but to God such figures, such numbers, are child's play. To a God Who can keep track of every single living creature on a planet, with more than six billion people, and trillions of other life forms right to the one-celled amoebas (and Who can also keep track of billions of other stars and planets), keeping track of our lives is certainly no big deal.

And that's what He does: He keeps track of every single thing we ever do or say. He even records our thoughts. He watches everything that passes through our minds and monitors what we hold onto and what we reject.

We have responsibility we have for the priceless time we're given on earth. Every moment that we live has tremendous potential for good or evil and every moment of life brings us closer to or takes us farther from God. Every minute counts. We can pray in that moment, we can love in that moment, we can praise God in the tick of a clock, but we can also latch onto a hateful or lustful or otherwise damaging way of thinking and detract from our eventual judgment.

My point is that God wastes nothing and not a single thing we do is meaningless. God isn't a cruel God. While death seems terrifying to us, once we look back from the afterlife we'll see that it's not a bad thing. It's nothing to fear. In fact, as I said, it should be a happy experience. If we're prepared, if we live the rest of our lives as God wants, if we're in tune with the Holy Spirit, it's not only a pleasant experience but an exhilarating one.

From the moment of birth all of us are given countless opportunities to do good and at the end of our lives, in a way we cannot fully perceive, God will instantly analyze how we have handled ourselves each of those 2.4 billion seconds and how much we have purified ourselves, how much we have risen above Original Sin. He will evaluate how much we have helped reclaim what Adam and Eve lost.

Life on earth is transient and passing. To find the best place in the afterlife, let me repeat, we must prepare every waking moment. There is never a second to lose. We need to start right now—this minute. Earth is merely a testing ground. We're not to obsessively hold onto any aspect of personal life any more than we hold onto an old grammar school classroom. Every day, in many ways, we find ourselves tested. We're tested for our faith. We're tested for our humbleness. We're tested for our patience. Most of all we're tested to see how much we love. With each personal trial our spirits grow and we have that much more understanding. With each successful trial we gain brighter heavenly apparel. It awaits those who have fought the good fight and who have loved Jesus.

There is nothing to fear for those who have followed His teachings.

Heaven is an incomparable joy, and most of us will one day reside in it.

As the *Catechism* says, "This mystery of blessed communion with God and all who are in Christ is beyond all understanding and description."

(adapted from Michael H. Brown's *After Life*)

POWERFUL DELIVERANCE PRAYER

Kyrrie eleison. God, our Lord, King of ages, All-powerful and All-mighty, you who made everything and who transform everything simply by your will. You who in Babylon changed into dew the flames of the "seven-times hotter" furnace and protected and saved the three holy children. You are the doctor and the physician of our soul. You are the salvation of those who turn to you. We beseech you to make powerless, banish, and drive out every diabolic power, presence and machination; every evil influence, malefice, or evil eye and all evil actions aimed against your servant. . . where there is envy and malice, give us an abundance of goodness, endurance, victory, and charity. O Lord, you who love man, we beg you to reach out your powerful hands and your most high and might arms and come to our aid. Help us, who are made in your image, send the angel of peace over us, to protect us body and soul. May he keep at bay and vanquish every evil power, every poison or malice invoked against us by corrupt and envious people. Then, under the protection of your authority may we sing, in

gratitude, "The Lord is my salvation; whom should I fear?" I will not fear evil because you are with me, my God, my strength, my powerful Lord, Lord of peace, Father of all ages. Yes, Lord our God, be merciful to us, your image, and save your servant . . . from every threat or harm from the evil one, and protect him by raising him above all evil. We ask you this through the intercession of our Most Blessed, Glorious Lady, Mary ever Virgin, Mother of God, of the most splendid archangels and all yours saints.

Amen."

(<http://www.SpiritDaily.com>, November 23, 2002)

ANIMA CHRISTI

Soul of Christ, sanctify me;
Body of Christ, save me;
Blood of Christ, inebriate me;
Water from the side of Christ, wash me;
Passion of Christ, strengthen me;
O good Jesus, hear me;
Within your wounds, hide me
Let me never be separated from you;
From the evil one, protect me;
At the hour of my death, call me;
And bid me come to you;
That with your saints, I may praise you
Forever and ever.

Amen.

(<http://www.SpiritDaily.com>, November 23, 2002)

PRAYER AGAINST EVERY EVIL

Spirit of our God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, Most Holy Trinity, Immaculate Virgin Mary, angles, archangels, and saints of Heaven, descend upon me. Please purify me, Lord, mold me, fill me with yourself, use me. Banish all the forces of evil from me, destroy them, vanquish them, so that I can be healthy and do good deeds. Banish from me all spells, witchcraft, black magic, malefice, ties, maledictions, and the evil eye; diabolic infestations, oppressions, possessions; all that is evil and sinful, jealousy, perfidy, envy; physical, psychological, moral, spiritual, diabolical ailments. Burn all these evils in hell, that they may never again touch me or any other creature in the entire world. I

command and bid all the powers who molest me - by the power of God all powerful, in the name of Jesus Christ our Savior, through the intercession of the Immaculate Virgin Mary - to leave me forever, and to be consigned into the everlasting hell, where they will be bound by Saint Michael the archangel, Saint Gabriel, Saint Raphael, our guardian angels, and where they will be crushed under the heel of the Immaculate Virgin Mary.

<http://www.SpiritDaily.com>, November 23, 2002)

PRAYER for INNER HEALING

Lord Jesus, you came to heal our wounded and troubled hearts. I beg you to heal the torments that cause anxiety in my heart; I beg you, in a particular way, to heal all who are the cause of sin. I beg you to come into my life and heal me of the psychological harms that struck me in my early years and form the injuries that they caused throughout my life. Lord Jesus, you know my burdens. I lay them all on your Good Shepherd's Heart. I beseech you - by the merits of the great, open wound in your heart - to heal the small wounds that are in mine. Heal the pain of my memories, so that nothing that has happened to me will cause me to remain in pain and anguish, filled with anxiety.

Heal, O Lord, all those wounds that have been the cause of all the evil that is rooted in my life. I want to forgive all those who have offended me. Look to those inner sores that make me unable to forgive. you who came to forgive the afflicted of heart, please, heal my own heart. Heal, my Lord Jesus, those intimate wounds that cause me physical illness. I offer you my heart. Accept it, Lord, purify it and give me the sentiments of your Divine Heart. Help me to be meek and humble.

Heal me, O Lord, from the pain caused by the death of my loved ones, which is oppressing me. Grant me to regain peace and joy in the knowledge that you are the Resurrection and the Life. Make me an authentic witness to your Resurrection, your victory over sin and death, your living presence among us.

Amen.

<http://www.SpiritDaily.com>, November 23, 2002)

PRAYER for DELIVERANCE

My Lord, you are all powerful, you are God, you are Father. We beg you through the intercession and help of the archangels Michael, Raphael, and Gabriel, for the deliverance of our brothers and sisters who are enslaved by the evil one. All saints of heaven, come to our aid. From anxiety, sadness, and obsessions, We beg you. Free us, O Lord. From hatred, fornication, envy, We beg you. Free us, O Lord. From thoughts of jealousy, rage, and death. We beg you. Free us, O Lord. From every thought of suicide and abortion. We beg you. Free us, O Lord. From every form of sinful sexuality. We beg you. Free us, O Lord. From every division in our family, and every harmful friendship. We beg you. Free us, O Lord. From every sort of spell, malefice, witchcraft, and every form of the occult. We beg you. Free us, O Lord.

Lord, you who said, "I leave you peace, my peace I give you", grant that, through the intercession of the Virgin Mary, we may be liberated from every evil spell and enjoy your peace always. In the name of Christ, our Lord.

Amen.

<http://www.SpiritDaily.com>, November 23, 2002)

WHAT IS BLESSED SALT?

There is a renewed interest today in the ancient sacramental of blessed salt, especially by charismatics, in healing and deliverance situations, etc. To understand its proper use and its efficacy, it would be helpful to review the Scriptural symbolism and its history, since Vatican II urges us to participate "intelligently and actively" in the use of sacramentals, just as in the use of Sacraments.

Salt in the ancient world was a precious commodity (even monopolized by the royalty in Egypt and Persia). Roman soldiers were partially paid with packets of salt ("sal" in Latin); this was the origin of our word "salary" and of phrases like "worth his salt,". Being costly, it was an appropriate offering to God as a "covenant of salt" (Lev.2:13; II Chron. 13:5; Num. 18:19) used in sacrifices by the Israelites (Ezek. 43:24) and for the accompanying sacrificial meal (Gen.31:54).

Belief in its preservative and healing properties led to its use to dry and harden the skin of newborns (Ezek. 16:4) and to prevent umbilical cord infection. Used

for 3500 years to preserve meats from deterioration, it became a symbol of preservation and spiritual incorruptibility that was to characterize anyone offering sacrificial worship. Shared at the sacrificial meal, salt became a symbol of friendship and hospitality, a custom-symbol still used today in Arab culture. Jesus referred to this salt-symbolized friendship covenant in Mark 9:50; “Have salt in yourselves and be at peace with one another” – that is, “preserve that quality (flavor) that makes you a blessing to one another.” (Note the double symbol of preservation and flavoring).

This double primary symbolization is also found in Paul’s advice in Col. 4:6; “Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone.” That is, let it be wholesome and savory, preserved from the corrupting conversation of worldlings (Col. 3:8 and Eph. 4:29). (His use of the word salt may also have referred to another of its symbols: spiritual wisdom, since the Latin word for savor or taste, “sapientia”, is the same as for wisdom.)

Some or all of these symbols may have been implied in Jesus’ words to his chosen ones, describing them as the “salt of the earth” (Matt. 5:13). He especially indicated that they were to oppose the world’s corruption, reminding them that, as salt must preserve its own anti-corruptive quality, they too must preserve their anti corruptive influence in a sin-corrupted world. (see Luke 14:34)

The blessing promised by God on food and water, as well as the prevention of miscarriages and agricultural catastrophies (Exod. 23:25-26) was extended by God through Elisha in Jericho (II Kings 2:20-21), when he was inspired to put salt into the contaminated water. Adding salt to already brackish water to decontaminate it, made the miracle all the more impressive, since one would expect the opposite effect. This first miracle of Elisha is the primary Scriptural basis for the sacramental use of blessed salt today, as the Roman Rituals indicates.

As a Catholic sacramental, salt blessed by the liturgical prayer of a priest may be used by itself, unmixed, as in exorcisms, and formerly in the exorcistic prayer at baptism, or it may be mixed with water to make holy water, as the Ritual prescribes (reminiscent of Elisha’s miracle). In whichever form, it is intended to be an instrument of grace to preserve one from the corruption of evil occurring as sin, sickness, demonic influence, etc.

As in the case of all sacramentals, its power comes not from the sign itself, but by means of the Church’s official (liturgical, not private) prayer of blessing – a

power the Church derives from Christ himself (see Matt. 16:19 and 18:18). As the Vatican II document on the Liturgy states (article 61), both Sacraments and sacramentals sanctify us, not of themselves, but by power flowing from the redemptive act of Jesus, elicited by the Church’s intercession to be directed through those external signs and elements. Hence sacramentals like blessed salt, holy water, medals, etc. are not to be used superstitiously as having self contained power, but as “focus-points” funneling one’s faith toward Jesus, just as a flag is used as a focus-point” of patriotism, or as handkerchiefs were used to focus faith for healing and deliverance by Paul (Acts 19-12).

Thus used non-superstitiously, modest amounts of salt may be sprinkled in one’s bedroom, or across thresholds to prevent burglary, in cars for safety, etc. A few grains in drinking water or used in cooking or as food seasoning often bring astonishing spiritual and physical benefits, as I have personally witnessed many times. As with the use of Sacraments, much depends on the faith and devotion of the person using salt or any sacramental. This faith must be Jesus-centered, as was the faith of the blind man in John 9; he had faith in Jesus, not in the mud and spittle used by Jesus to heal him.

In light of this we can see why Vatican II states that “there is hardly any proper use of material things which cannot thus be directed toward the sanctification of persons and the praise of God.” (article 61 of Liturgy document). Hence new sacramentals may also be added when rituals are revised (article 79).

Blessed salt is certainly not a new sacramental, but the Holy Spirit seems to be leading many to a new interest in its remarkable power as an instrument of grace and healing.

Any amount of salt may be presented to a priest for his blessing, using the following official prayer from the Roman Ritual:

“Almighty God, we ask you to bless this salt, as once you blessed the salt scattered over the water by the prophet Elisha.

Wherever this salt (and water) is sprinkled, drive away the power of evil, and protect us always by the presence of your Holy Spirit.

Grant this through Christ our Lord.

Amen.”

(Father John Hampsch C.M.F.)

MESSAGE of 12/25/2002 via Maria Pavlovic Lunetti

Dear Children! This is a time of great graces, but also a time of great trials for all those who desire to follow the way of peace. Because of that, little children, again I call you to pray, pray, pray, not with words but with the heart. Live my messages and be converted. Be conscious of this gift that God has permitted me to be with you, especially today when in my arms I have little Jesus - the King of Peace. I desire to give you peace, and that you carry it in your hearts and give it to others until God's peace begins to rule the world. Thank you for having responded to my call.

(The PFMC upholds the final decision of the Roman Catholic Church as to the authenticity of messages from Medjugorje.)

REFLECTION on the MESSAGE of 12/25/02

Also this Christmas, the Blessed virgin Mary gives birth to Jesus, leads us to Him and gives Him to us with the desire and the request that we receive Him as she has received Him. In the fullness of time, God the Father, in His eternal love and wisdom, approached Mary through the angel Gabriel, and asked her if she wanted to accept becoming the Mother of the Divine Child Jesus. God never forces anyone, but attracts; He offers His salvation and never imposes it. Mary spoke her "Yes" in the name of humanity entire, in the name of all generations, in the name of each one of us. Her "Yes" resounds until today. In Mary's body and heart there was place for God. God bent down to the creature – to Mary – asking her collaboration for His plan of salvation of man. God did not want to be only God. He also became man. The Creator wanted to become creature. This is how He showed the value of man and his capacity to receive and to welcome the Creator. The ways of God's love for man are unimaginable and inaccessible. God becomes small, insignificant, abandons Himself and gives Himself to men. God knows that man can make a home for Him in his life, and that is why He comes to him.

This is why, in this message, Mary again speaks to us the words: "*This is a time of great graces, but also a time of great trials*". In his letter, Saint James writes precisely about the utility of trials: "*My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience.*" (James 1:2-3). Our life's experience tells us that trials go together with grace. Mary's life confirms it, her life full of trials, suffering and burdens. In spite of it, she sang her Magnificat, because she discovered God as her only treasure. Mary, our Mother, is the most pure result of faith. During her whole life, even in her last trial, which was prophesied by the old Simeon during the Presentation in the Temple – that the sword of pain will pierce her soul – her faith has never wavered. He

never stopped to believe that the word of God would be accomplished.

Our faith can undergo severe trials. The world we live in, situations, events, injustices, experience of evil and suffering seems to contradict the Good News of this Christmas event – the Incarnation of God. We have to turn ourselves always again to the witnesses of faith. Hence, one of the most pure, most holy witnesses, one of the examples that stand before us is Mother Mary, whom God gives to us in these days and in this our time. She does not come with empty hands and with an empty heart: today, she holds in her hands the Saviour of the world, the King of Peace. This is how she came on the first day of her apparitions, and this contains the whole program of her messages, her invitations and her coming: to bring Jesus to us and to lead us to Jesus. The Mother does not cease to knock at the door of our hearts, as she knocked at the doors of the inhabitants of Bethlehem, that they may receive her with Jesus, whom she carried to them under her heart. Until today, she is not tired, although she has found many closed doors of our houses and of our hearts. Also in this Christmas night, she comes to us with Jesus. Let us not remain deaf and blind for this gift from heaven that opened itself to give us a home and warmth in our cold nights and houses. Let us not allow others near us to be cold because of our distance and selfishness.

We thank you, Mother Mary, for the Saviour whom you bring to us and to whom you give birth because of us!

(Father Ljubo Kurtović, OFM, Medjugorje, 12/26/02)

PRESS BULLETIN 181, 12/26/2002

A New Time In God's Way

We are entering into another new year. New minutes, new hours, new days are awaiting us... In the beginning of the year, we exchange congratulations

and best wishes. What do we wish to one another? What are our desires for one another? Are we greeting with the heart or only shaking hands and pronouncing courtesies? Media publish best wishes and messages given by different companies and organizations. Regularly, they wish us much success. However, is anybody asking the question what success means, who succeeds and in which way?

The time we live in runs after success. Progress and business accomplishments are the leading ideas in the world in which – according to its own logic – God should have no initiative and be unemployed. The world of trade understands only the language of profit and success at any price. In such a world, man wants to have everything under his control. Forgetting that everything is given to us, he even wants to control and dominate time, one of the most beautiful gifts. God gives it to us to walk towards Him.

God alone is the master of the time, but we all can use the time given to us by Him. God's time is the *kairos* – the right moment for the good and for spiritual growth. Often, papers publish ideas about a "new time", as if the time we have is not useful and good for man. On the contrary, this is a time of grace for each one individually. Our Lady knows it. This is precisely why, at this time, in Medjugorje, She calls us to move ahead meaningfully, and one can move ahead meaningfully only with Jesus who is the Way.

A new time is in front of us. It will be a new chance for us in proportion with our capacity to make an end to the old time and the old sinful man within us. Only Jesus – through the Church and in the sacraments – gives us a chance for the real fullness of life in the time that is before us. So, let us find time in this year to draw at the source of strength for Christian life – the sacraments. Let us not try to fix up of our time, but let us try to live it and to give it. If, as Christians, we do not find time for the One who has given us each moment of our life, then it is a sign that we become people who, in the year to come, will only wish success and business, and not life in time in God's way. Time that is used only to achieve success and profit is a path that leads straight to death, and I believe that each one of us wants to live!

We know that our life is in Jesus, but do we belong to Jesus? If we do not belong to him yet, let us do it in the time that is before us!

Father Mario Knezovic

Communions and Concelebrants

During the month of November, 35,000 received Holy Communion and 996 priests from this country and abroad concelebrated Holy Mass in Medjugorje.

The Second Death Anniversary of Father Slavko Barbaric

On the second death anniversary of Father Slavko Barbaric, on the solemnity of Christ the King, November 24th, many Croatian and foreign faithful and pilgrims came to Medjugorje. They prayed the rosary on Apparition Hill and celebrated the evening Holy Mass in the parish church.

Father Slavko accompanied Our Lady's apparitions in Medjugorje from their very beginnings and – thanks to the gifts received by God – he very soon became one of the most eminent apostles of Our Lady's messages. His whole life was woven into Medjugorje, he is buried here, and he remains forever present here. He knew how to incarnate the spirituality of Our Lady's messages through prayer and works. He was a man of Christ, a priest of Christ, a man of the Church. We thank him for all that he has done, we pray with him and for him, so that God's plans may be realised in Medjugorje and through Medjugorje!

Radio "Mir" Medjugorje: Celebration of the Fifth Anniversary

Radio "Mir" Medjugorje started broadcasting on November 25, 1997. On November 28th, 2002, Radio "Mir" Medjugorje celebrated solemnly the 5th anniversary of broadcasting and the end of the procedure of receiving permanent approvals, in the presence of hundreds of guests, listeners and friends of the radio. The programme of celebration began at 6 pm with Holy Mass at Saint James' parish church in Medjugorje, presided by Father Branko Rados, pastor of Medjugorje. The programme continued in the New Hall of the Parish by distribution of awards and rewards, as well as the promotion of the spiritual song of the year and the spiritual album of the year.

Father Mario Knezovic, Director of the ICMM and Radio Editor-in-Chief, greeted the guests at the beginning of the programme. Father Branko Rados, pastor of Medjugorje, Father Slavko Soldo, Herzegovinian Franciscan provincial, Father Miljenko Mica Stojic, for many years Director of the Information Centre "Mir" Medjugorje, and Father Ivan Landeka, pastor of Medjugorje at the time of the creation of this radio, also spoke to the assembly.

The Gold Medal of the Shrine of the Queen of Peace, for the contribution to the creation and the work of radio "Mir" Medjugorje was given to: Father Ivan Landeka, Father Miljenko Stojic and Ljubica Lukic and Ivo Mirko (posthumous). The Silver Medal of the Shrine of the Queen of Peace was given to: Marija Dugandzic, the first Chief-Editor of this Radio,

Nikica Dragoje, its technical director, as well as Bozidar Vacek and Drago Pilicki for the contribution to the technical development of the Radio.

Awards for the contribution to the work of radio "Mir" Medjugorje were given to: Ankica Cavar, Stipe Cavar, Davor Dragicevic, Huanita Dragicevic, Croatian Catholic Radio, Zeljko Sivric, Dragan Soldo, Visnja Spajic, Ivo Segoe, Kreso Segoe, Jure Vasilj and Vedrana Vidovic.

The spiritual album of the year is a CD by Ivo Separovic and the Octet Bljesak from Okucani, The spiritual song of the year was sung by Daniela Sisgoreo Morsan from Zagreb. The award for the best Franciscan Youth Song was given to the Franciscan Youth Fraternity from Siroki Brijeg. For the first time was sung the song "To Father Slavko" (Fra Slavku), written by Jakov Dzolic, composed by Vitimir Dugandzic and sung by Marija, Silvija and Ana Bosnjak.

Celebration of Saint Nicholas Day

On the feast of Saint Nicholas, December 6th, the children of the parish Medjugorje traditionally gather together to celebrate the feast of their beloved saint – Saint Nicolas. There was no end to their prayers, enthusiasm and joy. Numerous children from the parish gathered together for the Eucharistic celebration, and after Holy Mass Saint Nicolas came. He rewarded the children who had been good and those who were not always obedient were invited to be better, especially now as Christmas is approaching.

The Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception

On the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception, as usual, numerous pilgrims came to Medjugorje. Most numerous were Croatian and Italian pilgrims. On the day itself, the Rosary for Peace was prayed on Apparition Hill. About 2500 pilgrims participated in the evening Holy Mass.

Christmas at Medjugorje

The parishioners, the faithful from neighbouring parishes and the pilgrims prepared themselves for Christmas by a novena. In addition to the evening prayer program in church, the Rosary was prayed on Apparition Hill.

During Advent, two fasting and prayer seminars were conducted at "Domus Pacis", the House of Prayer. About 100 pilgrims Croatian and Austrian pilgrims participated in these seminars, desiring through prayer

and fasting to prepare for Christmas and to draw closer to the mystery of God born on earth.

During the Christmas holidays, peace prevailed in the shrine of the Queen of Peace with an atmosphere of prayer and unity among the faithful who arrived from all parts of the world. For Christmas itself, there were several hundreds of foreign pilgrims. On Christmas Eve, several thousands of pilgrims participated in evening Holy Mass. The Eucharistic celebration began at 10 p.m. with a prayer vigil that ended with Holy Mass at midnight. The feast of Christmas itself passed in the Christmas peace and joy of pilgrims and parishioners gathered around their Mother.

On December 17th, the Military orchestra from Mostar and the Parish Choir of the Queen of Peace from Medjugorje performed in the parish church their Christmas Concert, and on December 22, the Children's Choir from Dubrovnik "Little Singing Dubrovnik" and the small parish choir from Medjugorje "Little Doves of Peace" gave their Christmas Concert. The choirs so wished a Merry Christmas to the faithful and to Medjugorje pilgrims from all over the world.

Again, this year, the members of the "Cenacolo" community (former drug addicts) presented to the parishioners and the pilgrims a production of the Living Manger three times. Through a specific musical and scenic presentation, they showed to the faithful that they really live the motto of their community: "From darkness to light", and that it is possible to find a way from the hell of drugs and addiction to life.

Annual Apparition to Jakov on December 25th 2002

At the last daily apparition to Jakov Čolo on September 12th, 1998, Our Lady told him that henceforth he would have one apparition a year, every December 25th, on Christmas Day. This is also how it was this year. Our Lady came with the Child Jesus in her arms. The apparition began at 5:20 pm and lasted 7 minutes.

Our Lady gave the following message:

"Dear children! Today, on the day of love and peace, with Jesus in my arms, I call you to prayer for peace. Little children, without God and prayer you cannot have peace. Therefore, little children, open your heart so that the King of Peace may be born in your heart. Only in this way you can witness and carry God's peace to this peaceless world. I am with you and bless you with my motherly blessing."

Seminars at “Domus pacis”

In 2002, 48 different seminars took place in the house of prayer “Domus Pacis”.

Twenty-four “Prayer and Fasting” seminars were held for pilgrims from Austria, Germany, Poland, France, Ukraine, Russia, Italy, Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina. About 1000 faithful took part in them, deepening their faith in the Lord, while answering Our Lady’s call to prayer, fasting and inner silence. These seminars were held by Father Ljubo Kurtovic.

One hundred and forty-one members of the Franciscan Youth Fraternity from Herzegovina gathered together for 5 spiritual recollections.

The Franciscan School sisters led 7 seminars for young girls. One hundred and seventy-one girls took part in them.

Eleven spiritual seminars for 400 pilgrims were organized by different spiritual movements.

For “Prayer and Fasting” seminars, contact Father Ljubo Kurtovic, Zupni ured Medjugorje, Gospin trg 1, 88266 Medjugorje, Bosnia and Herzegovina. (Fax: 00 387 36 651 444)

The 14th International Youth Festival

Next year, the International Youth Prayer Gathering will take place as usually from July 31st to August 6th. The theme of the Festival is: “Through the Rosary Open Your Heart To Me.”

Things to bring with you: small FM radio with headphones, a Bible and umbrella.

All groups participating in the Youth Prayer meeting: please do not arrange or make plans for any other programs during this week.

During the time of the Youth Festival (except on Sunday) there will be no morning Masses for pilgrims. All pilgrims will attend the Evening Mass with youth.

During the whole Youth Festival, there will be simultaneous translation.

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

WHAT ARE THE CHARISMS of the HOLY SPIRIT?

In 1 Corinthians 12: 8-10 Saint Paul lists 9 gifts. These can be temporary or permanent or given for a

time.

In Ephesians 4: 11 he lists 5 vocational ministry gifts, some of which duplicate the charisms of 1 Cor. 12. These are permanent.

In Romans 12: 6-8 he lists 7 gifts, some of which are not on either of the other passages. These are ministering gifts which are usually permanent.

	Romans 12	Ephesians 4	1 Corinthians
1.	Prophecy	Prophet	Prophecy
2.	Service	-	-
3.	Teaching	Teacher	-
4.	Exhortation	-	-
5.	Contribution	-	-
6.	Giving	-	-
7.	Acts of Mercy	-	-
8.	-	Apostle	-
9.	-	Evangelist	-
10.	-	Pastor	-
11.	-	-	Wisdom
12.	-	-	Knowledge
13.	-	-	Faith
14.	-	-	Healing
15.	-	-	Miracles
16.	-	-	Discernment
17.	-	-	Tongues
18.	-	-	Interpretations

While they are all gifts for building up the Body of Christ, they are essentially three different categories: ministering gifts, vocational gifts (the ordained ministry for the most part), and extraordinary gifts.

Praying in tongues is another gift altogether. It is referred to in 1 Cor. 14: 14 and could be considered the same gift except that it is used for messages to the church only by some and not all the time. Praying in tongues is an always all the time gift. It is also considered to be synonymous with the moaning and groaning of the Spirit, though it could be different they are both prayer of the Holy Spirit.

(Taken from an e-mail posting by Marlin B. Hoge Jr. to the CINCHAR e-mail list. 21 Nov)

LETTERS to the EDITOR

Dear Keith and Kathleen,

May I offer my sincere thanks for the wonderful publication you send me, "The Pilgrim". I use parts of your articles and prayers in my Parish Bulletin. You present a well balanced and informative Journal.

Father Gerry Fitzpatrick, Anglesea Victoria. Australia

Dear Keith and Kathleen,

I am assigned to Saint Mary's in Bordentown, NJ.. Your ministry was made known to my wife and me by a very good friend. I am somewhat ashamed that I was ignorant of such good neighbors just over the county line. Please add me to your mailing list.

Deacon Tom Shea

To all,

We attended the 2002 Conference in Cherry Hill NJ on March 8-11, and we both received healing and thank you so much. Peace be with you.

Chris and Mike

Dear Keith and Kathleen,

I enjoy your web site and look it over for new events to go to. I also get your newsletter, and attended a lot of your retreats and conferences. You and your staff are really wonderful and must work so hard to provide such spiritually uplifting and orthodox teachings of our Catholic Church. All priests should attend your functions and take home to teach the people in the Church as you all do. Thank you for being CHURCH,

Sammy and Cheryl K.

HOPE for TOMORROW

There's hope for tomorrow,
Even when things look dim;
There's hope for tomorrow
When you put your trust in Him.
Though darkness surrounds you,
With arms that will hold you
In His loving care.
Just when you thought
You had lost everything,
He's right there beside you

With comfort to bring.

And you'll know assurance,

He'll never depart,

For He's dwelling inside you,

Right there in your heart.

(Hope for Tomorrow - by Connie J. Kirby)

PRO-LIFER ANGERED BY CATHOLIC SCHOOLS' LINKS TO PLANNED PARENTHOOD

A leading pro-life advocate wants to know why seven Catholic universities and colleges in the United States are promoting the world's largest abortion provider.

Pro-life Catholics reacted angrily when it was learned that San Francisco University provided a link to Planned Parenthood from its student health web site. The university pulled the link to review it.

But now, research by the Cardinal Newman Society has revealed that at least seven other major Catholic universities and colleges promote Planned Parenthood -- either through web links, or in one case, at DePaul University, through an internship program at Planned Parenthood.

Judie Brown is president of the [American Life League](#). She says this is absolutely shocking.

"So we have seven universities referring their students to Planned Parenthood while at the same time claiming to be Catholic. I think it's an outrage," Brown says. "It's an absolute scandal ... an abomination ... [and] an attack on Roman Catholicism from within. It's all those things."

The question is, what role should the Catholic church play in this? Brown says she intends to find out. She says she is writing to the bishops of each diocese where the universities are located to see what, if anything, is going to be done.

The seven universities include DePaul, Georgetown, Loyola, Santa Clara, Boston College, Seattle University, and John Carroll University. A special report from [Lifesite News](#) documents the findings and provides links to the universities in question.

(by Rusty Pugh, December 11, 2002, AgapePress)

CONSECRATION of a CHILD at BAPTISM

Following the baptism of a child, place the child on the altar by the tabernacle and consecrate him or her to the Immaculate Heart and Sacred Heart . Say the following prayer:

O' Lord Jesus, we kneel before You, present in the Most Blessed Eucharist--knowing for certain that You, O' Lord, see us and hear us. We beg You to now hear our poor prayer.

First we bless You for Your goodness and kindness to us and we thank You for the great gift You've given to us--our son (daughter) (state name of child here.)

He (she) is first of all Yours, O' Lord, and in a very special way he is "Mary's Child". You have seen fit to place him in our care--only to nurture him in love and faith and one day return him to Your Loving Heart.

Therefore, O' Lord Jesus, do we now consecrate our little son, Charles Sean, to Your Most Sacred, Loving and Tender Heart, united to the Most Immaculate Heart of Your Mother Mary. We implore You and Your Mother to take our son unto Your own care and protection. Watch over him (her) , please, all the days of his life. Grant him grace--a special grace--that he may grow day by day, and year by year, in the Love of Your Hearts.

O Blessed Lord Jesus in the Most Blessed Sacrament, please hear our prayer.

O Immaculate Heart of Mary, Lady of the Most Blessed Sacrament, look down upon us and Charles Sean; please hear our prayer and accept this consecration of our son (daughter)

We ask this in Jesus' name.

Amen

[\(http://members.aol.com/Linden59/\)](http://members.aol.com/Linden59/)

DEATH of COMMON SENSE

Today we mourn the passing of an old friend, by the name of "Common Sense." Common Sense lived a long life but died in the United States from heart failure on the brink of the new millennium. No one really knows how old he was, since his birth records were long ago lost in bureaucratic red tape.

He selflessly devoted his life to service schools, hospitals, homes, factories, helping folks get jobs

done without fanfare and foolishness. For decades, petty rules, silly laws, and frivolous lawsuits held no power over Common Sense. He was credited with cultivating such valued lessons as: "to know when to come in out of the rain," why the early bird gets the bird," and that "life isn't always fair."

Common Sense lived by simple, sound financial policies (don't spend more than you earn), reliable parenting strategies (the adults are in charge, not the kids), and it's okay to come second. A veteran of Industrial Revolution, the Great Depression, and the Technological Revolution, Common Sense survived cultural and educational trends, including body piercing, whole language, and "new math." But his health declined when he became infected with the "If-it-only-helps-one-person-it's-worth-it" virus.

In recent decades his waning strength proved no match for the ravages of well intentioned but overbearing regulations. He watched in pain as good people became ruled by self-seeking lawyers. His health rapidly deteriorated when schools endlessly implemented zero-tolerance policies. Reports of a six-year-old boy charged with sexual harassment for kissing a classmate, a teen suspended for taking a swig of mouthwash after lunch, and a teacher fired for reprimanding an unruly student, only worsened his condition.

It declined even further when schools had to get parental consent to administer aspirin to a student but could inform the parent when a female student was pregnant or wanted an abortion.

Finally, Common Sense lost his will to live as the Ten Commandments became contraband, churches became businesses, criminals received better treatment than victims, and federal judges stuck their noses in everything from the Boy Scouts to professional sports. Finally, when a woman, too stupid to realize that a steaming cup of coffee was hot, was awarded a huge settlement, Common Sense threw in the towel.

As the end neared, Common Sense drifted in and out of logic but was kept informed of developments regarding questionable regulations such as those for low flow toilets, rocking chairs, and stepladders.

Common Sense was preceded in death by his parents, Truth and Trust; his wife, Discretion; his daughter, Responsibility; and his son, Reason. He is survived by two stepbrothers: My Rights, and Ima Whiner. Not many attended his funeral because so few realized he was gone.

(OBITUARY - AUTHOR UNKNOWN)

FAITH

Faith can move mountains,
No matter how steep,
And calm the rough waters,
No matter how deep.
Faith can change darkness
To heavenly light,
While leading us tranquilly
Out of the night.
All this I can grant
With assurance, you see,
For countless are the mountains
Faith has moved for me.

(Hope for Tomorrow - by Laura Baker Haynes)

THE LIFE of PRAYER from the CATHOLIC CATECHISM

Part Four: The Revelation of Prayer Section One: Prayer in the Christian Life Chapter Three: The Life of Prayer Article 2: The Battle of Prayer

I. OBJECTIONS to PRAYER

2725 Prayer is both a gift of grace and a determined response on our part. It always presupposes effort. The great figures of prayer of the Old Covenant before Christ, as well as the Mother of God, the saints, and he himself, all teach us this: prayer is a battle. Against whom? Against ourselves and against the wiles of the tempter who does all he can to turn man away from prayer, away from union with God. We pray as we live, because we live as we pray. If we do not want to act habitually according to the Spirit of Christ, neither can we pray habitually in his name. The “spiritual battle” of the Christian's new life is inseparable from the battle of prayer.

2726 In the battle of prayer, we must face in ourselves and around us *erroneous notions of prayer*. Some people view prayer as a simple psychological activity, others as an effort of concentration to reach a mental void. Still others reduce prayer to ritual words and postures. Many Christians unconsciously regard prayer as an occupation that is incompatible with all the other things they have to do: they “don't have the time.” Those who seek God by prayer are quickly discouraged because they do not know that prayer comes also from the Holy Spirit and not from themselves alone.

2727 We must also face the fact that certain attitudes deriving from the *mentality* of “this present world” can penetrate our lives if we are not vigilant. For example, some would have it that only that is true which can be verified by reason and science; yet prayer is a mystery that overflows both our conscious and unconscious lives. Others overly prize production and profit; thus prayer, being unproductive, is useless. Still others exalt sensuality and comfort as the criteria of the true, the good, and the beautiful; whereas prayer, the “love of beauty” (*philokalia*), is caught up in the glory of the living and true God. Finally, some see prayer as a flight from the world in reaction against activism; but in fact, Christian prayer is neither an escape from reality nor a divorce from life.

2728 Finally, our battle has to confront what we experience as *failure in prayer*: discouragement during periods of dryness; sadness that, because we have “great possessions,”¹⁵ we have not given all to the Lord; disappointment over not being heard according to our own will; wounded pride, stiffened by the indignity that is ours as sinners; our resistance to the idea that prayer is a free and unmerited gift; and so forth. The conclusion is always the same: what good does it do to pray? To overcome these obstacles, we must battle to gain humility, trust, and perseverance.

II. HUMBLE VIGILANCE of HEART

Facing difficulties in prayer

2729 The habitual difficulty in prayer is *distraction*. It can affect words and their meaning in vocal prayer; it can concern, more profoundly, him to whom we are praying, in vocal prayer (liturgical or personal), meditation, and contemplative prayer. To set about hunting down distractions would be to fall into their trap, when all that is necessary is to turn back to our heart: for a distraction reveals to us what we are attached to, and this humble awareness before the Lord should awaken our preferential love for him and lead us resolutely to offer him our heart to be purified. Therein lies the battle, the choice of which master to serve.¹⁶

2730 In positive terms, the battle against the possessive and dominating self requires vigilance, sobriety of heart. When Jesus insists on *vigilance*, he always relates it to himself, to his coming on the last day and every day: *today*. The bridegroom comes in the middle of the night; the light that must not be extinguished is that of faith: “‘Come,’ my heart says, ‘seek his face!’”¹⁷

2731 Another difficulty, especially for those who sincerely want to pray, is *dryness*. Dryness belongs to contemplative prayer when the heart is separated from God, with no taste for thoughts, memories, and feelings, even spiritual ones. This is the moment of sheer faith clinging faithfully to Jesus in his agony and in his tomb. “Unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit.”¹⁸ If dryness is due to the lack of roots, because the word has fallen on rocky soil, the battle requires conversion.¹⁹

Facing temptations in prayer

2732 The most common yet most hidden temptation is our *lack of faith*. It expresses itself less by declared incredulity than by our actual preferences. When we begin to pray, a thousand labors or cares thought to be urgent vie for priority; once again, it is the moment of truth for the heart: what is its real love? Sometimes we turn to the Lord as a last resort, but do we really believe he is? Sometimes we enlist the Lord as an ally, but our heart remains presumptuous. In each case, our lack of faith reveals that we do not yet share in the disposition of a humble heart: “Apart from me, you can do *nothing*.”²⁰

2733 Another temptation, to which presumption opens the gate, is *acedia*. The spiritual writers understand by this a form of depression due to lax ascetical practice, decreasing vigilance, carelessness of heart. “The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.”²¹ The greater the height, the harder the fall. Painful as discouragement is, it is the reverse of presumption. The humble are not surprised by their distress; it leads them to trust more, to hold fast in constancy.

III. FILIAL TRUST

2734 Filial trust is tested - it proves itself - in tribulation.²² The principal difficulty concerns the *prayer of petition*, for oneself or for others in intercession. Some even stop praying because they think their petition is not heard. Here two questions should be asked: Why do we think our petition has not been heard? How is our prayer heard, how is it “efficacious”?

Why do we complain of not being heard?

2735 In the first place, we ought to be astonished by this fact: when we praise God or give him thanks for his benefits in general, we are not particularly concerned whether or not our prayer is acceptable to him. On the other hand, we demand to see the results of our petitions. What is the image of God that

motivates our prayer: an instrument to be used? or the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ?

2736 Are we convinced that “we do not know how to pray as we ought”?²³ Are we asking God for “what is good for us”? Our Father knows what we need before we ask him,²⁴ but he awaits our petition because the dignity of his children lies in their freedom. We must pray, then, with his Spirit of freedom, to be able truly to know what he wants.²⁵

2737 “You ask and do not receive, because you ask wrongly, to spend it on your passions.”²⁶ If we ask with a divided heart, we are “adulterers”;²⁷ God cannot answer us, for he desires our well-being, our life. “Or do you suppose that it is in vain that the scripture says, ‘He yearns jealously over the spirit which he has made to dwell in us?’”²⁸ That our God is “jealous” for us is the sign of how true his love is. If we enter into the desire of his Spirit, we shall be heard.

Do not be troubled if you do not immediately receive from God what you ask him; for he desires to do something even greater for you, while you cling to him in prayer.²⁹

God wills that our desire should be exercised in prayer, that we may be able to receive what he is prepared to give.³⁰

How is our prayer efficacious?

2738 The revelation of prayer in the economy of salvation teaches us that faith rests on God's action in history. Our filial trust is enkindled by his supreme act: the Passion and Resurrection of his Son. Christian prayer is cooperation with his providence, his plan of love for men.

2739 For Saint Paul, this trust is bold, founded on the prayer of the Spirit in us and on the faithful love of the Father who has given us his only Son.³¹

PLEASE RESPOND to THIS NOTICE and STAY ON the BULK MAILING LIST

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

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

Transformation of the praying heart is the first response to our petition.

2740 The prayer of Jesus makes Christian prayer an efficacious petition. He is its model, he prays in us and with us. Since the heart of the Son seeks only what pleases the Father, how could the prayer of the children of adoption be centered on the gifts rather than the Giver?

2741 Jesus also prays for us - in our place and on our behalf. All our petitions were gathered up, once for all, in his cry on the Cross and, in his Resurrection, heard by the Father. This is why he never ceases to intercede for us with the Father.³² If our prayer is resolutely united with that of Jesus, in trust and boldness as children, we obtain all that we ask in his name, even more than any particular thing: the Holy Spirit himself, who contains all gifts.

IV. Persevering in LOVE

2742 “Pray constantly . . . always and for everything giving thanks in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God the Father.”³³ Saint Paul adds, “Pray at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end keep alert with all perseverance making supplication for all the saints.”³⁴ For “we have not been commanded to work, to keep watch and to fast constantly, but it has been laid down that we are to pray without ceasing.”³⁵ This tireless fervor can come only from love. Against our dullness and laziness, the battle of prayer is that of humble, trusting, and persevering love. This love opens our hearts to three enlightening and life-giving facts of faith about prayer.

2743 *It is always possible to pray:* The time of the Christian is that of the risen Christ who is with us always, no matter what tempests may arise.³⁶ Our time is in the hands of God:

It is possible to offer fervent prayer even while walking in public or strolling alone, or seated in your shop, . . . while buying or selling, . . . or even while cooking.³⁷

2744 *Prayer is a vital necessity.* Proof from the contrary is no less convincing: if we do not allow the Spirit to lead us, we fall back into the slavery of sin.³⁸

How can the Holy Spirit be our life if our heart is far from him?

Nothing is equal to prayer; for what is impossible it makes possible, what is difficult, easy. . . . For it is impossible, utterly impossible, for the man who prays eagerly and invokes God ceaselessly ever to sin.³⁹

Those who pray are certainly saved; those who do not pray are certainly damned.⁴⁰

2745 Prayer and *Christian life* are *inseparable*, for they concern the same love and the same renunciation, proceeding from love; the same filial and loving conformity with the Father's plan of love; the same transforming union in the Holy Spirit who conforms us more and more to Christ Jesus; the same love for all men, the love with which Jesus has loved us. “Whatever you ask the Father in my name, he [will] give it to you. This I command you, to love one another.”⁴¹

He “prays without ceasing” who unites prayer to works and good works to prayer. Only in this way can we consider as realizable the principle of praying without ceasing.⁴²

(Catholic Catechism – Part Four, Section 1, Chapter 3, Part 2, <http://www.scborromeo.org/ccc/p4s1c3a2.htm>)

FOOD for THOUGHT

You find amazing things on the Web. But would you expect to find a site that makes it easy for lay people to pray the way monks pray?!

Maybe you've wanted to pray the church's Liturgy of the Hours. But maybe you've seen monks flipping back and forth in their books for prayer and felt it looked difficult. If so, the Blue Cloud Abbey Benedictines in South Dakota have the web site for you: www.bluecloud.org. After locating it, click on the section that reads, “Pray With the Monks.”

You'll come to an explanatory section telling you that “these psalms and prayers are part of the monks pray,” urging you “to pray meditatively and slowly.” It adds, “You can make a difference in your life, your family and community by praying daily!”

Scroll down to find morning and evening prayer to every day- for the Easter season too.

Morning prayers begin with this instruction: “Make the sign of the cross with your right thumb on your lips, saying: Lord, open my lips, and my mouth will proclaim your praise.” With that, you're on your way.

(David Gibson, Editor, Faith Alive!)

VOCATION DEPARTMENT: NAZARETH HOUSE

A place of discernment and formation for men aspiring to priesthood in the Roman Catholic Church, Nazareth House is located on the

campus of Camden Catholic High School in Cherry Hill. The Diocese of Camden has begun a formation program to help young men investigate whether God is calling them to priestly formation.

The mission of Nazareth House is to assist young men between the ages of 18-35 in the discernment and development of the seeds of a priestly vocation. The staff will provide them with the foundation for seminary theologate formation, through a shared community life of prayer and worship; human, spiritual and intellectual development; and pastoral service. It now houses the Office of Vocations.

FOR MORE INFORMATION or APPLICATION MATERIALS, CONTACT:

Father Cadmus Mazzarella,
mazzarella@camdendiocese.org,
Director of Vocations, Diocese of Camden,
Nazareth House, 300 Cuthbert Boulevard,
Cherry Hill, NJ 08002
(856) 910-4930 or FAX: (856) 662-8917
or visit: <http://www.beapriest.org>

INTERESTED in FORMING A VOCATION AWARENESS PROGRAM in YOUR PARISH?

If you are interested in participating in this very simple program please call the PFMC at (856) 768-9228 and ask for Liz. She will help you with materials and information. This program is very simple and very effective. We will be working in conjunction with Parish Vocation programs.

VATICAN PRESCRIBES ADORATION, PRAYER for PRIESTLY BURNOUT

The Vatican issued a new instruction for parish priests that prescribes eucharistic adoration and an intense prayer life as a preventative cure for priestly “disaffection, disillusionment or even failure.”

“Spending time in intimate conversation with and adoration of the Good Shepherd, present in the most Blessed Sacrament of the altar, is a pastoral priority far superior to any other,” said the document, released at an October 18th press conference.

“Every priest, who is a leader of his community, should attend to this priority so as to ensure that he does not become spiritually barren nor transformed

into a dry channel no longer capable of offering anything to anyone,” it said.

The 38 page instruction, “The Priest: Pastor and Leader of the Parish Community,” was issued by the Congregation for Clergy and represented the fruit of its discussions at a 2001 plenary meeting.

The text reaffirms priests unique ministerial role in parish life and their necessity to the life of the church. It underscores church teaching that priests, through a permanent change in their very being at ordination, act” in the person of Christ.”

Under the influence of contemporary culture, the priest today is under stood often as fulfilling other roles ranging from the sociologist to the therapist, from the politician to the manager. It has even led to the idea of the “retired” priest.

While encouraging priests to engage lay people in parish roles, the document restates the unique and irreplaceable place of the priest in governing and in sacramental ministry.

The vast majority of priests today successfully and joyfully live their pastoral commitments but noted “it can happen that some priests, having begun their ministry full of enthusiasm and ideals, experience disaffection, disillusionment and even failure.”

It attributed this phenomenon to multiple factors, including lack of support from the bishop or community, personal problems, inadequate formation, lack of priestly fraternity, personal isolation, bitterness at not being able to find responses or solutions to problems, lack of ascetical practices, abandonment of spiritual life or even lack of faith.

Spirituality is, without doubt, the most important pastoral concern, the document said.

Any pastoral initiative, missionary program or effort at evangelization that eschews the primacy of spirituality and divine worship is doomed to failure.

The document suggested that dioceses set aside a

HOLY MASS TIMES

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

If you have access to the Internet and don't already have it book marked, type in the Uniform Resource Locator (URL) www.masstimes.org in the white box near the top of your browser. You can find maps to the churches in addition to the times of Holy Mass celebrations.

house where priests could go for periodic recollection and prayer “so as to renew contact with those means which are indispensable for their personal holiness.

It said the priest’s fundamental challenge was to foster among his parishoners a consistent spiritual life in conformity with church teaching. It recommended encouraging visits to church to pray before the tabernacle, keeping churches open as long as possible during the days, and devoting special attention to being available for individual confession.

A good laity is scarcely possible without truly holy priests. Without them everything is dead....just as it is almost impossible to have a blossoming of vocations without Christian families, which are domestic churches.

One possible solution to the vocation crisis and priest shortages was making every effort to keep alive in the hearts of the faithful that joy and holy pride in being Catholic.

Without this joy and pride at a psychological level, it becomes difficult to conserve and develop the life of faith. It is not surprising, at least at the level of psychology, that in some contexts priestly vocations fail to germinate or come to maturity.

The document said encouraging lay participation in parishes should not be limited to organization and administration but also to improving a certain osmosis between the faith of the priest and his parishoners.

Christian families and fervent communities have often assisted their priests in times of crisis.

(John Norton for Catholic Star Herald, October 25, 2002)

PILGRIMS of FAITH MARIAN CENTER (PFMC)

We are not a church, store or travel agency but have aspects of all three. We operate as a ministry whose volunteers are mostly lay persons professing a belief in Jesus Christ, Our Lord and Savior, through the universal faith and teachings of the Roman Catholic Church. We profess allegiance to the Magisterium of that Church led by Pope John Paul II. In a similar fashion as those who approach members of famous families such as the Carters and the Kennedys as well as the British Royal Family through the matriarchs or mothers, we believe that approaching Jesus through his Blessed Virgin Jewish Mother, Mary, may be of benefit in the answering of our prayers.

We operate on donations for all our activities. These activities include retreats and days of recollection at the PFMC where Holy Mass and Adoration take place for the public with Bishop DiMarzio’s permission. The PFMC was established based on pilgrimages to Medjugorje, Bosnia-Hercegovina, and other holy places or shrine worthy of pilgrimage. Books, pamphlets and religious articles brought back from pilgrimages were placed on display for others to view and take based on donations. We are NOT a store.

For books, pamphlets and religious articles, we operate like a church pamphlet or bookrack where you make selections and offer a donation based on value posted or received. We have items from our inventory on display at Epiphany House and have produced order forms in the past. See the order forms enclosed in previous issues or loaded on the Internet Web Site, <http://www.geocities.com/pilgrimsfaith>, for a partial listing of items that can be obtained from the PFMC through donations. If you wish to order, please fill out your order request, make out a check or complete the information for use of a credit card and mail to PFMC, 61 Cooper Road, Voorhees, NJ 08043-4893. If you do not have an order form, call us at (856) 768-9228 with a FAX number or mailing address and we will send you an order form. If you know what you want and we carry it, you can order over the telephone using your credit card.

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

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

Thank you and God bless you,

(Kathleen and the Volunteer Staff)

BULLETIN NOTICES for *PFMC* AREA EVENTS

Would you be so kind as to copy or cut out one or more of following BULLETIN NOTICES and take them to your Pastor and / or Parish Bulletin Coordinator? One per week should not be an overload to you. Ask your Pastor and / or Parish Bulletin Coordinator to publish these notices to support the events for which you have an interest.

It does wonders when a parishioner asks for a bulletin notice as compared to the thousands of requests that come in from outside the parish.

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

Father Joseph Byerley of Saint Pius X Roman Catholic Church, 344 Kresson Road, Cherry Hill, NJ, 08034-3396, (856) 429-1330, FAX: (856) 429-8679, is the PFMC Liaison with Bishop Nicholas DiMarzio.

25-27 JANUARY 2003, FATHER BILL McCARTHY – TRIDUUM SEMINAR

The Pilgrims of Faith Marian Center (PFMC) will host a Triduum seminar study of "The Tabernacle (Old Testament to New Testament), The Lamb's Supper, The 7 Covenants of the Old Testament and One of the New Testament, The Eucharist, and The Sacramental System" taught by Father Bill McCarthy, M.Ss.A., co-founder of My Father's House in Moodus, CT.

These sessions will be held from 9 AM to 5 PM in the Upper Room of Epiphany House, 61 Cooper Road, Voorhees, NJ on Saturday, 25 January 2003 through Monday, 27 January 2003.

For more information call (856) 768-9228 or visit <http://www.geocities.com/pilgrimsfaith>.

12 FEBRUARY 2003 RETREAT for WOMEN with FATHER ROBERT DeGRANDIS, SSJ

The Pilgrims of Faith Marian Center (PFMC) will host a special retreat for women with Father Robert DeGrandis. This retreat will be held in the Upper Room of Epiphany House, 61 Cooper Road, Voorhees, NJ on Saturday, 12 February 2003.

It will concentrate on forgiveness, prayer, and healing for those women who have been abused, physically, emotionally, and/or sexually.

For more information call (856) 768-9228 or visit <http://www.geocities.com/pilgrimsfaith>.

2003 RETREAT CONFERENCE

The Pilgrims of Faith Marian Center (PFMC) 2003 RETREAT CONFERENCE (2003 RC) will be at the Hilton Hotel, Cherry Hill, NJ. The dates are Friday through Sunday, March 14th, 15th, and 16th, 2003.

The 2003 RC theme is "He must increase; I must decrease." (John 3:30) [NAB].

Father Bill Halbing, Father Andrew Apostoli, CFR, and Father Robert DeGrandis, S.S.J. will be featured speakers. They will speak on "Healing in our Faith."

Father Michael Semana, founder of the "World of Hope Foundation," will return for a concert Saturday

evening as well as his very generous work with the youth and young adults in the Youth Track (YT).

Joseph Terelya will speak on Saturday night before the concert via his interpreter.

The Metuchen Diocese Charismatic Music Group "REFUGE" will be back to provide the weekend music. Al Barbarino has agreed to EMCEE for the Weekend and to provide background music for the 3DX. Other musicians including Marty Rotella, "HEARTS AFIRE," "CEDARS in CHRIST," "S'ELAH," and "VOYAGE," have been invited.

Father Robert DeGrandis and his sister Dorothea DeGrandis Sudol will share the seminars and workshops of the 3-Day Extension (3DX) on "Healing of Memories - Inner Healing."

The 3DX will be on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday, March 17th, 18th, and 19th, 2003.

Rooms may be booked at the \$92 rate with 1-4 persons in a room for both the 2003 RC and 3DX as well as up to 7 days before or after the events. Rooms have either one King bed or two Double beds. Roll-away beds are available. This rate and availability of additional rooms expires on 2/19/2003. **For Hotel reservations please call NOW: 1-800-HILTONS or locally (856) 665-6666. Please make your reservations with the PFMC and HILTON as soon as possible. Consider this as a Christmas gift.**

For more information call (856) 768-9228 or visit <http://www.geocities.com/pilgrimsfaith>.

16-18 MAY 2003, RETREAT WEEKEND for MARRIED COUPLES

The Pilgrims of Faith Marian Center (PFMC) will host a married couples retreat chaired by Father Bill McCarthy, M.Ss.A., co-founder of My Father's House in Moodus, CT. It is planned for the evening of Friday, 16 May 2003, and 9 AM to 5 PM on Saturday, 17 May 2003 and Sunday, 18 May 2003. Donation requested is \$80 per couple.

If there is sufficient early registration interest, this married couples retreat weekend may be moved to a local hotel with overnight accommodations available. Cost of rooms will be kept reasonable. Sign up early to assist us in making this latter decision.

For more information call (856) 768-9228 or visit <http://www.geocities.com/pilgrimsfaith>.

(Kathleen as well as all the PFMC Volunteer Staff)

CALENDARS:

In *January*, the Church celebrates Solemnities of *Mary, Mother of God (1)*, *Epiphany of the Lord (5/6)*, Feasts of *Baptism of the Lord (12)* and *The Conversion of Paul (25)*, and Memorials of *Saints Basil the Great (2)*, *Gregory Nazianzen (2)*, *Elizabeth Ann Seton (4)*, *Anthony, Abbot (17)*, *Agnes (21)*, *Francis de Sales (24)*, *Thomas Aquinas (28)* and *John Bosco (31)* and Optional Memorials of *Saints Genevieve (3)*, *Raymond of Penyafort (7)*, *Hilary (13)*, *Fabian (20)*, *Sebastian (20)*, *Vincent (22)*, *Angela Merici (27)*, as well as *Blessed Andre Bessette (6)*. Most Church calendars recognize **Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr (15) (observed) (20)**.

In *February*, the Church observes Feasts of **Presentation of the Lord (2)**, and **Chair of Saint Peter (22)**, Memorials of *Saints Agatha (5)*, *Paul Miki and Companions (6)*, *Scholastica (10)*, and *Cyril and Methodius (14)*, Optional Memorials of *Saints Blase (3)*, *Ansgar (3)*, *Jerome Emiliani (8)*, and *Peter Damian (21)* as well as *Our Lady of Lourdes (11)*, and **Seven Founders of the Order of Servites (17)**. Most Church calendars show **Presidents' Day (17)** and **Saint Valentine's Day (14)**.

AROUND the *PFMC* AREA

Please take note of the new centerfold location for the message alleged to be from Mary, GOSPA and its reflection. Please review the announcements on pages 1 through 6 and the Bulletin Notices on pages 22 and 23. We need everyone to help spread this information with prayer groups and Parish committees as well as to publish it in your Parish Bulletin. For additional information, call the PFMC at (856) 768-

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Pilgrims of Faith Marian Center (PFMC), A Religious Association, Inc.
NON-PROFIT and IRS Code 501(c)(3) TAX EXEMPT
Keith and Kathleen Werner, Co-Directors
61 Cooper Road, Voorhees, NJ 08043-4963
(856) 768-9228 FAX: (856) 768-9428

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9228. Please speak clearly and slowly, leave your name, address and phone number with area code so that we may return your call. You may FAX your questions to (856) 768-9428.

IN MEMORIAM: RON TAYLOR

As we were completing this issue of "The *PILGRIM*" we received the news that a dear and long time friend, Ronald L. Taylor, had passed away on Christmas morning. He had suffered for the past six months with inoperable liver cancer. He had enjoyed 22 years of life after having a cancerous melanoma removed from his back. He, his wife Fran, and their three children, Kelly, Kristen and Kevin were the one neighbor family we met in our travels with the United States Navy that remained friends for life. Ron had what those who participated in his funeral described as the Ron Taylor Attitude (RTA). He lived life to the fullest and never gave up on reaching out to others. His pastor said that it was fitting that he should pass on to a new life on the day we celebrate God taking on human life so He could die on the cross and be resurrected to His new life.

INTERNET

Surf for the PFMC presence on the Internet at:

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

Send us interesting web sites and e-mails:

PFMCkmw@comcast.net

keithwerner@comcast.net



PLEASE DON'T THROW THIS AWAY!!

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

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

