



The **PILGRIM**

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May 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



Dear Holy Spirit, we thank you for your gift of the Holy Child. We thank you for choosing Mary as your spouse. In the life of Jesus we see your very Spirit, and we come to kneel in Your sweet anointing and to offer our lives to You.

Touch us O Lord, and Oil of Gladness [see page 22], just as you touched Mary's life. Let the Spirit Child of Jesus be born in us, filling our lives, and enabling us to belong to You.

Give us all the resources and spiritual strength that we may be your servants and spread faith in Joy, in Your Love and in Wisdom. AMEN

(Kathleen prays from the heart for each issue.)

HAPPY MOTHER'S DAY!

Mother's Day is May 11, 2003. All of us at the **PFMC** hope that all mothers are remembered on this special day for them. We placed articles in the April issue of "**The PILGRIM**" because we knew this issue might not be available by May 11, 2003.

Please remember your mother. Without her pro-life stance you would not be here.

(Kathleen and Keith and all the PFMC Volunteers)

MARRIED COUPLES RETREAT with FATHER BILL McCARTHY - MAY 16, 17, and 18, 2003

This is a special opportunity for the husbands to remember the mother's of their children and for

all those who might not have had children to come closer to the Lord, Jesus Christ, and His Blessed Mother, Mary. Every marriage can be strengthened by advice based on Holy Scripture and the writings of the Holy Fathers. Please come and join us in welcoming **Father Bill McCarthy, M.Ss.A.** to the **Upper Room** of the **Epiphany House** for this **Married Couples Retreat**.

The hours of this **Married Couples 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**.

This gives ample opportunity for a great start on Friday night as well as a chance to go out to dinner as a couple on both Saturday and Sunday night for private one on one discussions of what you have learned without distractions in the family.

Take the time as a married couple to explore the marriage covenant and how the Holy Spirit can and does work in your married lives.

Explore with Father Bill the beauty and richness, the mountains and valleys, the joys and tears of the sacrament of Holy Matrimony.

The requested registration donation is **\$80** per couple and includes a delicious lunch each day. We are planning seating for **40** couples. Please let us know if you need to come but have trouble with the requested donation. We need to know the number of attendees in order to plan for the refreshments and the light lunches on Saturday and Sunday.

We hope that you will take advantage of this wonderful weekend and **register as soon as possible**.

We accept Visa, MasterCard, and Discover. Call the PFMC at (856) 768-9228 for an information sheet and registration form or use one enclosed in previous issues of "**The PILGRIM**."

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

"The PILGRIM" for **May 2003** is dedicated to the **"Sacred Heart of Jesus"** **"Oil of Gladness"** and **"Immaculate Heart of Mary."** See page 3 for the **Table of Contents / "IN THIS ISSUE . . ."**

Please make your own overnight accommodation arrangements. There is a Holiday Inn Express nearby in Berlin, NJ. Call (856) 767-7711. Within 10 miles of the PFMC there are franchise locations from nearly every American hotel chain. God bless you.

**PILGRIMAGE with FATHER
GIOVANNI TINO - SAN GIOVANNI
ROTUNDO (SAINT PADRE PIO),
LANCIANO (EUCCHARISTIC
MIRACLE), MEDJUGORJE, and ROME
– SUNDAY, AUGUST 17th, 2003 to
THURSDAY, AUGUST 28th, 2003**

Our Lady is once again calling us to spend a beautiful pilgrimage to Italy and to Medjugorje. If you have ever been called to visit Medjugorje, this summer pilgrimage is for you, your friends, and for families who can only get away in the summer time.

Kathleen and Keith will act as the spiritual coordinators for this pilgrimage.

Father Giovanni Tino has again said he would return with us as our Spiritual Director. His last pilgrimage was faith filled, and certainly anointed in all senses of understanding how the Holy Spirit works in healing and love. Our Lady took us into her arms from the moment we got in the van to go to the airport, and she has not let go of any of us since our return. All of our lives have been deeply affected, and we daily feel her call to prayer, love, conversion, fasting, and reconciliation.

The pilgrimage cost for this 12 days is \$2599 per person double occupancy and \$115 Italian, Croatian and USA air taxes.

It includes the following, and I think you will agree that compared to other pilgrimages, the offering of services is complete, and wonderful.

Air Fare Round Trip JFK – Milan - Bari on Alitalia Airways, and Rome - Split on Croatia Air.

All Transfers by private motor coach with English speaking tour escort in Italy.

Private guide in Medjugorje.

All continental breakfasts at hotels and in private home in Medjugorje.

Two dinners at hotel in San Giovanni Rotondo.

Two dinners in local restaurant in Rome.

Home cooked family breakfasts and suppers in lovely housing very close to the Church of Saint James Church in Medjugorje.

2 nights San Giovanni – 3 star hotel

2 nights Rome – 4 star hotel

6 nights Medjugorje - family home

Stop for prayer in Lanciano, to see the beautiful Eucharistic Miracle.

Full Medjugorje program of climbing Apparition Hill and Cross Mountain, Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, Spiritual Talks by visionaries if available, Talks by parish priests, Scheduled times of prayer, and free time for the Stations of the Cross, or other parish or group activities.

½ day guided tour of San Giovanni with visit to Saint Michael's Cave

½ day tour of Vatican Museum / Sistine Chapel and Saint Peters Basilica with all Vatican Museum entrance fees

Visit to Catacombs including entrance fee

Private Mass at San Giovanni and in Vatican

Full spiritual program during entire pilgrimage. Includes daily Mass, rosary, Divine Mercy, confessions, and Healing prayer throughout.

One bag portorage and all hotel taxes and service charges.

Not included are any beverage fees, phone, and tips for guides and bus drivers.

We will need \$500 deposit with immediate application, and full payment no later than July 12, 2003. All rooms are double occupancy unless you wish a single supplement room of \$275 throughout the entire pilgrimage.

Should you desire to deviate from the pilgrimage and depart earlier or stay longer in Rome then a \$150 charge is necessary to take care of all additional services to book out of the group. Two nights extra in Rome would cost about \$295 to include the hotel, breakfasts and separate transfer to the airport.

If you are interested please call Kathleen immediately. Enclosed in this issue **of "The PILGRIM"** is an information sheet with registration form for this pilgrimage. Please fill it out completely,

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.

and send it in with your deposit. You may also use a credit card for this pilgrimage. We accept DISCOVER/PRIVATE ISSUE (NOVUS), MASTER CARD (CIRRUS) and VISA (PLUS) for all donations to the PFMC.

It is ABSOLUTELY NECESSARY TO HAVE ALL RESERVATIONS AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. We only take smaller groups of no more than 20-25 pilgrims.

IT IS PERFECTLY SAFE FOR TRAVEL, AND WE ENCOURAGE ANYONE WHO HAS EVER WANTED TO GO TO MEDJUGORJE TO GO AND TO SEE.

Kathleen is at (856) 768-9228 Monday through Friday 10 AM to 5 PM. Those at long distance may use 1-800-788-MARY [6279].

HUMANITARIAN AID to the DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

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 and parishes 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 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.

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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.

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 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.

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.

CATHOLIC INSTITUTE of DISCIPLESHIP – FUTURE SEMINARS

The Catholic Institute of Discipleship at Saint Antoninus Church, 337 South Orange Avenue, Newark, NJ 07103 has planned several future seminars: "The Eucharist" 8/9/2003, and "The Last Things" 11/15/03. Information sheets are available at the PFMC. Call (973) 623-0258 for more information.

A GALA DINNER and FUND RAISING CONCERT WITH GRACE MARKAY and FATHER MICHAEL SEMANA

Mark your calendars and plan ahead for **Saturday, NOVEMBER 15, 2003** for a **Gala Dinner and Fund Raising Concert** to be held at the Holiday Inn on NJ Route 70 (Marlton Pike), Cherry Hill, New Jersey.

Join in a Cocktail Reception of Complementary Hors d'oeuvres of assorted cheeses, assorted fruit, crackers, breads and brushchetta with garlic toast. A Cash Bar will be open from 6 PM to 7 PM, you will be escorted to the Grand Ballroom for a festive candlelight Buffet Dinner and Dessert Bar. You will enjoy background music throughout the evening.

Dinner will consist of Salad Bar, Seafood Newburg with rice pilaf, Southern fried chicken, Prime Rib au jus, glazed baby carrots with sautéed green beans, roasted bliss potatoes. You are invited to all you can eat.

Tables will be set for 10 and tickets are \$50 each person. A limit of 300 people will be expected.

Father Michael Semana and Grace Markay will present a PFMC benefit concert following dinner.

Rooms at the Holiday Inn Cherry Hill Hotel are available and can be booked using the Pilgrims of Faith Marian Center (PFMC) event identification for \$89 per night for two double beds. The hotel has a gym, and indoor heated pool.

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Sign up early. We accept Visa, MasterCard, and Discover. Call 856-768-9228 for reservation or fill in enclosed application and mail to the Center.

2004 RC, YT, and 3-DX DATES to MARK on YOUR CALENDAR

If the 2004 RC, YT, and 3-DX are to be again held at the Hilton Hotel in Cherry Hill, NJ, the dates will be Friday, 12 March 2004, Saturday, 13 March 2004, and Sunday, 14 March 2004 for the RC and YT. The 3-DX will be Monday, 15 March 2004, Tuesday, 16 March 2004, and Wednesday, 17 March 2004.

The theme will be "Behold, I am sending you like sheep in the midst of wolves" (Matthew 10:16 [NAB])

We have not signed a contract as yet and are awaiting the inputs from all the volunteers and attendees to work up lessons learned. We will put out information sheets and reservations forms as soon as we have signed contracts and assembled a list of speakers.

Al Barbarino, Father Robert DeGrandis, Father Michael Semana, REFUGE and HEARTS AFIRE have all agreed to return.

Kathleen felt certain that she should try to get Sister Briege McKenna and Father Kevin Scallon because of the theme. They appear to be involved in something else for the dates mentioned above. We are praying because the word is their 2004 calendar has not been confirmed yet.

DANDELIONS from HEAVEN

Mothers Day is coming...
and I wanted to send you a sign...

Something you can tell others...

"Is from an angel of mine".

So I searched the Heavens high and low for that perfect thing..

And low and behold I found it....

and a smile I hope it will bring.

So when you look to the Heavens...and see the yellow stars in the sky...

Just think of me...your angel...

in the Heavens way up high...

And just imagine those stars...are dandelions up above...

Yes! Dandelions are also in Heaven...,
which you know how much I love.

So on this Mothers Day...

when you awake and feel blue...
You will notice those yellow stars...
are no longer in view...
So just look to the meadows and the dandelions you see....
Are the ones I've tossed down this Mothers Day from me!
And when you find a dandelion that has turned from yellow to white...
You're supposed to make a wish...
and then blow with all your might.
For you will be blowing kisses...
to me in Heaven above....
And I will be catching them and blowing them back...
sent with all my love.

Please know that I am with you...on this Mothers Day...
And also in the days ahead...God and I will never stray...
We will be with you in the morning...
when you wake and see the sun...
We will be with you when you say your prayers...
when the day is done.
For God and I will never be...
very far from your side...
For I can now be everywhere...
and God will be your guide...
So...remember when you see dandelions...
It's your guarantee...
That I am always close to you....
For dandelions are free to roam.....
now just like me.
I will always be with you Mom....
Happy Mothers Day Love, Your Angel in Heaven.

(By: Laura/Heavenly Lights Children's Memorial)

STORM

A little girl walked to and from school daily. Although the weather that morning was questionable and clouds were forming, she made her daily trek to the elementary school. As the afternoon progressed, the winds whipped up, along with thunder and lightning. The mother of the little girl felt concerned that her daughter would be frightened as she walked home from school and she herself feared that the electrical storm might harm her child.

Following the roar of thunder, lightning, like a flaming sword, would cut through the sky. Full of concern, the mother quickly got into her car and drove along the route to her child's school. As she did so, she saw her little girl walking along, but at each

flash of lightning, the child would stop, look up and smile.

Another and another were to follow quickly and with each the little girl would look at the streak of light and smile.

When the mother's car drew up beside the child she lowered the window and called to her, "What are you doing? Why do you keep stopping?" The child answered, "I am trying to look pretty. God keeps taking my picture." May God bless you today as you face the storms that come your way.

[\(mommomchoochooti@aol.com\)](mailto:mommomchoochooti@aol.com)

BLESSED SACRAMENT CHAPLET

Blessed Sacrament Beads (Blessed Sacrament Fathers). These consist of a medal of the Blessed Sacrament and 33 beads, recalling the 33 years of Christ's life on earth.

On the medal one makes a spiritual communion as follows: "As I cannot now receive Thee, my Jesus, in Holy Communion, come, spiritually into my heart, and make it Thine own forever."

On each bead say: "Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament on the altar have mercy on us!"

(Approved May 30, 1911, by Pope Pius X)

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SSJ, 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.

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

VOCATIONS DEPARTMENT

SEEK THE FACE OF CHRIST IN EVERY SISTER, BROTHER

After nearly five years in vocational ministry, that's the immutable conclusion I have come to as I write this column to prepare for the upcoming 40th World Day of Prayer for Vocations and my Congregation's annual celebration of our foundation in which we pray a Novena for Vocations.

God has instilled within each of us the power to illuminate for others the path to vocational fulfillment and God's love whether through marriage, single or religious life. It's quite miraculous really.

We know God has a plan for each one of us. Cleverly, though, God only gives us one key to unlock this mystery when it really requires two. The second key must come from another of God's people, someone close who cares enough to help us in our life's journey. I love the way Jeff Clavins, columnist for The Catholic Spirit, recently summarized this fundamental truth: “

As Christianity is Incarnational, it comes as no surprise to find people doing what the eastern star did, guiding people to Christ.” So if I have this power, you are asking yourself, just how in the heck do I use it? Clearly the first place to start is prayer. Much like the fine-tuning on a radio, prayer strengthens our ability to receive the “signals” sent to us by the Holy Spirit.

Pray for families so that they may nurture faith and love, cultivating an environment where spiritual vocation is valued. Pray for the men and women who have already committed to a life in Christ, our, sisters, brothers, deacons and priests. And of course pray for those who are currently searching for their vocation, that they have the courage and an open heart to discern God's will.

You might also consider “turning up the volume” on your appeals by praying with others in your parish during the World Day of Prayer for Vocations May 2. Over 430 Adorers of the Blood of Christ in the United States - prays a novena for vocations that culminates with our annual celebration of our foundation day each March.

Of course prayer is only half the bargain. God also needs your personal intervention when delivering His precious instructions to those in life that need them most. The Most Rev. Kieran Conry, Bishop of Arundel and Brighton, put it this way: “In praying [for vocations], we associate ourselves with the

challenge, in the same way that praying for the poor and suffering in the world reminds us of our personal obligation in that regard.” This really isn't a complicated task.

Simple words of encouragement can strike like lightning in the yearning soul of a friend, a family member, a co-worker or a neighbor. We've built an entire ministry called *LifeChoices* around helping young men and women explore these glorious mysteries with both spiritual guidance and career counseling.

We start from the assumption that any life lived in service to Christ is sacred, whether married, single or through vowed religious life. Since we began *LifeChoices* four years ago, more than 400 women and men have used the program as a tool to discern where God is calling them to use their gifts. Recently we kicked off a nationwide program to encourage all those associated with our congregation to personally invite someone they know to consider *LifeChoices*.

In last year's message for the World Day of Prayer for Vocations, Pope John Paul II wrote this beautiful admonishment: “...

All Christians help one another to discover and fulfill their own vocation by listening to the Word of God, in prayer, by assiduously participating in the Sacraments and *incessantly seeking the face of Christ in every brother and sister.*” (Emphasis mine.)

In other words, when it comes to guiding people to Christ by illuminating their vocational path -- you have the power!

(By Sister Diana Rawlings ACS Director, National Vocations Office, Adorers of the Blood of Christ)

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. It houses the Diocese of Camden formation program to help young men investigate whether God is calling them to a priestly vocation.

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 provides 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.

SEX, LIES and RELIGIOUS LIFE in HOLLYWOOD

Quick quiz for all you movie buffs: award yourself one point for correctly naming the movie, two points for naming the actor.

Okay, here goes: Movie 1 - "Hundreds of boys have gone through here. And they're out in the world with their heads up. They're making good, every last one of them. That's serving my creator and my country." Title? Actor?

Movie 2 - "Maria, the love of a man and a woman is holy too. You have a great capacity to love. What you must find out is how God wants you to spend your love." Title? Actor?

Movie 3 - "But look at me! I'm a nun. I'm a penguin." Title? Actor?

And the correct answers are: Movie 1 - Spencer Tracy as Father Flanagan in the 1938 classic *Boys Town*; Movie 2 - Peggy Wood as Mother Superior in the 1965 blockbuster musical *The Sound of Music* starring Julie Andrews as Maria; and finally Movie 3 - Whoopi Goldberg as a mobster girlfriend on the lam in the 1992 hit movie *Sister Act*.

All three of these movies were widely acclaimed, all three entertaining. But which presents the more accurate picture of religious life?

Since *Boys Town* and *The Sound of Music*, Hollywood has continued to reshape images of religious life and the priesthood. Unlike 40 years ago, Hollywood's "brand" of religious life today sometimes portrays priests and religious as stern to the point of sadistic, frequently succumbing to sexual temptation, or as objects of ridicule.

It's no wonder many young people don't seriously consider religious life and the priesthood. I might not have either, if religious life had been presented to me the way it appeared in the movies *Priest* or *Blues Brothers*.

And it's not surprising that parents and grandparents don't enthusiastically promote religious life either. Of course, Hollywood was never hired to manage public relations for the religious life. Catholics have the responsibility of revealing the truth about religious vocations and their relevance to our lives and to our Church.

To dispel stereotypes and inaccuracies about religious life, each congregation and diocese must define and promote itself. We can build the religious vocation brand identity by fostering awareness and the reputation and image of religious life and the priesthood.

Start with your children, grandchildren and others in your life by offering examples of the positive aspects of religious life that are often overlooked by the media. Highlight the good news that nuns, priests and brothers around the world give their lives to works of mercy and social justice, to prayer and ministry, and much more. The sisters from my own congregation, the Adorers of the Blood of Christ, serve in more than 70 urban and rural communities that stretch across 20 states throughout our nation. These women help provide healthcare, education, retreat and pastoral services, social justice programs and we also work in missionary endeavors on other continents.

HOLY MASS TIMES

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

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

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

Look for movies, television shows and news reports that counterbalance preconceptions about religious life. By raising the topic of religious vocations with your children and loved ones, you give relevance to what Hollywood often trivializes: spiritual life and discernment.

It is encouraging to note that another point of view is finding its way into Hollywood boardrooms and executive suites. Michael Medved, film critic for *The New York Post* and outspoken supporter of decency in popular culture, sees a “profound national shift” toward traditional values. “It is so meaningful,” says Medved, “it is even infecting Hollywood.”

Susan Sarandon's Academy-award winning performance as a nun ministering to a death-row inmate in the 1995 movie *Dead Man Walking* is powerful testimony to the life of a real nun...the remarkable Sister Helen Prejean with the Sisters of Saint Joseph of Media.

The success of the television series *Touched By An Angel*, starring Roma Downey and Della Reese, has ignited national interest in miracles and the Holy Spirit. Lesser known movies such as *Cry*, *The Beloved Country* and *City of Joy* offer compelling images of reconciliation and service to the poor by those in religious life.

Perhaps the day will come soon when the popular image of religious life better fits the beautiful tapestry of service, commitment and love of Christ that is the overwhelming norm in our communities.

In the meantime, we must all be aware of the power of the media. We must take responsibility for witnessing what is true about a life dedicated to serving our brothers and sisters in Christ.

(Sister Diana Rawlings, National Vocation Director for the Adorers of the Blood of Christ, can be reached at 1-877-236-7377 or rawlingsd@newmanu.edu)

PRAYER for an END to TERRORISM and VIOLENCE

Lord, the threat of terrorism and violence affects our lives as never before.

As members of the world family guide us towards a lasting peace and a genuine love and understanding of one another.

This alone will enable use to find just and non-violent solutions to the problems we face.

Where Your peace and love abide, there can be none of the anger, hate, and bitterness which cause a person, race, or nation to strike out against another.

Help us to respect the dignity and rights of each person and nation and to find Your will and Your way in the situations we face.

Amen.

(Assumption Parish, Atco, NJ)

SACRAMENTS and ME

When I was a young girl, I went to Mass every week and Confession twice a year. I was taught that this was right, and so I did it. Although I was fairly well educated about the faith, I somehow concluded that God was distant and detached from the world. I was taught in my grade school religion classes that God loved me, but I couldn't help but wonder how I could really know that. I wondered how God shows His love for us—after all, I had never met a saint or a prophet, and I hadn't seen any incredible miracles. It seemed to me that God cranked the world up and let it go on its own. In short, I was a little Deist.

I didn't understand that God was personal, not only in the innermost being of the Trinity, but also in His relation to us. I didn't know that God desires to be our friend, our helper, and Our Father. I know God much better now than I did then (although I am still far from knowing Him as I should)—and this is primarily because of the sacraments. In the sacraments I come face to face with Christ, and this is especially true of the Eucharist and Reconciliation. Through this personal contact with Our Lord I have come to know and love Him more fully.

EXTERIOR FAITH

When I reached the end of my grade school years, I wanted to learn more about my faith. A brief catechism class for young adults at my parish helped me greatly. It truly deepened my appreciation for an understanding of the Eucharist and the Mass. Going to Mass on Sunday mornings became something I looked forward to and cherished, rather than it being a mere duty. I realized—in a deeper way than I had when I made my First Communion—that I was truly receiving Christ Himself, and that He wanted to be close to me. This was an extraordinary grace in my life that helped me begin to see how personal God is.

However, I still viewed the faith as something primarily exterior. Morality was the core of my belief. I thought that to be a Catholic meant merely

professing a certain set of beliefs and acting in a certain way. This is not to say that morality is not important—it certainly is—but it is not the heart of the faith. Catholic morality necessarily follows from a true and living love of God. Good morals should spring forth from out interior lives. Unfortunately, I didn't have much of an interior life at that time. I looked at my faith exteriorly and intellectually. I became prideful. I liked being a Catholic because it set me apart from most other people in the world who were immoral. I started to feel that I could never make the mistakes and commit the sins that some people did.

DRIFTING AWAY

Well, God let me go my own way. I went on being prideful. But my sins didn't end there. In His mercy, God let me drift farther and farther from Him until I finally realized that I wasn't as great as I thought I was. I committed sins that I thought I would never commit and this destroyed my pride. I had always assumed that I would never commit a serious sin—it just wasn't something I would do. When I relied only on myself—on my intellect and my exterior actions alone—I couldn't live up to the Catholic morals I valued. I turned back to God and repented, and He began to reveal Himself to me. He did this through the sacraments of His Catholic Church.

My conversion started with a good, honest confession of my sins. It hurt, but I knew it was good for me. I began to go to Confession more than twice a year, and while I developed a habit of going to Confession frequently, I also began to look at the Sacrament of Reconciliation in a much more personal way. I realized that each of my sins—great or small—wounded Christ. In each sin, to a greater or lesser extent, I was turning away from Jesus, who suffered a horrible death so that I could be close to Him. When I went to Confession, I was no longer simply performing a duty, but rather, I was coming before my Lord who loved me unto death, and telling Him personally that I had sinned against Him, and hurt Him, and that I was sorry, and why I was sorry. I promised to do my best never to hurt Him again, and I showed Him through penance that I meant what I said. In this sacrament I was able to hear Him forgive me. Through His priest, Christ personally listens to all that we tell Him in the confessional, and says, "I forgive you. I absolve you from your sins." Hearing these words was so incredibly sweet to me. They made me love Christ more and more. He has been so merciful and good to me—how can I not love Him?

INTENSELY PERSONAL

I also developed a greater love for the Eucharist at this time. I began going to daily Mass whenever I could because I was eager to receive Christ. I had previously loved the Eucharist but it had been a shallow love. Now that all was made right between us in the Sacrament of Reconciliation, I found that my love for Christ in the Eucharist deepened profoundly. The union that we have with Christ in the Eucharist is something that is very difficult for me to put into words. It's amazing that God desires to share His whole self—His body, blood, soul and divinity—with us in this sacrament. Out of love He comes to us and dwells in us, although we don't deserve it. Jesus shows His great love for us by giving Himself to us freely and making Himself vulnerable under the appearance of bread and wine. This astonishing revelation of love draws me to Christ, our divine lover, and moves me to love Him in return. The Eucharist is as personal for us spiritually as the consummation of the marriage covenant between a bridegroom and a bride. We are all spiritually in a spousal relationship with Christ.

My relationship with Jesus has become intensely personal through the grace of the sacraments. Being a weak human being, I have fallen repeatedly. At times, I'm tempted to merely look at the sacraments as a sort of magic way of staying out of trouble, but I know in my heart that they are much more than that. Without the sacraments, I wouldn't know my Lord. They are truly the heart of my relationship with Him.

(by Elizabeth McDevitt, Lay Witness, April 2001)

THE IMPORTANCE of BAPTISM

Baptism is the sacrament through which Holy Mother Church gives supernatural life and spiritual birth to souls. In baptism, the Holy Spirit gives the first sanctifying grace and takes up His dwelling in the soul.

Baptism also takes away original sin, and all actual sins committed previous to its reception. It remits all punishment. These effects are signified by the pouring of water, the special property of which is to cleanse.

This sacrament makes the person, who is baptized "In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost" – a child of God. He becomes a member of Christ's Mystical Body, the Church, and an heir to heaven.

Baptism imprints on the soul the character of a Christian. It renders a person capable receiving the other sacraments. Hence, it is sometimes called the “foundation” sacrament.

It infuses into the soul the virtue of Faith, enabling the person habitually to believe the truths taught by the Catholic Church, and endowing him with the constant ability to make acts of faith.

It imparts to the soul the seeds of Divine hope, and clothes it in the habit of charity. It gives the soul a right, which last throughout life, to actual graces to keep the Divine life received and to retain membership in the visible Church

NECESSITY of BAPTISM

Baptism is absolutely necessary for salvation, for Jesus Christ explicitly said’ “Unless a man be born again of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God” (John 3:5)

The lack of the sacrament of Baptism however can be supplied at death (1) by martyrdom, and this is called baptism of blood; or by (2) an act of perfect contrition, together with at least an implicit desire for baptism and this is called baptism of desire.

The greatest concern should be had to have infants baptized early, for, owing to their tender age, there is always, more or less danger of their dying. Parents sin gravely if a child of theirs dies without baptism through their fault, or if they delay baptism for a long time without necessity.

An adult who is to be baptized must have faith and at least imperfect sorrow for mortal sins committed. Without such sorrow, he would receive the character of baptism, but not the remission of his sins nor sanctifying grace. These effects would be suspended until the impediment had been removed either by perfect sorrow for his sins, or the sacrament of reconciliation.

THE MINISTERS of BAPTISM

The duty of baptizing belongs to bishops and priests, but in case of necessity anyone may baptize –man woman, child heretic, or unbeliever-provided the one baptizing uses the proper form and has the intention of doing what the Church does in baptizing. In danger of death, an ecclesiastic, even of an inferior order, should be preferred to a lay person, and a layman to a laywoman, unless the greater knowledge of the woman or propriety requires her to baptize.

THE FORM of BAPTISM

Baptism is administered by pouring water on the head of the one to be baptized, or, if this is impossible, on some other principle part of the body, while saying aloud: I baptize thee in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

When a priest confers solemn baptism, this essential form is accompanied by a number of beautiful rites; the Sign of the Cross and exorcism, which liberate the soul from the power of the devil; anointing with oil, a symbol of the spiritual strength conferred by the reception of grace; breathing three times upon the face to show that baptism is pouring new life into the soul, just as God breathed life into Adam when He created him.

The Sign of the Cross is made on the forehead and breast, because the Cross is the sign of a Christian, and everyone must carry the cross of mortification to overcome the world, the flesh and the devil which he renounces.

Blessed salt is put into the mouth while the priest prays that Christian wisdom may preserve the baptized from the corruption of sin. A profession of faith is made in the most important doctrines of the Church.

Investiture in a white garment or cloth indicates purity of soul. A lighted candle is given to signify the flame of charity.

When a person is privately baptized, these ceremonies should be supplied later if possible.

The name of a saint is given to the one baptized so he may have a heavenly patron, protector and model in striving for sanctity.

Godparents must see that their godchildren are instructed in the Faith, and live as good Christians. They must give them a good example. The spiritual relationship contracted between a sponsor and the baptized person makes marriage between them unlawful.

The baptized person is obliged at all times to profess his faith and to observe the laws of God and His Church. He renounces forever the devil, the world and its vanities, that is sin and the vicious maxims of the world.

The splendor and the glory, the honor and nobility of baptism, and the supremely regrettable consequences that may follow from deferring it, behoove all early to seek this door to spiritual life, this vehicle to heaven!

(The Maryfaithful)

RENEWAL of BAPTISMAL VOWS

Most Holy Trinity, Father, son and Holy spirit, in Your Presence I solemnly renew the promises which were made for me at my baptism.

I renounce the devil with all his works and pomps. I renounce the world with all its indecency and pride. I renounce the flesh with all its disorderly passions.

I believe in God the Father, Who created me. I believe in God the Holy Spirit, Who sanctified me. I believe in the Saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting.

This is my faith! To it I pledge myself. In it I will live and die. And in accord with it, I will, with your grace, Oh Lord keep the commandments, and I will observe the precepts of Your Holy Church. I will be loyal, loyal to the Church. I will be loyal to Mary, my mother, loyal to Christ, my Leader and King, and loyal to God. AMEN

SACRED HEART OF JESUS,
THY KINGDOM COME.

[The Maryfaithful, January-February 2003]

BAPTISM IS A SYMBOL of CHRIST'S PASSION

You were led down to the font of holy baptism just as Christ was taken down from the cross and placed in the tomb which is before your eyes. Each of you was asked, "Do you believe in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit?" You made the profession of faith that brings salvation, you were plunged into the water, and three times you rose again. This symbolized the three days Christ spent in the tomb.

As our Savior spent three days and three nights in the depths of the earth, so your first rising from the water represented the first day and your first immersion represented the first night. At night a man cannot see, but in the day he walks in the light. So when you were immersed in the water it was like night for you and you could not see, but when you rose again it was like coming into broad daylight. In the same instant you died and were born again; the saving water was both your tomb and your mother.

Solomon's phrase in another context is very apposite here. He spoke of *a time to give birth, and a time to die*. For you, however, it was the reverse: a time to die, and a time to be born, although in fact both events took place at the same time and your birth was simultaneous with your death.

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This is something amazing and unheard of! It was not we who actually died, were buried and rose again. We only did these things symbolically, but we have been saved in actual fact. It is Christ who was crucified, who was buried and who rose again, and all this has been attributed to us. We share in his sufferings symbolically and gain salvation in reality. What boundless love for men! Christ's undefiled hands were pierced by the nails; he suffered the pain. I experience no pain, no anguish, yet by the share that I have in his sufferings he freely grants me salvation.

Let no one imagine that baptism consists only in the forgiveness of sins and in the grace of adoption. Our baptism is not like the baptism of John, which conferred only the forgiveness of sins. We know perfectly well that baptism, besides washing away our sins and bringing us the gift of the Holy Spirit, is a symbol of the sufferings of Christ. This is why Paul exclaims: *Do you not know that when we were baptized into Christ Jesus we were, by that very action, sharing in his death? By baptism we went with him into the tomb.*

(From the Jerusalem Catecheses, 2nd Reading for
Thursday within the Octave of Easter, Office of
Readings, Liturgy of the Hours, Daughters of Saint
Paul, 1983, <http://www.petersnet.net/research/128>)

PRAY for GRACE

O my God and my All, in Thy goodness and mercy, grant that before I die I may regain all the Graces which I have lost through my carelessness and folly.

Permit me to attain that degree of merit and perfection to which Thou didst desire to lead me, and which I failed by my unfaithfulness to reach. Mercifully grant that others regain the Graces which they have lost through my fault.

This I humbly beg through the merits of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Immaculate Virgin Mary. Amen

(The Maryfaithful, January-February 2003)

A PRAYER for OUR TROOPS

Lord, hold our troops in your loving hands. Protect them as they protect us. Bless them and their families for the selfless acts they perform for us in our time of need. I ask this in the name of Jesus, Our Lord and Savior. AMEN

(Unknown)

MESSAGE of 4/25/2003 via Maria Pavlovic Lunetti

Dear Children! I call you also today to open yourselves to prayer. In the foregone time of Lent you have realized how small you are and how small your faith is. Little children, decide also today for God, that in you and through you He may change the hearts of people, and also your hearts. Be joyful carriers of the risen Jesus in this peaceless world, which yearns for God and for everything that is from God. I am with you, little children, and I love you with a special love. 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 to alleged visionaries from Medjugorje.)

REFLECTION on the MESSAGE of 4/25/03

Decide Also Today for God

In her messages, the Blessed Virgin Mary often mentions the word "today", now, the present moment. She wants to say to us that yesterday is gone, that tomorrow has not arrived yet, that there is only today, now. Now I can decide for God and for prayer, now I can become believer or unbeliever. How many people live split up between yesterday and tomorrow, without living today, never being present to themselves in this time that God gives us. The majority of the messages of Our Lady start with: "I call you also today". Nothing has changed in the force, the love, the challenge of her calls and her messages. She remains the same, because she does not need any change. Let us ask ourselves how much we have changed or how much we remained unchanged. Because, the one does not advance on the way of faith moves back undoubtedly. The spiritual life is neither ease, nor comfort, but a permanent combat on the paths of faith, according to the words of Job: "Isn't human life on earth a combat?" (Cf. Jb 7,1a) How much combat to ensure the material existence, how much more of it than on the spiritual way of faith in God! Jesus himself invites us and says: "Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation" (Mt 26,41)

The time of Lent was a gift and an occasion to see ourselves in truth in front of God. In this message, Our Lady calls us to this same truth. In front of God, we are always small and only creatures, dependent in everything on our Creator. It is a grace to recognize and realize how much we are small and how much our faith is small. Nobody can say: "I believe in God hundred percent, I cannot believe more", "I love God so much that I cannot love him more". We always discover spaces within us where we did not allow yet God to enter.

Our Lady invites us to make a decision: "Decide Also Today for God". Each one of us is responsible for his life and decisions. Mary can call us maternally, but she cannot do it in our place. She did all that she could. She can love us, but cannot live our life in our place, nor die in our place. She does not take away from us the freedom of our decision, just like God the Father did not take away from her the freedom of her decision when he sent the angel Gabriel at the Annunciation. In her freedom, Marie could say: "It is too difficult for me, it is beyond my forces and my capacities" Freely, she pronounced her "yes" to God. Today, she speaks and gives witness that she was not mistaken, and this is why she knows that we will not make a mistake if we decide for God. According to words of Saint Therese of Avila, "God awaits our decision for to do then everything himself in us". Without our decision, he cannot, he does not want to act against our free will. If we allow it, God can change our hearts and the hearts of the others in us and through us. We cannot do it. We cannot convert anybody by our efforts to convince, our preaching and our fine words, intelligent and human. It is the work of God. What we can do, it is to prepare the ground in our heart for him, it is to create space for God within us. Then only, the Risen One will have place to enter into this peaceless world, which yearns for God and for everything that is from God. In his Confessions, Saint Augustine confirms it: "You encourage it to seek joy by praising you, because you created us for you and our heart is without peace as long as it does not rest in you". (Confessions I,1)

Mary gives us the promise to be and remain with us. She came to us and she continues to come with a heart full of a motherly love, to give it to all those who wish to open and receive her love. Let us allow her to lead us. Let us not be afraid, like she was not afraid to give her life to God.

(Father Ljubo Kurtović, OFM, April 26, 2003, <http://www.medjugorje.hr/ulazakstipe.htm>)

JESUS AT THE WRONG ADDRESS!?

It's Easter morning.

The world squared its accounts with Jesus. His disciples are scattered in fear. For them, he does not exist any more. Their last remembrance of Jesus is his tomb, the end of a life of a man who was so different from them. They understood nothing of his message. They even forgot that he said that he would rise again to a new life. The death-mentality of mortals was stronger than their hope in life.

In the crowd of those who were lost and disappointed, the only ones who kept their presence of mind were the Mother of Jesus and his disciple John, but both crushed by pain. The day after, Mary of Magdala and the other Mary joined them. They wanted to visit the Tomb of Jesus, but Jesus was not there any more. They were looking for him at the wrong address. Jesus does not live among the dead, he is alive and he awakens the dead to a new life.

His tombstone that was removed gave a clear message, which resounds until today all over the world: Jesus is risen! "And he said unto them, Be not afraid: You seek Jesus of Nazareth, which was crucified: he is risen; he is not here!" (Mk 16:6)

From that moment, everything has changed. Death does not rule any more over humanity. Every creature gets a chance for a new and eternal life. In fact, death is no more – Jesus squared the accounts with it. The door of salvation is wide open. The tomb is no more the last station. Jesus invited us to live eternally in the house of his Father and of our Father. This is why he tells us: "He that believes and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believes not shall be condemned." (Mk 16:16)

Through our baptism, we take part in Christ and become a part of the Church. This is in fact the path that leads to eternal dwellings. On this path, there should be no stop-and-go, but reality sometimes leads us in the wrong direction. We walk and run but there is no goal at the horizon. We seek but we do not find. Often we seek Jesus on a wrong address. It is difficult for us to recognize him in the heart of a brother or a sister next to us. But, it is there that Jesus dwells. Let us knock at that door and we shall surely find him. Our Lady also invites us to seek him there. So let us remove the stone that encloses us into our tombs and errors. Let us allow the rays of the Risen Christ to enter into our inner being, and our path from the nest to the stars will be illuminated.

Father Mario Knezovic

COMMUNIONS and CONCELEBRANTS

During the month of March, 45,000 received Holy Communion and 923 priests from this country and abroad concelebrated Holy Mass in Medjugorje.

EASTER IN MEDJUGORJE

On the Eve of the Palm Sunday, a prayerful concert was held in Saint James' Parish Church in Medjugorje. The theme of the concert was "The Seven Last Words of Jesus on the Cross". This work by Joseph Haydn was played by the Chamber Orchestra of the Symphonic Orchestra of Mostar under direction of maestro Tonko Ninic.

During the entire Holy Week and for Easter, numerous groups of pilgrims arrived in Medjugorje, desiring to prepare themselves for Easter and to celebrate the biggest Christian feast here. For Easter itself, there were several thousand pilgrims from all over the world, but the most numerous were Austrians and Germans. Also very numerous were Croatian pilgrims and those coming from neighboring parishes, who wanted to make their Easter confession here. Every evening, during the three-hour prayer program, there were about 20 priests hearing confessions.

The Holy Triduum was celebrated in deep recollection and prayer. The liturgical celebrations of Holy Thursday and Good Friday (as well as the Way of the Cross on Cross Mountain) and the Liturgy of the Word in view of the Easter Vigil were celebrated in 10 languages.

SEMINARS IN "DOMUS Pacis"

During the last period, there were three "Prayer and Fasting" seminars for pilgrims from Germany, Austria and Slovakia. Franciscan sisters led one seminar for young girls from Herzegovina.

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)

**NO VISA for MEDJUGORJE for
CITIZENS of SLOVAKIA, THE CZECH
REPUBLIC, POLAND and HUNGARY**

By the decision of the Foreign Affairs Ministry of Bosnia and Herzegovina, between April 1 and October 31, 2003, citizens of Slovakia, the Czech Republic, Poland and Hungary need no visa for Bosnia and Herzegovina. We ask kindly the organizers of pilgrimages to inform about this

decision their collaborators in the above-mentioned countries.

THE 8TH INTERNATIONAL MEETING for PRIESTS

The 8th International meeting for priests will take place in Medjugorje from June 30 to July 5, 2003. The theme of the meeting is "Servant of the Eucharist".

You may make reservations by e-mail: medjugorje-mir@medjugorje.hr, at the Information Office personally, or by phone/fax: +387-36-651-988 (for Marija Dugandzic).

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

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

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

You can find the program of this meeting on our web-page www.medjugorje.hr.

Many priests who do not have access to Internet may not have been informed about the existence of this international meeting in Medjugorje. Therefore, we kindly ask all Organizers of pilgrimages, Prayer Groups and Centers for Peace to publish this information as widely as possible by all means at their disposal, so that as many priests as possible may participate. In as much as it is possible, we also kindly ask you to financially assist the priests who would like to come but do not have the necessary funds for such a journey.

We thank you in advance and pray for God's blessing and the blessing of the Queen of Peace upon you and your work.

SUMMER SCHEDULE at the SHRINE

The summer prayer program schedule at the Shrine of the Queen of Peace in Medjugorje begins on May 1st.

Prayer of the Rosary in the parish church will begin at 6pm. Holy Mass will be at 7pm, followed by the blessings and the third part of the rosary. Eucharistic adoration on Thursday will be after the evening Mass

and on Wednesday and Saturday from 10-11 PM. Veneration of the cross will be on Friday after the evening Mass.

Rosary on Apparition Hill and the Way of the Cross on Krizevac will begin at 4 PM. You can make your confession every evening during the evening prayer program.

(Published by: Information Center MIR - Shrine of the Queen of Peace, 88266 Medjugorje.
<http://www.medjugorje.hr/ulazakenstipe.htm>)

THE HISTORY and USE of HOLY WATER

Kind reader, as you sometimes stand at the church door, and see people enter and depart, taking holy water as they do so. Some making a well-defined sign of the cross, and others a motion that might be taken for the brushing away of an importunate mosquito, or for anything but what it is intended to represent, did you ever feel a desire to learn anything more about holy water than that it is blessed by a priest as necessity requires, and placed at the church door for the convenience of people? Or do you, perhaps, belong to the large number of those who are content to practice their religion in a mechanical sort of way without caring to trouble themselves with an inquiry into the history and significance of its numerous sacred rites?

The first point to attract attention is the extensive use of holy water in the sacred functions of religion and among the faithful. From the grand basilica to the hut of the beggar holy water is found, and it enters into the imposing ceremonial of the one as well as into the simple devotions of the other. It is required in almost all the blessings of the Church and in some of the sacraments, and a few sacred rites are complete without it. The room in which we are born is sprinkled with it; in one of its three several forms it is poured on our brow in baptism; it accompanies the last sad rites of religion over our remains, and the ground in which we are laid to return to dust is consecrated with its hallowed drops. This is an evidence of the importance the Church attaches to it, as well as of the perfect manner in which the faithful have imbedded her spirit; and it must also be regarded as proof of its efficacy in conferring blessings and repelling the attacks of the enemy of mankind.

What then is holy water? We need not be told that it is water which has been blessed with certain exorcisms and prayers, and into which salt similarly blessed has been mingled.

EARLY USES of HOLY WATER

The better to understand the history of holy water in the Christian Church, it will be well to inquire into the part which water played in the religious ceremonies of both the Jewish and the pagan nations of antiquity. Water being the natural element for the removal of external defilements, it was to be expected that any system of religion, whether true or false, abounding, as all did in ancient times, in symbolical rites, would adopt water as the symbol of interior purity. We do not, however, read of water having been used in the religious ceremonies of the worshipper of the true God before the establishment of the Mosaic Law. Nor need we be surprised at this for up to that time the ceremonial of divine worship had hardly begun to be developed, but consisted almost wholly of prayers and offering of sacrifices by the patriarch of the tribe or family. But with the establishment of the Jewish Dispensation, when the ritual prescriptions were defined with the greatest precision, purification by water was made to play an important part. (Exodus, xix. 10; xx. 18 et seq; Leviticus, viii. 6; Numbers, xix et seq; Deuteronomy, xxi1 et seq., etc.)

The student of the Greek and Latin classics need not be reminded that among the Greeks and Romans lustration and other religious ceremonies, in which the use of water entered largely, formed an important part of the ritual exercises of their temples; and the following will suffice for the general reader. "Originally ablution in water was the only rite on served by the Greeks, but afterward sacrifices, etc., were added. They were employed both to purify individuals, cities, fields, armies, or states, and to call down the blessing of the gods. The most celebrated lustration of the Greeks was that performed at Athens, in the days of Solon by Epomen ideas of Crete, who purified that city from the defilement incurred by the Cylonian Massacre. A general lustration of the whole Roman people took place, every fifth year, before the censors went out of office. On that occasion the citizens assembled in the Campus Maritius, and the sacrifices termed Suovetaurilia, consisting of a sow, a sheep and an ox were offered up, after being carried thrice around the multitude. This ceremony, to which the name lustrum was particularly applied, is said to have been instituted by Servius Tullius in 566 BC, and was celebrated for the last at Rome in the reign of Vespasian. Al Roman armies were lustrated before they commenced military operations. The Roman shepherd at the approach of night adorned his fold with branches and foliage, sprinkled his sheep with water, and offered incense and sacrifices to Pales, the tutelary divinity of shepherds. Whatever was used at lustrations were immediately after the ceremony cast

into the river or some place inaccessible to man, as it was deemed ominous for anyone to tread on it. In the Egyptian pagan worship lustration were more frequent than among any other people, the priest being required to wash themselves twice every day and twice every night. (Herodotus, book ii. No. 37) But it is needless to multiply examples from pagan antiquity; sufficient to say that so universal was the custom that it found its way into the New World. The less barbarous tribes of Mexico and Central America having their sacred water, which was used for various religious and medicinal purposes. (Hubert Howe Bancroft's Native Races, " vol. ii page 611; and vol. iii. page 370 et seq., etc) And among some at least of the pagans, as among Catholics, the custom existed of sprinkling themselves, or having themselves sprinkled by the priest, with water on entering their temples. ('Kirchen-Lexicon," article Weihwasser.)

The fact that a sort of holy water was in use both among the Jews and pagans might appear to give some plausibility to the statement sometimes made that many Catholic rites and ceremonies are but a reproduction of those of paganism; or, as one Pittsburgh divine charitably put it, "the Romanist are only baptized pagans." Without attempting to defend the Church against these silly attacks it may be said that several different replies may be made to these accusations. In the first place, watering, as was said above, the most ready and natural element for the cleansing of external defilements, it was to be expected that it would also be used as the symbol of purification from the defilements of sin, as in baptism. Again, the Jews having employed water in certain religious rites, the use of it in the new Dispensation would have a tendency to aid in winning some, at least, of them to the Christian religion. As

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such an adaptation we have the blessing, or “churching,” of women after parturition, as an act of thanksgiving, taking the place of the legal purification enjoined on similar occasions by the Mosaic Law. And a like course of action was sometimes found to be of advantage among pagans who were too strongly attached to some of their pagan rites. According to the principle laid down by Saint Paul, missionaries made themselves all to all that they might gain all to Christ. (I. Cor. ix 20-22) as an instance: when Saint Augustine, who had been sent to England to preach the Gospel, found the custom among the pagans of having idols placed in the hollow of trees, and other similar places, he was perplexed as to the best means of winning the people from this idolatry. Knowing, as he did full well, that if the idols were removed not a few of the people would retain a superstitious veneration for the places they had once occupied, he wrote for the advice to Saint Gregory the Great, who was then ruling the Universal Church. The Pope advised him to substitute for pagan idols the images of the Blessed Virgin and the saints; which he did, with the desired effect. Finally, it may be answered that the Church has received from her divine Founder the plenitude of power for the institution of such rites and ceremonies as may seem best to her, enlighten as she is by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, for the carrying of her exalted mission. Let us now direct our attention to the history and use of holy water in the Christian Church.

HISTORY of HOLY WATER in the CATHOLIC CHURCH

The present rite of blessing water by prayer and a mixture of salt is frequently referred to Pope Saint Alexander I., who governed the Church from the year 190-119. But from the word which he uses in his decree it would appear that the rite is more ancient than the time of the Pontiff. He says: “We bless, for the use of the people, water mingles with salt.” Marcellius Columna attributes the introduction of holy water to the apostle Saint Matthew, whose action was approved by the other apostles, and soon became general. (“Institutiones Liturgicae, “ by J. Fornici, pp 353,0354) Whether we are disposed to accept this evidence as conclusive or not, it is all but certain from other proofs that the use of holy water dates from apostolic times, as Saint Basil, among others, mentions. (Kirchen-Lexicon.”)

The blessing of water before High Mass on Sundays, and the sprinkling of the people with it by the celebrant, before he commences the offering of the Adorable Sacrifice, are commonly attributed to Pope Saint Leo IV., who governed the Church from 847 to

855; but there are also very learned authorities who trace it to a far more remote antiquity. The custom of placing holy water at the door of the church for the use of the faithful is still more ancient, as may be inferred from the fact that the idea was evidently suggested by the Jewish custom of requiring purification before entering the temple to offer or assist at the sacrifices. But it would be impossible to fix the precise date. The customs of Christians sprinkling themselves with water or even washing their hands and face before entering the house of God, existed throughout the Church at least from the time of Tertullian that is before the end of the second century. (Kirchen-Lexicon.”) Mgr. Bargier has the following in regard to the custom of taking holy water on leaving the church: “The holy-water font, as its name indicates is a vase intended to contain holy water for the use of the faithful, who bless themselves with it on entering the church, and not when leaving; for they purify themselves to enter the holy place; but when they leave it they should have no further use for the spiritual succor, sanctified as they have been by prayer, the sacraments, and the liturgical offices. Such is the practice universally followed in Rome.”

The use of holy water among the faithful at their homes is of still greater antiquity, as may be learned from the Apostolic Constitutions, which contain a formula for the blessing of it, that it may have power “to give health, drive away diseases, put the demons to flight,” (Catholic Dictionary,” article Holy Water.) etc.

THE KINDS of HOLY WATER

Let us now turn to the historical and liturgical view of the question. First, there are three, or, in another sense, four kinds of holy water. According to the first division, there is, first, baptismal water, which is required to be blessed on every Holy Saturday and eve of Pentecost in all churches that have baptismal fonts. This water, after the holy oils have been mingled with it, is used only in the administration of baptism. In the next place, there is water blessed by a bishop to be used in consecrating churches, or reconciling churches that have been desecrated. This is called Gregorian Water, because Pope Gregory IX made its use obligatory for the purpose specified. Wine, ashes, and salt are mingled with it. Then there is the common holy water, which, as is well known, is usually blessed by a priest. This blessing may be performed at any time, and in a suitable place. It is directed to be done every Sunday before Mass, as we shall see, with the exception of Easter and Pentecost, when the water blessed on the previous eve is used for the Asperges. In the oriental churches there is the

custom of solemnly blessing water on the feast of the Epiphany in memory of the baptism of Our Lord in the river Jordan, which event is commemorated by the Church on that day (Kirchen-Lexicaon.”)

According to another division, there may be said to be four kinds of holy water; for when water is being blessed for the baptismal font it is usually put into a larger vessel, and at a certain stage in the ceremony the font is filled, to receive the holy oils and be used in baptism, while the rest is distributed among the people. This is commonly called “Easter Water.” It may be remarked, in passing, that the laws of Church require the holy water to be removed from all the fonts at the church doors during the last three days of Holy Week.

BLESSING of HOLY WATER

When we examine into the blessing of holy water, it is found to consist of exorcisms, prayers, and the mingling of salt with the water. By the fall of our first parents the spirit of evil obtained an influence not only over man but also over inanimate nature, whence he is called in Scripture “the price of this world.” (Saint John, xii. 31; xiv. 30 etc.) For this reason, when any material object is to be devoted to the service of God, an exorcism is generally first pronounced over it to call down the blessings of God upon it, and upon those who use it in a spirit of faith.

In the exorcism of the salt, the priest addresses it, declaring that he exorcises it by the Living God, the True God, the Holy God, by the God who commanded the Prophet Eliseus to cast salt into the water to purify it; (IV. Kings, ii.2.) that it may become exorcised for the use of the faithful; that whosoever uses it may enjoy health of soul and body; that all phantasms and wickedness and all deceits of the devil may depart from the places where it is sprinkled, and that every evil spirit be adjured by Him who is to come to judge the living and the dead and the world by fire. The salt having been exorcised, is blessed with the following beautiful prayer:

“O almighty and eternal God! We humbly implore Thy boundless clemency that Thou wouldst mercifully deign to bless and sanctify this salt, Thy creature, which Thou hast given for the use of mankind, that it may bring health of mind and body unto all that take it, and that whatever is touched or sprinkled with it may be freed from all uncleanness and from all attacks of the spirit of wickedness.”

We see from this prayer that the Church begs God to attach a triple efficacy to the blessed salt: First, that it may be a means of salvation to the soul: Second, that it may be a preservative against corporal danger;

Third that it may sanctify everything with which it comes in contact. It does not produce these effects of itself, as a sacramental does, but it obtains actual graces for the pious user, which will, if co-operated with, obtain them. (Barry, p.60.) The same remark applies to the efficacy of the water.

Then follows the exorcism of the water, in the name of Jesus Christ, His Son Our Lord, and in the name of the Holy Ghost, for the dispelling of all the power of the enemy of man, and that the same enemy with his apostolate angels may be utterly expelled by the power of the same Jesus Christ Our Lord, who is to come to judge the living and the dead and the world by fire. This exorcism is followed by the subjoined prayer:

“O, God! Who, for the salvation of mankind, hast wrought many great mysteries and miracles by means of the substance of water, listen propitiously to our invocations, and infuse in this element, prepared by manifold purification, the power of thy benediction: in order that Thy creature (water), being used as an instrument of Thy hidden works, may be efficacious in driving away devils and cure diseases; that whatever in the houses or in the places of the faithful shall have been sprinkled with this water may be freed from all uncleanness and delivered from all guile. Let no pestilential spirits reside there, no infectious air; let all the snares of the hidden enemy be removed; and if there should be anything adverse to the safety or repose of the indwellers, may it be put entirely to flight by the sprinkling of this water, and that the welfare which we seek, by the invocation of Thy Holy name, may be defended from all assaults; through our Lord Jesus Christ, Who lives and reigns forever and ever. Amen.

This formula of prayer implores the following effects for the holy water: First, to drive away the devils; Second, to cure diseases; Third, to free houses and

BOOKS to BROWSE

These books may be obtained through the PFMC.

If you are interested in ordering them, please call us at (856) 768-9228 and order from the Inventory Volunteers, Vince and Livia Nocella.

“*The Gift of Miracles*” by Robert DeGrandis, S.S.J. with Linda Schubert, Servant Publications

“*True Devotion to the Holy Spirit*” by Luis M. Martinez, Sophia Institute Press

“*The Secret of the Rosary*” by Saint Louis de Montfort, Tan Books and Publishers

their contents from all evil, particularly from a plague infected atmosphere. After these prayer the priest puts a little salt into the water three times, in the form of a cross, saying: “May this commingling of salt and water be made, in the name of the Father and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.” (Barry, pp 60,61.)

THE USE of SALT in HOLY WATER

A few words on the use of salt in this and certain other solemn rites of the Church. Salt is frequently referred to in both the Old and New Testaments. “The union of water and salt is not without mystery. The property of the first is to cleanse, of the second to preserve. The church wishes that this sacramental should help to wash away sin from her children, and to preserve them from relapse. Water quenches fire and fosters the growth of plants; thus, in the spiritual order, water serves to quench the fire of the passions and to promote the growth of virtues. Salt is the symbol of wisdom; it signifies the Eternal Wisdom, the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity. Water represents emblematic of the Incarnation—of the assumption of human nature. Hence the mingling of the substances is human nature by the Eternal Word. Water represents repentance for past offences; salt from its preservative properties, represents the care which the true penitent takes to avoid future relapses.

“There is a remarkable instance in the Fourth Book of Kings, 2nd chapter,” –to which reference is made in the exorcism of salt, given above, --”Of the efficacy which God attaches to salt. The inhabitants of Jericho complained to the prophet Eliseus that the water of their town was bad and the ground barren. The holy man said to them; “Bring me a new vessel, and put salt into it. And when they brought it, he went out to the spring of the waters, and cast the salt into it, and said: This saith the Lord: I have healed these waters, and there shall be no more in them death or barrenness.” (Barry, pp. 58,59.)

The custom of mingling salt with the water when it is blessed is of great antiquity in the Church. One of the Apostolic Cannons says: “We bless water mingled with salt, that all who are sprinkled with it may be sanctified and purified.” (“Kirchen-Lexicon.”)

The importance which Holy Church attaches to indulgences, more especially in modern times, makes it pertinent to inquire, What indulgences, if any, are granted to the use of holy water? The Raccolta says (p.5): “His Holiness Pope Pious IX., by a brief (March 23, 1876), granted to all the faithful, every time that, with at least contrite heart, they shall make the sign of the cross with holy water, pronouncing at the same time the words ‘In the name of the Father

and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost,’ an indulgence of one hundred days.” [Publisher’s Note: This kind of timing for indulgences is no longer in use. The PFMC has published articles on indulgences and will repeat them in future issues of “The PILGRIM.”]

(The Maryfaithful, 2003)

SOME WAYS to PRAY TOGETHER as a FAMILY

My family would recite the rosary together each night when I was growing up. But gradually, as we children began to have after-school events, we stopped. I don’t know how many of my siblings still say the rosary or even remember the family prayer circle.

I still pray the rosary, but privately. I carry a one-decade rosary in my pocket, one given to me by a Korean friend. The beads are wooden, and there is a medallion with a crucifix on one side and a prayer for a unified Korea on the other.

There are many ways to pray together as a family. No one type fits all situations.

Some families read the Bible. Some parents lead their children in prayer as they prepare for bed. Others gather in a prayer corner in their homes.

My wife and I have found that praying together as a family is affected by our children’s attitudes. Our oldest daughter eagerly participates in spiritual activities, while our oldest son has rebelled against “churchy-stuff” since early childhood. Trying to find a way of praying that satisfies them both has been difficult, and I haven’t even mentioned our youngest.

We try to do three forms of family prayer “religiously”:

Meal prayers. Normally, at family meals, we hold hands and say the traditional meal blessing.” Bless us, O Lord...”

On special occasions we sing a grace my wife learned in childhood: “Oh, the Lord is good to me, and so I thank the Lord for giving me the things I need, like the sun, and the rain, and the apple seed. The Lord is good to me.”

We sometimes pray by singing a refrain from a Tom Chapin song:

“Thanks for our home, thanks for our health and the bounty that grows from the ground. With our loved ones here, we bless the year, that’s brought us safely round.”

During Advent, we light the wreath candles and sing a song learned in preschool: "Advent is a time to wait, not quite time to celebrate. Light the candles one by one....Christmas Day will soon be here, time for joy and time for cheer."

This prayer ritual means a lot to us.

We even do it when we have guests.

Travel. Before we travel, we ask God to bless our journey, to bring us back home safely and that all will be well while we are gone. A friend blesses her journeying guests this way: "May God bless you on your journey. May you experience God in all those you meet. And may you travel safely until we meet again."

Eucharist. We try to make the weekly Eucharist a family prayer occasion. Our youngest son is a server, my wife is an extraordinary minister, and I lector and cantor. When my son serves we sit behind him: when I cantor, my family sits where I can sit with them during the readings and homily.

For us the Mass is, as the church teaches, "the source and summit" of our family spiritual life. Following Mass we talk about the readings and homily. Sometimes we sing favorite hymns all the way home.

(By Daniel S. Mulhall, The Monitor, March 21, 2002)

PRAYER for the HEALTH of the HOLY FATHER

We pray to Abba, the Eternal Father, in and subject to His Will, in the Name, the Heart and the Blood of Jesus, by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Lord and giver of life, through the intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary, as Our Lady of the Most Blessed Sacrament and as Mediatrix of all Graces, we pray that Pope John Paul II will be cured and healed of all illness and that his earthly life shall extend free from any harm, so that the Pope will continue to serve as Vicar of Christ for many years to come. AMEN.

(Unknown)

PARISH VISITORS of MARY IMMACULATE (P.V.M.I.)

CONTEMPLATIVE MISSIONARIES

Founded on the Feast of the Assumption, 1920, by Mother Mary Teresa Tallon, the Parish Visitors of Mary Immaculate have visited hundreds of thousands

of families and individuals through door-to-door evangelization.

For the Parish Visitor, "Contemplation is first!" as the foundress always insisted. Holy Mass, the Divine Office, daily Rosary, meditation and more combine to strengthen each sister as she goes out seeking souls.

Sister is a friendly neighbor: "Hello, I'm visiting the homes in the parish on behalf of the pastor. Are there any baptized Catholics here? All kinds of needs are found and addressed by the Parish Visitor, but her principle concern is about the spiritual vitality of the Catholics living in the parish where she serves Our Lord.

Making a census of the parish, Sister determines the sacramental needs of the Catholics living at specific addresses. Return visits are made when necessary. The unchurched are invited to participate in the Rite of Christian Initiation. Persons active in a non-Catholic religion are thanked for their time and their questions are answered. Those in material need are guided toward wholesome organizations that can most effectively help them.

In addition to door-to-door evangelization, the Parish Visitors are catechist and teachers of catechists, and of lay door-to-door evangelizers. In the spirit of the new evangelization, the sisters wrote *God Still Makes Housecalls* (\$6.50 ea. with free audiotope by Sister Carole Marie), and evangelization manual for parishes interested in door-to-door visitation.

As the following true story illustrates, the Parish Visitors are evangelizers wherever and whenever the Sacred Heart of the Good Shepherd provides the opportunity.

PRAYING in the RAIN

I was waiting for the bus one mid-afternoon when a sudden summer downpour came from the sky. I had just missed a bus when the rain cloud began unloading its burden of billions of raindrops. Having no umbrella, I became soaked from head to foot in moments.

From across the street a woman called out, "Sister, do you have a minute? Our eyes met and she hurried across the street carrying a new red and white umbrella. Obviously, she wanted to share with me her protection from the weather.

Although I had hoped to dry out on the next bus, Jesus had another use for His rain and her umbrella. When the bus arrived, I waved it on.

"Sister, I have a problem. My husband and I have been separated for three months. We have two young

children. A week ago he repented and now he wants to come back. He seems very sincere. The children miss their father, too!" As cars and trucks splashed their way in front of us, she explained that they had gone to a justice of the peace to get married, although they were both Catholics.

The rain was still coming down heavily, when we noticed another bus coming down the road. I asked for her telephone number and address. She hurriedly jotted it down and gave it to me just as the bus was about to stop. I assured her that I would visit her the next day and would be delighted to meet her husband as well. Thanking her for sharing her umbrella, I boarded the bus.

The next day was cloudy, but without any signs or more rain. When I arrived at my friend's home, both husband and wife were expecting me. Polite and handsome, the man had been a good Catholic at one time. As so often happens nowadays, confused thoughts and emotions had helped them drift away from the Church. They were clearly in love and in pain. Although they had been married by a justice seven years prior, they now could see the benefit of living a Catholic marriage. The grace of the sacrament was clearly needed. Had the children been baptized? "No." Much could be done for this family through prayer and sound spiritual counseling.

I asked if they would like to talk to a priest in the parish. "Yes," they said. I assured them that Father was easy to talk to and had much experience helping couples and families. I promised to call him and arrange an appointment.

A few weeks later I was told that the children had been baptized and the couple had their marriage validated. God does work in mysterious ways; His wonders to behold!

When my new friend saw me praying in the rain she thought, "Maybe this nun could help us! "My prayer was that a bus would arrive soon and get me out of the rain. As every Catholic knows all prayers are answered, but we do not always know how. this time I did know: An umbrella answered my prayer, and our visitation under it began God's answer to her prayer.

Mother Foundress always said that we are contemplative—missionaries—"On the Way." So it was that God provides rain one day and a person responds with an umbrella. Another day it may be a meeting on an elevator, in a subway, at an airport, in a CCD parent-teacher meeting, in a doorway or a hallway. Who knows when or where or how? God knows. God is never outdone in kindness; He is

never outdone in opportunities. What a joy it is to be a Parish Visitor of Mary Immaculate!

(by Sister Marion Adele, P.V.M.I., Lay Witness, 2001)

THE FAMILY of MORAL VIRTUES

All the moral virtues are in some way related to one of the cardinal virtues. Here are some examples:

Prudence—making good decisions

Good counsel profits from the advice of others when confronted with difficult decisions.

Common sense is the ability to judge things according to the ordinary rules of conduct.

Good judgement involves attentiveness to the mind of the lawmaker

Innocence helps us to see the truth clearly (cf. 2 Cor. 11:3).

Docility is the ability to be taught.

Justice—giving others their due

Religion is the worship we owe God.

Piety is the duty that we owe our parents (and by extension the clergy, our spiritual fathers, and our family) and our country, or "fatherland."

Observance refers to the respect owed to those persons distinguished by their office or some dignity.

Obedience is the duty owed to those in authority.

Truthfulness ensures that our communications reflect objective reality.

Gratitude is the duty owed to one who has conferred benefits on us.

Zeal involves eagerly leading others to the good or protecting them from evil.

Restitution is the making of reparation for harm done to others.

Fortitude—constancy in the pursuit of the good

Magnanimity literally means "great souled," and inclines us to heroic acts of virtue.

Magnificence leads us to do great things at great personal expense.

Patience enables us to remain at peace despite trials and opposition.

Perseverance helps us to pursue a good cause to the end, and reaches its perfection in the distinctly Christian virtue of martyrdom.

Temperance—moderation in all things

Clemency remits or lessens the punishment due to a guilty person.

Meekness is self-possession in the face of adversity, and thus is even able to restrain justified anger.

Modesty allows us to be self-assured without being self-absorbed or calling undue attention to ourselves. It involves moderation in our dress, language, and behavior.

Abstinence Is moderation in the consumption of food for our spiritual welfare.

Sobriety is the regulation of our consumption of food and especially alcohol and medicines—according to the dictates of reason.

Diligence regulates our desire for ease and comfort.

Chastity controls our desire for sexual pleasure in conformity with reason and the teachings of Christ (cf. Catechism, nos. 2227 et seq.).

(Lay Witness, April 2001)

LORD GIVE US SOULS!

The trend of the day is toward materialism, over-indulgence, luxury, and amusement.

Many families, caught up in the whirl of the times, or through poverty, change of residence, or some unfortunate mistake, have let slip the precious heritage of the true faith which once was theirs.

Many, caught up in the mad seeking for pleasure or the blind battle for the almighty dollar, have forgotten their Creator or, entangled by spurious reading, have denied Him entirely.

All these cases cry loudly for help for some apostle of holy charity to alleviate, to rectify.

This is where the P.V.M. I. [see page 19] comes in; one who can enter homes and seek for the Shepherd's lost sheep, who is consumed with a divine thirst for souls. "Souls! Souls! Lord, give me souls!" must be her cry, like that of Saint John Vianney, the Cure of Ars, whose watchword it was.

(Mother Mary Teresa Tallon, Feast of the Assumption, 1930, Lay Witness, April 2001)

THE ANOINTING with the HOLY SPIRIT

When we were baptized into Christ and clothed ourselves in him, we were transformed into the likeness of the Son of God. Having destined us to be

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his adopted sons, God gave us a likeness to Christ in his glory, and living as we do in communion with Christ, God's anointed, we ourselves are rightly called "the anointed ones." When he said: *Do not touch my anointed ones*, God was speaking of us.

We became "the anointed ones" when we received the sign of the Holy Spirit. Indeed, everything took place in us by means of images, because we ourselves are images of Christ. Christ bathed in the river Jordan, imparting to its waters the fragrance of his divinity, and when he came up from them the Holy Spirit descended upon him, like resting upon like. So we also, after coming up from the sacred waters of baptism, were anointed with chrism, which signifies the Holy Spirit, by whom Christ was anointed and of whom blessed Isaiah prophesied in the name of the Lord: *The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me. He has sent me to preach good news to the poor.*

Christ's anointing was not by human hands, nor was it with ordinary oil. On the contrary, having destined him to be the Savior of the whole world, the Father himself anointed him with the Holy Spirit. The words of Peter bear witness to this: *Jesus of Nazareth, whom God anointed with the Holy Spirit.* And David the prophet proclaimed: *Your throne, O God, shall endure for ever; your royal scepter is a scepter of justice. You have loved righteousness and hated iniquity; therefore God, your God, has anointed you with the oil of Gladness above all your fellows.*

The oil of gladness with which Christ was anointed was a spiritual oil; it was in fact the Holy Spirit himself, who is called *the oil of gladness* because he is the source of spiritual joy. But we to have been anointed with oil, and by this anointing we have entered into fellowship with Christ and have received a share in his life. Beware of thinking that this holy oil is simply ordinary oil and nothing else. After the invocation of the Spirit it is no longer ordinary oil but the gift of Christ, and by the presence of his divinity it becomes the instrument through which we receive the Holy Spirit. While symbolically, on our foreheads and senses, our bodies are anointed with this oil that we see, our souls are sanctified by the holy and life-giving Spirit.

[Publisher's Note: See past issues of "The PILGRIM" or Retreat Conference Booklets where the blessed oil sacramental offered by the PFMC has been described as "Oil of Gladness."]

(From the Jerusalem Catecheses, 2nd Reading for Friday within the Octave of Easter, Office of Readings, Liturgy of the Hours, Daughters of Saint Paul, 1983, <http://www.petersnet.net/research/129.htm>)

TO MY ANGEL GUARDIAN

O glorious guardian of my frame!
In heaven's high courts thou shinest bright,
As some most pure and holy flame,
Before the Lord of endless light.

Yet for my sake thou com'st to earth,
To be my brother, Angel dear:
My friend and keeper from my birth,
By day and night to me most near.

Knowing how weak a child am I,
By thy strong hand thou guidest me;
The stones that in my pathway lie,
I see thee move them carefully.

Ever thy heavenly tones invite
My soul to look to God alone;
And ever grows thy face more bright,
When I more meek and kind have grown.

O thou who speedest through all space
More swiftly than the lightnings fly!
Go very often, in my place,
To those I love most tenderly.

With thy soft touch, oh! dry their tears;
Tell them the cross is sweet to bear;
Speak my name softly in their ears,
And Jesu's name, supremely fair.

Through all my life, though brief it be,
I fain would succor souls from sin.
Dear Angel, sent from heaven to me,
Kindle thy zeal my heart within!

Naught but my holy poverty,
And daily cross to give have I;
O join them to thine ecstasy,
And offer them to God on high.

Thine are heaven's glory and delight,
The riches of the King of kings;
The Host in our ciboriums bright
Is mine, and all the wealth pain brings.

So with the Cross, and with the Host,
And with thine aid, dear Angel Friend,
I wait in peace, on time's dark coast,
Heaven's happiness that knows no end.

(Saint Theresa Little Flower, February, 1897)

PRAYER to the HOLY SPIRIT

HOLY SPIRIT, GOD OF LOVE,
be present to me;
accept the offering of myself
which I make to you.

Receive these hands, these feet, these eyes,

this tongue, and all my senses.

Receive my memory, my will,
my understanding, my desires, my sighs,
the longings and the aspirations of my soul.

Receive my every hour, my every moment, and all the
happenings of my life.

HOLY SPIRIT, GOD OF LOVE,
knit my soul to you.

Let **YOUR LOVE** possess my whole being, my
senses, my faculties, my emotions, my very life.

Let **YOUR LOVE** rule my labor and my rest,
my going and my staying,
and move me as it pleases you.

Let **YOUR LOVE** disquiet and comfort me,
humble and exalt me,
and burn away my faults.

HOLY SPIRIT, GOD OF LOVE,
draw me to yourself.

Do with me what you will.

Nothing will cause me fear
if only **YOUR LOVE** enfolds me.

(Apostles of the Holy Spirit Bulletin, 2001-2002)

ANSWERS from the BIBLE

When in Sorrow, John 14

When you have sinned, Psalm 51

When you worry, Matthew 6:19-34

When you are in danger, Psalm 91

If you have the blues, Psalm 34

When God seems far away, Psalm 139

If you are discouraged, Isaiah 40

If you are lonely or fearful, Psalm 23

If you feel down and out, Romans 8:39

When you want courage for your task, Joshua 1

When you want rest and peace, Matthew 11:25-30

When leaving home for labor or travel, Psalm 121;
107:23-31

If you get bitter or critical 1 Cor.13

For a great invitation or a great opportunity, Isaiah 55

(The Maryfaithful)

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.

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

**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 <http://www.myfathershouse.com/> in Moodus, CT. This retreat will start on the evening of Friday, 16 May 2003, and continue from 9 AM to 5 PM on Saturday, 17 May 2003 and Sunday, 18 May 2003.

Requested donation is \$80 per couple. This includes hot lunches on Saturday and Sunday as well as handouts. Overnight accommodations are not included but are conveniently located nearby if you wish to remain in the vicinity of the PFMC.

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

**17-28 AUGUST 2003, PILGRIMAGE to
SAN GIOVANNI ROTONDO,
LANCIANO, MEDJUGORJE, and ROME**

The Pilgrims of Faith Marian Center (PFMC) will coordinate a pilgrimage to San Giovanni Rotondo (Saint Padre Pio), Lanciano (Eucharistic Miracle), Medjugorje, and Rome with Father Giovanni Tino.

Departure is on Sunday, 17 August 2003, from John F. Kennedy (JFK) International Airport, NY. Return is to JFK on Thursday, 28 August 2003.

Requested donation is \$2599 per person double occupancy plus \$115 for air taxes. Single supplement is \$275. As with all PFMC pilgrimages, this includes breakfasts and suppers throughout the pilgrimage. A deposit of \$500 is required with reservation. Full payment is due by 12 July 2003.

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 *May*, the Church celebrates the Solemnities of *ASCENSION of the LORD (29)* and the Feasts of *Saints Philip and James (3)*, *Matthias, Apostle (14)*, and the *VISITATION (31)* and the Memorials of *Saints Joseph the Worker (1)*, *Athanasius (2)*, *Damien of Molokai (10)*, *Nereus (12)*, *Achilleus (12)*, *Pancras (12)*, *Isidore the Farmer (15)*, *Pope John I (18)*, *Bernardine of Siena (20)*, *Bede the Venerable (25)*, *Pope Gregory VII (25)*, *Mary Magdalene de Pazzi (25)*, *Philip Neri (26)* and *Augustine of Canterbury (27)*. The Church calendar recognizes **Mother Day (11)**, and **Memorial Day (observed) (26)**.

In *June* the Church celebrates the Solemnities of *PENTECOST (8)*, *HOLY TRINITY (15)*, *CORPUS CHRISTI (19)*, *BIRTH of SAINT JOHN the BAPTIST (24)* *SACRED HEART (27)*, and *SAINTS PETER and PAUL (29)*, the Memorials of *Saints Marcellinus and Peter (2)*, *Charles Lwanga and Companions (3)*, *Boniface (5)*, *Norbert (6)*, *Ephrem of Syria (9)*, *Barnabas, Apostle (11)*, *Anthony of Padua (13)*, *Romuald (19)*, *Aloysius Gonzaga (21)*, *Irenaeus (28)*, *The First Martyrs of Rome (30)* and *The Immaculate Heart of Mary (28)*. The Church calendar recognizes **Fathers Day (15)**.

For additional information, call the PFMC at (856) 768-9228. 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.

PFMC PRESENTATIONS

Kathleen and Keith desire to participate in Altar Rosary Society, Legion of Mary, or other parish prayer group meetings with witness, and/or videotape or slide presentations, followed by a question and answer session.

The experiences and continuation of the PFMC ministries for Our Lady in this time of manifestation of Our Lord's mercy and graces are shared at is no cost. Free will offerings are accepted. This is especially true for books, tapes, and religious articles, when they are made available in displays at the presentation sites just like they are at the PFMC which operates like a church book rack. Recipients are asked to donate at or above the suggested value on each article. Call the PFMC at (856) 768-9228.

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 4 and the Bulletin Notices on page 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.

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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

**PRIORITY DATED
RELIGIOUS MATERIAL**

**Mailed early AM,
Friday, 5/9/2003**

The PILGRIM

U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
ATCO, NJ
PERMIT NO. 74
NON PROFIT ORG.



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!"

