



The **PILGRIM**

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June 2005

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



Jesus, infuse our hearts with your burning fire of Love. Let us consecrate our own hearts to Yours, that we may be one with Thee.

Walk with us teaching us in Wisdom, the Gifts of the Holy spirit. Teach us that to love is to will the good for the beloved.

Help us, Lord Jesus, to persue an infinite love of Mother Mary, our true mother, and couple this love with humility, so that our heaarts will never want to search for anything that is not possessed by the Immaculate one.

We ask these things through the most Sacred Heart of Jesus and the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

AMEN

(Kathleen prays from the heart for each issue.)

VISIT OUR GIFT ROOM

Are you looking for that special gift for graduation, or baptism, or marriage, or just a treat for yourself? **Keith** has just returned from **Medjugorje**, and has brought with him many new religious articles. In particular you might like to see the beautiful all metal **Miraculous Medal Rosary**. Every "bead" is a **Miraculous Medal**. We also have new all metal **Divine Mercy Medal** and **Holy Spirit Rosaries**. with "beads" of silver colored doves. He also brought back many new crucifixes both standard and **Saint Benedict Medal**. Please come to the **PFMC** and enjoy looking around.

We also have an assortment of books and can order for you anything you might be looking for to read at the beach this summer. Enjoy a few hours browsing in our vast library, or set up a day retreat for your prayer group. We have kitchen facilities to support catering brought in or to cook for your group. We are

The *May* MESSAGE, from **GOSPA, Our Lady, Queen of Peace**, to an alleged visionary from **Medjugorje, Bosnia-Hercegovina**, is presented beginning on page **16** (centerfold page) followed by REFLECTION and PRESS BULLETIN.

trying to remain open during the summer from **9 AM until about 3 PM on Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday, and on most Mondays and Wednesdays from 9 AM to about 5 PM**. Please call the **PFMC** at **(856) 768 9228** to verify that the displays are available and someone will wait for you. If you have any questions or need to ask about an item in our stock, don't hesitate to call. **We need more volunteer help as well as continued financial support for our work. Please use the enclosed envelope. God Bless You!!**

(Kathleen, Keith, Colleen, Livia, and Vince)

2006 RETREAT CONFERENCE

Reserve **Friday, 17 February 2006** through **Sunday, 19 February 2006** for the **PFMC RETREAT CONFERENCE**. It is shaping up beautifully. In prayer we have signed a contract with the **Clarion Hotel** on **Old Marlton Pike (New Jersey Route 70)** near **Interstate 295** in **Cherry Hill, NJ**. Those of you who have been attending the **PFMC RETREAT CONFERENCE** events over the years may remember this location as the **Sheraton Poste** or **Four Points**. We held many events there in the past.

The **PFMC** room block is now available for reservations and we hope to book all **188** rooms in the hotel. Room rates are **\$92 per night** for **two queen beds** or **one king bed**. Each room may have **one roll-away bed** at **\$10 per night**. In each room there is a **microwave** and a **refrigerator** as well as **normal amenities** for **hot drinks**. All rooms are newly remodeled, and very comfortable. We ask you to make your room reservations as soon as possible. Call the **Clarion Hotel** at **(856) 428-2300** and ask for the "**PILGRIMS**" room block. The rates apply from **Thursday, 16 February 2006** through **Sunday, 19 February 2006**. Get away from the hustle of the secular world and join us for the entire weekend.

"The PILGRIM" for June 2005 is dedicated to **"MARY, SPOUSE of the HOLY SPIRIT, MOTHER of the SACRED HEART"**. See page 3 for an **"IN THIS ISSUE . . ."** or **Table of Contents** listing.

Room reservations are critical to the overall costs of an event like the annual **PFMC RETREAT CONFERENCE**. If we do not make our room block quota we must pay for the use of the public space.

In order to encourage more attendance and in recognition of the room costs, the **PFMC RETREAT CONFERENCE** registration rates have been revised downward to **\$50** per person and **\$95** for a married couple. We will be putting out an information brochure with registration forms for the **RETREAT CONFERENCE** soon.

You must register for the **PFMC RETREAT CONFERENCE** with the **PFMC** using a registration form or by calling **(856) 768-9228**. Early registration is recommended. You may be a walk-in registrant but this is discouraged due to the advance planning put into the attendance of each registrant.

You may use facsimile to send room reservations to the **Clarion Hotel (856) 354-7662** or **PFMC RETREAT CONFERENCE** registrations to the **PFMC (856) 768-9428**. This is recommended in the last few weeks when mail might be delayed.

We will have a food plan available that will make it worth your while to purchase hot meals. On the premises is a restaurant that will facilitate anyone who just wants to order from the menu. Lists of local eating establishments will be provided.

The theme for **2006** is "Let us pray and beg Our Lord to have mercy on us and to grant us deliverance." (**Tobit 8:4 NAB**). Speakers will be: **Father Bill Halbing** on **Friday night** and **Saturday**; **Father Edgardo "Bing" Arellano**, seen on **Eternal Word Television Network (EWTN)** and founder of **The Alliance of the Two Hearts**, on **Saturday**; **Father Michael Semana** on **Saturday** and **Sunday**. Music will be by "**REFUGE**." **Al Barbarino** has agreed to be our **Master of Ceremonies** as well as provide his music ministry witness on **Sunday**.

Father John Tino will be the main celebrant for the **Friday Holy Mass**. We have invited **Bishop Joseph Galante** of the **Camden Diocese** to celebrate the **Sunday Holy Mass**. **Father Michael Semana** will sing the **Saturday Holy Mass** and provide an evening concert on **Saturday night** along with our regular healing service. **Daily Rosary, Angelus, Divine Mercy Chaplet, Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, Confessions** and much more is in the

planning process.

The **PFMC** will have a gift or display room with all of our stock of books, statues, and religious articles available. **The Alliance of the Two Hearts, Father Michael Semana, REFUGE, Father Bill Halbing** and **Al Barbarino** will also have displays available.

WE WILL HAVE A YOUTH / YOUNG ADULT PROGRAM run by the brothers, sisters, and priests from **The Alliance of the Two Hearts** in **Dover Delaware**. The charge for each youth / young adult is **\$20** for the weekend and will include a lunch on **Saturday** and **Sunday**. All youth / young adult participants **MUST** be **PRE REGISTERED**. **NO WALK-INS WILL BE ABLE TO ATTEND**. This will not be a program to watch children will parents attend the adult program. Youth / young adult participants are expected to be that by being at all sessions and taking an active part in the program. Parents should make arrangements for leave little children or those who do not wish to participate in the program at home or in the care of relatives. Please do not bring little children into the adult sessions.

We will **NOT** have a three day extension of the **RETREAT CONFERENCE** this year.

Please support this **PFMC RETREAT CONFERENCE** and **YOUTH / YOUNG ADULT PROGRAM** with your reservations / registrations now. Call the **Clarion Hotel** at **(856) 428-2300** and ask for the "**PILGRIMS**" room reservation block. Call the **PFMC** at **(856) 768-9228** for early registration. We accept **Discover, MasterCard, and Visa** credit cards but ask for assistance with the **3%** cost to us for credit card usage.

(Kathleen and Keith with all the **PFMC** Volunteers)

IN MEMORIAM

Please pray for the repose of the souls of:

Mary Anlage
Frank Granieri
Teresa Mosier

Please send us death notices, prayer cards, etc. so we can pray for the deceased who are beloved by our readers.

(Requested by Colleen Thomas, **PFMC** Volunteer)

The volunteer Board of Directors and Staff of the **PFMC** recognize and accept that the final authority regarding the alleged apparitions, locutions and related messages at, and to the recipients from, **Medjugorje, Bosnia-Herzegovina**, as well as all other private revelations, rests with the **Holy See**, to whose judgment we willingly submit. We give total allegiance to our **One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church** and its **Magisterium**, particularly **Our Holy Father, Pope Benedict XVI**.

While those presenters who work with the **PFMC** are selected for their personal qualifications and commitment to the Church, their comments and presentations are those of individual **Catholics** and no endorsement by ecclesiastical authority is to be presumed.

PLEASE MARK YOUR 2005 CALENDARS for *PFMC* EVENTS

See Conference Corner on page 31 as well as Bulletin Notices on pages 30 and 31. Most *PFMC* area events will be preceded by their own information sheets with reservation forms.

June 2005

11 June 2005: 9 AM Holy Mass, Healing Service, and Brunch with Keith presenting the topic: “**God, The Father of Mercy.**” Hosted by *Jesus Divine Mercy Ministry of Healing Prayer*, Eileen (609) 883-3905 or Norma (609) 799-4104.

25 June 2005: 9:30 AM Holy Rosary, 10 AM Holy Mass at Saint Peter, Point Pleasant Beach, NJ. “Celebration in Honor of Our Lady Queen of Peace” with **Father John Campoli** and **Wayne Weible** giving Testimony and Witness in **Kolbe Hall**. Bag lunch, love offering, and Blessed Mother Gift Auction. Contact **Dawn Rusinko** (732) 714-1170.

July 2005

There will not be a *July* issue of “*The PILGRIM*” due to vacations for *PFMC* volunteers. The *June* messages will appear in a *July August* issue of “*The PILGRIM*” put out early in *August 2005*.

August 2005

7 August 2005: The annual *PFMC Business Meeting* will take place after Prayer at 3 PM in the midst of a *PFMC Pot Luck Picnic*.

October 2005

9 October – 17 October 2005: Pilgrimage to **San Giovanni Rotondo, Monte Sant’ Angelo, Lanciano, and Rome, Italy** with **Father Glenn Hartman**. We are offering an extension in **Rome** to visit the grave of **Pope John Paul II**.

PILGRIMAGES for 2005

We have published information sheets with reservation forms to coordinate pilgrims for pilgrimages to **Medjugorje, Bosnia-Hercegovina** and to **San Giovanni Rotondo, Monte San Angelo, and Lanciano, Italy**.

We are in the planning stages for a *Spring 2006 Pilgrimage to the Holy Land* with **Father John Tino**. Departure will be in the week after **Easter**. Let us know if you are interested and we will send you information sheets with reservations forms as soon as they are printed.

IN THIS ISSUE . . .

A PRAYER, VISIT OUR GIFT ROOM, 2006 RETREAT CONFERENCE	1
IN MEMORIAM	2
PLEASE MARK YOUR 2005 CALENDARS for <i>PFMC</i> EVENTS, PILGRIMAGES for 2005	3
THE HOLY SPIRIT in OUR LIVES through HOLY MATRIMONY, ROOTS of MARITAL FAILURE	4
HOLY FAMILIES	6
PLEASE RESPOND to THIS NOTICE and STAY ON the BULK MAILING	7
TAKING TODDLERS to CHURCH	8
SOMETIMES YOUR BEST FRIENDS DO TELL YOU	10
VIRGINITY LOST and FOUND	11
BENEDICT XVI ANNOUNCES CAUSE of BEATIFICATION of JOHN PAUL II	13
HOLY FATHER JEAN PAUL II VENERATED the STATUE of OUR LADY of CIVITAVECCHIA (MEDJUGORJE), OTHER PONTIFICAL ACTS	14
BIOGRAPHY of NEW PREFECT of the CONGREGATION for the DOCTRINE of FAITH	15
MESSAGE of 5/25/2005 via Maria Pavlovic Lunetti, REFLECTION on the MESSAGE of 5/25/2005, ANOTHER REFLECTION	16
EUCHARISTIC ADORATION	17
PRESS BULLETIN 210, 5/26/2005	18
VOCATIONS DEPARTMENT, SEEDBED OF VOCATIONS	20
THE HOLY SPIRIT in OUR LIVES through HOLY ORDERS	21
POPE’S ADDRESS to CLERGY of ROME	22
HOLY MASS TIMES	23
MYSTICAL BODY, MARY’S GENEALOGY?	25
FATHER’S LOVE LETTER	26
IN THE HEART of JESUS	27
HOW DOES A NEW POPE CHOOSE A NAME?, IS IT A SIN TO BE WEALTHY?	28
POPE MARKS 25 TH ANNIVERSARY of JOHN PAUL’S VISIT to UNESCO	29
<i>PILGRIMS of FAITH MARIAN CENTER (PFMC)</i> , BULLETIN NOTICES for <i>PFMC</i> AREA EVENTS	30
CONFERENCE CORNER. <i>PFMC</i> DISPLAYS and / or PRESENTATIONS, PRO-LIFE ALERT	31
CALENDARS:, AROUND the <i>PFMC</i> AREA, POPE BENEDICT XVI PRAYER INTENTIONS for <i>JUNE</i>	32

What would you like to do with regard to visiting **Medjugorje** or any other shrine or holy place recognized by the **Magisterium** of the **Roman Catholic Church** as a worthy place of pilgrimage?

Please let us know the times of the year you might want to go on pilgrimage and interim stopover points. We can go via a number of airports with moderate layovers in the airport. We have always preferred to spend at least a day visiting holy places around the airport by arriving early and departing late.

If you would like us to set up a pilgrimage or a retreat cruise for your prayer group, parish, or school, with or without *PFMC* coordination, please call (856) 768-9228 for estimates on your ideas.

For a schedule of 2005 pilgrimages, we are using the services of *206 Tours*, from **Smithville, NY**. They have been organizing such pilgrimages since 1985. *206 Tours* has set up a special web page for the *PFMC* at: <http://www.pilgrimages.com/pfmc/>.

5 to 13 September 2005: PFMC pilgrims may join a pilgrimage to **Medjugorje** coordinated by **Rafael Villongco**, (732) 441-0567 or (732) 441-1513. The **Spiritual Director** will be **Father Donald Calloway, MIC**. The base price is **\$1499** plus **\$160 - \$200** for travel / airport taxes. Add-on air fares from other cities to **Newark, NJ** are available. Please visit: <http://www.pilgrimages.com/frcalloway> for more information. This pilgrimage has at least **40** pilgrims.

9 to 17 October 2005: San Giovanni Rotondo (Saint Pio of Pietrelcina), Monte San Angelo, Lanciano (Eucharistic Miracle), and Rome, Italy, with **Father Glenn Hartman, Saint John Neumann Parish** in **Sicklerville, NJ** as **Spiritual Director**. Note the change in dates and the extension of **4 days in Rome** to visit the grave of **Pope John Paul II** and the sites of our **Catholic faith** such as the **Catacombs, Coliseum, and major basilicas**. The Double Occupancy Package Price is **\$2499** and Single Supplement is **\$350**. Call the **PFMC** at **(856) 768-9228** for an information sheet with registration form. These will be included in the July-August issue of **"The PILGRIM."** Leaving from **Newark International Airport (EWR)** this pilgrimage still includes round trip air to **Bari, Italy**, via **Rome, Italy**, three star *** hotels or religious houses, motor coach land transfers with **English** speaking guide, all breakfasts and suppers, baggage transfer of one bag, **PFMC** Coordination, and full daily spiritual program. The Package price does not include: Medical / Traveler's Insurance, the cost of which is age dependent; alcoholic beverages, lunch, snacks, laundry and / or dry cleaning, room service, tips, etc. which are individual preference; and transportation to **EWR**. Add-on air fares from other cities to **EWR** are available. Ground transportation information and coordination is also available. We plan to mail the new information sheets with reservations forms as soon as we finalize them.

(The Volunteer Staff at the PFMC)

THE HOLY SPIRIT in OUR LIVES through HOLY MATRIMONY

Holy Scripture affirms that man and woman were created for one another: "It is not good that the man should be alone." The woman, "Flesh of his flesh," i.e., his counterpart, his equal, his nearest in all things, is given to him by God as a "helpmate"; she thus represents God from whom comes our help. "Therefore a man leaves his father and his mother and cleaves to his wife, and they become one flesh." The Lord himself shows that this signifies an unbreakable

union of their two lives by recalling what the plan of the Creator had been "in the beginning": "So they are no longer two, but one flesh."

The various liturgies abound in prayers of blessing and epiclesis asking God's grace and blessing on the new couple, especially the bride. In the epiclesis of this sacrament the spouses receive the Holy Spirit as the communion of love of Christ and the Church. The Holy Spirit is the seal of their covenant, the ever available source of their love and the strength to renew their fidelity.

The consent by which the spouses mutually give and receive one another is sealed by God himself. From their covenant arises "an institution, confirmed by the divine law, ...even in the eyes of society. The covenant between the spouses is integrated into God's covenant with man: Authentic married love is caught up into divine love.

Thus *the marriage bond* has been established by God himself in such a way that a marriage concluded and consummated between baptized persons can never be dissolved. This bond, which results from the free human act of the spouses and their consummation of the marriage, is a reality, henceforth irrevocable, and gives rise to a covenant guaranteed by God's fidelity. The Church does not have the power to contravene this disposition of divine wisdom.

The married need the strong and patient love of the Holy Spirit. The grace of the sacrament of matrimony is at their disposal to walk in the paths of patient love, it is strong enough to lead them to the perfection of the saints.

**(Taken from APOSTLES of the HOLY SPIRIT
BULLETIN, Winter 2004-2005)**

ROOTS of MARITAL FAILURE

Having spent the past four years engaged in Tribunal ministry, people often ask me about the high number of annulments in North America. The Code of Canon Law lists many grounds upon which the Church may declare a marriage invalid. The more common grounds concern the psychological maturity of the spouses or their intentions going into the marriage. The root cause of marital failure in almost all of these cases is abortion, contraception, and premarital sex.

Premarital Sex

Granted, society now expects young couples to engage in premarital sex. Pornography is the wallpaper of our culture, while condoms are as

common in our classrooms as crayons. Thus, whenever I interview someone seeking an annulment, I always ask whether the couple engaged in premarital relations. I cannot recall the last time someone answered no.

Why is this an issue? To begin, the problems that lead to divorce are often already noticeable during the courtship. Yet couples who engage in premarital relations will commonly overlook these differences. Thus the problems remain unresolved going into the marriage. Once married, however, these problems are both harder to resolve and more difficult to ignore.

“I knew this was a problem,” many women share during their interview. “But I had invested so much into our relationship.” This is a common euphemism when a woman engages in premarital relations. She cannot break off the relationship without feeling used. Men tend to state things more bluntly: “I had my doubts, but we were living together. So I felt obliged to marry her.”

Notice how premarital sex creates a false intimacy within an insecure relationship. The couple feels compelled to marry. This compulsion arises neither out of love, nor from a desire to build a life together. Rather, the decision to marry arises from a guilty conscience. The couple desires to correct a sinful situation. The romance deteriorated long before the exchange of the couple’s wedding vows.

Contraception

Contraception is another evil I find at the root of most broken marriages. Let’s ponder the Church’s teaching concerning this matter. Through the conjugal act, the husband gives himself completely to his wife. At the same time, the wife gives herself completely to her husband. This giving of oneself is not merely physical, but also spiritual, emotional, and psychological. Thus the conjugal act, as Pope John Paul II teaches in *Familiaris Consortio*, serves both a unitive and a procreative purpose.

Contraception separates the marital act from both purposes. This is obvious with regard to procreation since, in using contraception, the couple intends to prevent the conception of children. Yet contraception also raises a barrier between the couple and the unitive meaning of the conjugal act.

In *Familiaris Consortio*, we read how the conjugal act is an act of self-giving on the part of both spouses. God intended this act of self-giving to be both total and unconditional. Contraception frustrates the unitive function of the marital act because contraceptive sex is neither total nor unconditional. In short, contraception adds a condition to the conjugal act. The condition is that the wife is not to become

***The PILGRIM*, Volume 16, Number 6 – June 2005**

pregnant. Should the contraception fail, a wife cannot automatically assume she will have her husband’s support. In fact, one of the first lessons I learned in tribunal ministry is the following: Domestic violence usually begins with an unexpected pregnancy.

Likewise, contraception prevents the total self-giving of each spouse to the other. Each spouse withholds spiritually from the other, since the marriage is no longer a mutual source of God’s grace. The spouses withhold physically because they close themselves off to the natural consequences of their conjugal relationship. Finally, the couple withhold from each other emotionally as their mutual support for one another becomes conditional. It never surprises me to discover that contraceptive spouses stopped attending to each other’s needs shortly after the birth of their last child.

Abortion

I cannot say that abortion is as common as contraception and premarital sex when dealing with broken marriages. Yet, whatever abortion lacks in quantity, it more than makes up for in intensity. Abortion is the A-bomb of marriage. At ground zero lies a child torn from the womb. In time, the fallout will also destroy the lives of the aborted child’s family.

As I mentioned earlier, most marriages that turn violent do so when the wife tells her husband that she is pregnant. This connection is particularly strong when the pregnancy ends in abortion. In some cases, abortion is the catalyst for domestic violence within

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Williams, as well as many of *Mary’s* other beloved priests from the

Philadelphia and Newark Archdioceses as well as the Brooklyn,

Camden, Harrisburg, Metuchen, Norwich, Pittsburgh, Rockville

Center, Scranton, Trenton and Wilmington Dioceses. Father Glenn

Hartman, is reviewing every issue of “*The PILGRIM*.”

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

the relationship. In others, abortion subsequently amplifies the violence already present. Additionally, domestic violence is not uncommonly the means by which a man coerces his wife or girlfriend into aborting the couple's child. After four years of tribunal ministry, this is still the most common scenario I encounter with abortion.

It is also the scenario I find the most pastorally challenging. Despite what many feminists claim, a woman seldom chooses abortion freely — that is, without external coercion. Rather, the decision is usually made under duress. Eventually, she will face the reality of her choice and find herself in need of the Church's help and compassion. For once her child is dead, the woman finds neither help nor compassion from the abortion industry.

It also makes little difference whether the couple procures an abortion during the courtship or whether the abortion takes place during the marriage. It always leads to an increase in emotional, mental, and physical abuse between the spouses. In the vast majority of cases, the relationship ends within three years of the abortion. Often it ends on a violent note.

There are several reasons why this is the case, the most obvious being the moral guilt felt by the parties. Abortion is a traumatic experience. It affects the individual mentally, emotionally, and spiritually. While society claims that abortion is a morally neutral choice best left to the individual and her doctor, our consciences remind us otherwise.

In short, these women know abortion is wrong. They feel it in their soul every time they pass a mother with a stroller on the sidewalk. Their heart cries out with every television advertisement for diapers. What these women need is Christ's healing touch in the confessional, as well as sustained pastoral support from pro-life organizations like Project Rachel. This is the approach Christ took with the woman caught in adultery (Jn. 8:2-11). He did not excuse the sin, but He did not turn away the sinner. He invited her to repentance and forgiveness.

Yet healing and forgiveness prove elusive as each party internalizes the guilt they feel from the abortion. Yes, abortion also traumatizes men. Both husband and wife avoid discussing the abortion. Rather than share their feelings openly, rather than seek each other's forgiveness, rather than support one another through the post-abortion trauma each experiences, the abortion becomes an unspoken secret within the relationship. This secret will inevitably surface in a moment of anger unless it is first absolved and healed in the confessional.

In the end, the culture of death lies at the root of most annulments granted in North America. Catholics cannot solely blame divorce: for abortion, contraception, and premarital sex break down many relationships long before the couple first contemplates divorce.

(By Pete Vere, J.C.L., Lay Witness, January/February 2005. Pete Vere is a doctoral student with the Faculty of Canon Law at Saint Paul University in Ottawa, Canada. He also serves as an International Director with the Order of Alhambra - a Catholic family organization that assists the mentally and cognitively challenged. He recently co-authored, with his friend Michael Trueman, "Surprised by Canon Law: 150 Questions Laypeople Ask About Canon Law" (Servant Publications).)



HOLY FAMILIES

Following in condensed form is the Holy Father's May 22, 2004 ad limina address to the U.S. bishops from Arkansas, Oklahoma, and Texas.

I am grateful that during the last few months I have had the pleasure of meeting so many bishops from your country, which is home to a large and vibrant Catholic community. "We give thanks to God always for you all . . . remembering before our God and Father your work of faith and labor of love and steadfastness of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Thess. 1:2-3). These visits not only strengthen the bond between us, but they also offer a unique opportunity for us to look more closely at the good work already accomplished and the challenges still facing the Church in the United States.

In my last talks I discussed themes related to the munus sanctificandi (sanctifying office). In particular, I looked at the universal call to holiness and the importance of a loving communion with God and one another as the key to personal and communal sanctification. "God created man in his own image and likeness: calling him to existence through love, he called him at the same time for love" (Familiaris Consortio, no. 11; cf. Gen. 1:26-27). These essential relationships are based on God's love, and act as the point of reference for all human activity. The vocation and responsibility of every person to love grants us not only the ability to cooperate with the Lord in His sanctifying mission, but also gives us the desire to do so. Accordingly, in this my final reflection on the sanctifying office, I wish to concentrate in a special way on one of the cornerstones of the Church itself, namely, the complex of interpersonal relationships

known as the family (cf. Familiaris Consortio, no. 11).

Strengthening Marriage

Family life is sanctified in the joining of man and woman in the sacramental institution of Holy Matrimony. Consequently, it is fundamental that Christian marriage be comprehended in the fullest sense and be presented both as a natural institution and a sacramental reality. Many today have a clear understanding of the secular nature of marriage, which includes the rights and responsibilities modern societies hold as determining factors for a marital contract. There are nevertheless some who appear to lack a proper understanding of the intrinsically religious dimension of this covenant.

Modern society rarely pays heed to the permanent nature of marriage. In fact, the attitude toward marriage found in contemporary culture demands that the Church seek to offer better premarital instruction aimed at forming couples in this vocation and insist that her Catholic schools and religious education programs guarantee that young people, many of whom are from broken families themselves, are educated from a very early age in the Church's teaching on the Sacrament of Matrimony.

In this regard, I thank the bishops of the United States for their concern to provide a correct catechesis on marriage to the lay faithful of their dioceses. I encourage you to continue to place a strong emphasis on marriage as a Christian vocation to which couples are called and to give them the means to live it fully through marital preparation programs which are "serious in purpose, excellent in content, sufficient in length and obligatory in nature" (Directory for the Pastoral Ministry of Bishops, no. 202).

The Church teaches that the love of man and woman made holy in the Sacrament of Marriage is a mirror of God's everlasting love for His creation. Similarly, the communion of love present in family life serves as a model of the relationships which must exist in Christ's family, the Church. "Among the fundamental tasks of the Christian family is its ecclesial task. The family is placed at the service of the building up of the kingdom of God in history by participating in the life and mission of the Church" (Familiaris Consortio, no. 49). In order to ensure that the family is capable of fulfilling this mission, the Church has a sacred responsibility to do all she can to assist married couples in making the family a "domestic church" and in fulfilling properly the "priestly role" to which every Christian family is called (cf. *ibid.*, no. 55).

Schools of Holiness

A most effective way to accomplish this task is by assisting parents to become the first preachers of the Gospel and the main catechists in the family. This particular apostolate requires more than a mere academic instruction on family life; it requires the Church to share the hurts and struggles of parents and families, as well as their joys. Christian communities should thus make every effort to assist spouses in turning their families into schools of holiness by offering concrete support for family life ministry at the local level. Included in this responsibility is the satisfying task of leading back many Catholics who have drifted away from the Church but long to return now that they have a family.

The family as a community of love is reflected in the life of the Church. Indeed, the Church may be considered a family — God's family gathered as sons and daughters of Our Heavenly Father. Like a family, the Church is a place where its members feel free to bring their sufferings, knowing that Christ's presence in the prayer of His people is the greatest source of healing. For this reason, the Church maintains an active involvement at all levels of family ministry and especially in those areas which reach out to youth and young adults.

Young people, faced with a secular culture which promotes instant gratification and selfishness over the virtues of self-control and generosity, need the Church's support and guidance. I encourage you, along with your priests and lay collaborators, to have youth ministry as an essential part of your diocesan programs. So many young people are seeking strong, committed, and responsible role models who are not afraid to profess an unconditional love for Christ and His Church. In this regard, priests have always made and should continue to make a special and invaluable

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contribution to the lives of young Catholics.

As in any family, the Church's internal harmony can at times be challenged by a lack of charity and the presence of conflict among her members. This can lead to the formation of factions within the Church which often become so concerned with their special interests that they lose sight of the unity and solidarity which are the foundations of ecclesial life and the sources of communion in the family of God. To address this worrisome phenomenon, bishops are charged to act with fatherly solicitude as men of communion to ensure that their particular Churches act as families, so "that there may be no discord in the body, but that the members may have the same care for one another" (1 Cor. 12:25). This requires that the bishop strive to remedy any division which can exist among his flock by attempting to rebuild a level of trust, reconciliation, and mutual understanding in the ecclesial family.

Renewal of Devotions

My brother bishops, as I conclude these considerations on family life, I pray that you will continue your efforts to promote personal and communal sanctification through devotions of popular piety. For centuries the Holy Rosary, Stations of the Cross, prayer before and after meals, and other devotional practices have helped to form a school of prayer in families and parishes, acting as rich and beautiful supplements to the sacramental life of Catholics. A renewal of these devotions will not only help the faithful in your country grow in personal holiness but will also act as a source of strength and sanctification for the Catholic Church in the United States.

As your nation marks in a special way the 150th anniversary of the proclamation of the dogma of the Immaculate Conception, I leave you with the words of my illustrious predecessor, Blessed Pope Pius IX: "We have, therefore, a very certain hope and complete confidence that the most Blessed Virgin will ensure by her most powerful patronage that all difficulties be removed and all errors dissipated, so that our Holy Mother the Catholic Church may flourish daily more and more throughout all the nations and countries, and may reign 'from sea to sea and from the river to the ends of the earth'" (Ineffabilis Deus). I invoke the intercession of Mary Immaculate, patroness of the United States, who untainted by sin unceasingly prays for the sanctification of Christians, and I cordially impart my apostolic blessing as a pledge of strength and joy in Jesus Christ.

(by Pope John Paul II, Lay Witness, January/February 2005, pp. 52-53)

TAKING TODDLERS to CHURCH

Actions Speak Louder Than Words!

A young couple who attends Mass with their four children every Sunday recently received a letter from an anonymous parishioner complaining about the distraction their little ones were causing during the liturgy. What a shame. Wasn't it Christ Himself who said, "Let the children come to me, and do not hinder them; for to such belongs the kingdom of heaven" (Mt. 19:14)?

I know the young family who received the note. In fact, I've never witnessed, in the years I've sat behind this family, any tantrum, outburst, or distractive behavior from their children. Occasionally, one of their young may cry out or need a bathroom break that won't wait, but the mother or father always leaves quietly and with little notice.

In my view, either the anonymous writer targeted the wrong family, is super-sensitive to *any* disturbance, or perhaps was just having a bad day and yearned for an hour of solitude and serenity spent with the Lord.

Even so, Sunday Mass is not meant to be a solo service or personal retreat, but a liturgy involving the entire Church community — including children.

Christians are called to be people of charity, faith, and joy. If we don't welcome and celebrate God's precious gift of new life — with the occasional outburst — who will? After all, each little baby is made in God's own image and likeness and is part of His perfect plan.

Certainly children are not welcomed and cherished by those who champion the "right" to legal abortion, which claims the lives of nearly 4,400 babies each day. Don't get me wrong, I'm all for keeping church pews as prayerful and peaceable as possible and I get as agitated as the anonymous writer when I see parents of small children who do absolutely nothing while their young are acting up and out of control. Frankly, I have to do all I can to keep myself from going over and offering them parenting tips!

But there are times, despite every effort and preparation, when a little one's outburst or crankiness can't be helped. I've probably spent more time than most parents standing in vestibules or sacristies, rocking fussy infants or calming antsy toddlers. For many of our colicky newborns, the only thing that seemed to keep them quiet was motion, which meant I often made a quick exit from our normal front row pew and walked or rocked them through the remainder of the service. Yet, John and I came to understand the importance of attending Mass together as a family. We realized that the most important

***The PILGRIM*, Volume 16, Number 6 – June 2005**

lesson of faith we can instill in our children is not what we tell them, but what they see.

In that regard, I am convinced that the most powerful witness a child can see is his or her parents kneeling in prayer — especially the father — ,who shows by his actions a reverence and awe for a heavenly Father who is greater and more powerful than he!

As for those of us who have no small children to care for, let us praise God for the gift these little ones and their families are to our community. And let us pray especially for them and for those in our world who have lost their sense of the miraculous and are blind to the gift God has placed in our presence — some of whom are only inches tall and yet have a set of lungs that could match an opera star!

Here are some practical tips that helped us get through some of those difficult periods when our children were small:

Be prepared for baby's needs. If you are bringing an infant to church, bring bottles, pacifier, diapers, and a bib. For the nursing mom — put away those one-piece dresses and wear shirts and tops that can be easily adjusted for nursing. Find a chair in the back of the church or in a separate room if feeding time is a noticeable disruption. For the restless infant or small toddler, a selection of small toys (minus the rattles and noisemakers) are appropriate time-passers.

Prepare preschoolers. Making sure your children have a good breakfast and *always* going to the bathroom just before leaving home keeps disruptions to a minimum. Some youngsters fuss simply because they are hungry. As for the bathroom, don't risk "waiting." When in doubt, take them out! Some children truly can't wait one more minute.

Wear your Sunday best. Children learn the importance of an occasion by the way we dress and prepare. Sunday clothes don't have to be new and expensive, but they should be something special — giving an added meaning to *whom* we are coming to visit. Teens and young adults may need to be reminded of the importance of modesty — especially when coming to church. Sadly, many parishes have found it necessary to post signs in vestibules or in church bulletins stating: "No shorts, halter, or sleeveless tops."

Sit up front. Most children behave better when they are seated near the front and can see the altar and priest. Remember, their view is limited because of their size and when children can't see what's going on, it's far more likely they will be distracted and disruptive. Trust me on this one. Try the front row for six weeks and see if your wiggly youngster is not transformed into a quiet, attentive observer. Of

course, there may still be times when parents have no alternative but to remove a cranky kid from the congregation so others may pray in peace. Don't be discouraged. God will bless your effort. Saint Augustine once wrote: "The mere intent to pray is a prayer." Just be sure to offer your morning and attendance at Mass as a prayer and no matter what happens, it is a pleasing gift to God'

Hang in there. Your weekly persistence will eventually pay off. Children are the greatest imitators and soon enough they will kneel and pray just as they see you do.

Bring children's books. Small booklets of faith with colorful pictures and easily understood language are perfect for young churchgoers. Save these items for church use only, so the child will look forward to using them. Or have several selections and rotate their use.

Know what to avoid. Don't bring large dolls, trucks, or noisy, distracting items for children — and that includes food or candy that is messy and sticky. And please, no gum.

Expect good behavior. Children need to learn that there are some occasions during which they must be quiet and refrain from talk or play. This is a good beginning manners and discipline builder. Yes, it takes practice, but even the very young are eager to please and to copy the actions of others — especially their parents and family. Praising a child for good behavior goes a long way for reinforcing the behavior. Insist the child try — but don't expect perfection. Patience and persistence are key!

Encourage your child to participate. Parents should lovingly encourage their young to believe that no prayer is too small and no child too young to get God's attention. It helps if children feel a more active role in what is going on at Mass. The simple act of blessing themselves with holy water, genuflecting, lighting a candle and saying a short prayer for a loved one, or placing the envelope in the collection lets them feel a part of the liturgy.

Make Sunday special. Our Heavenly Father rested on the seventh day and commands us to do the same. It's up to us as parents to let our children know from an early age that God and family come first — especially on Sunday!

(from "LAY WITNESS" March/ April 2003, by Mary Ann Kuharski, a homemaker and mother of 13, six of whom are adopted and of mixed races, most with special needs, the author of several books, and director of **PROLIFE ACROSS AMERICA**. For more information on Mary Ann's pro-life work, call (612) 781-0410, or fax (612) 781-5031, or visit www.prolifecrossamerica.org.)

SOMETIMES YOUR BEST FRIENDS DO TELL YOU

My two friends have been searching for a long time. They need a place to worship. He was brought up in a rigid Baptist tradition; she was brought up in a rigid Catholic tradition. I am not reporting on their search, because, after all, it is theirs. While I can identify with their search in many ways, my own search has never taken me outside of Catholicism. So I cannot speak about their unique experience and what they are hoping to find.

But today they told me they attended Mass at my parish. I was quite surprised but, of course, delighted. When you are happy with your home, you want to gather people in. And when you are secure in your belief that yours is Truly Home, well, you want to make sure people not only feel welcome, but you want to make them comfortable enough to stay and share your food.

“What did you think?” I asked.

She commented on how much the liturgy has changed since she last attended Mass more than 30 years ago. Not realizing the difference between the Nicene Creed and the Apostles Creed, she felt confused. He wondered if there were any prayer books, and if so, where were they kept; he had wanted to follow along.

Then we got to the serious stuff. “I felt as if I were in a bus station,” he confessed. “And, before the service was over, people apparently knew the buses were getting ready to leave, because half the people in the church filed out.” She said the congregation struck her as being very preoccupied.

“What’s 7:30 a.m. Mass like?” she asked. Before I could respond, he interjected, “Is it more reverent?”

I mumbled something about liturgical styles, suggesting 7:30 was unquestionably more “quiet.” But I felt sick. Suddenly I saw my parish as my friends saw it: noisy, distracted and distracting, irreverent, badly dressed and appearing nonchalant about what was happening at the altar.

My friends are not complainers. They softened their remarks by telling me they had visited a neighboring Catholic parish and observed the same bustling, casual atmosphere. I knew they spoke the truth. I have been troubled by such concerns for years. Yet I’ve pushed these thoughts to the background. “Be glad people volunteer,” I say to myself when I see Eucharistic ministers dressed as though they had just rushed in from working in their gardens. “Be grateful that they bring the kids at all,” I think when children unload snacks, Legos, crayons and coloring books, dolls and toy trucks from their backpacks. “Teenagers

are going through a stage,” I insist silently when the girl in the pew ahead of me combs her hair all through Mass and others talk and giggle audibly during the Eucharistic Prayer. “Focus on her lovely voice,” I remind myself when the young woman leading the congregational singing raises her arm and with it the short sweater she has on, which invites everyone in the church to stare at her navel.

“But what about the hospitality of this parish?” its defenders would protest, and I become one such defender. Every warm body is welcome here, not only to worship with us, but also to sign up for anything at any time. At least a third of the registered adults are involved in some kind of parish activity. And the financial support is extremely generous. As a parish, we dig deep, and dig often. We contribute unstintingly in good times and in bad. Our largesse is immune to the ups and downs of our nation’s economy and our nation’s bishops.

But do we pride ourselves on our hospitality, social service activities and financial generosity at the expense of reverence? And, a companion question, has reverence been a casualty of the revision of the liturgy that followed the Second Vatican Council? Could it be that increased lay participation, which makes liturgies lively and full of activity, has led us to forget that these are still the *sacred* mysteries, *holy* Mass celebrated in the *sanct*-uary. Isn’t it still, “Holy, Holy, Holy”?

As I ponder these things, without coming up with satisfactory answers, suddenly I am struck with another question — one more challenging yet: why should my friends expect to find reverence at Mass? They are seasoned church shoppers. I know they have tested every denomination known to urban humanity. They know there are lots of different styles of worship. They have been to churches that literally rock with contemporary music. They have been to churches where the community simply sits in meditation. They have heard rousing preachers. They have done it all. But they expected reverence in this Catholic parish. Do they know something that we, as a Catholic community, don’t comprehend, something we may have forgotten, or something we have taken so much for granted that we have become inured to its reality and its power?

Even if we come to Mass harried, frazzled and time-starved, isn’t it the holy-holy-holy that we genuinely seek, deep down, as do my friends? We come to get our food for the week, the ultimate take-out, the spiritual nourishment that sanctifies the work we do and the sustenance we need to bring the good news to others. Yet how can we invite others to share in the sacred mystery of this bread, this cup, if we don’t

demonstrate by our reverence that we believe this mystery is true and awesome?

The solution is really simple, a variant on a comment Father Cletus, our associate pastor, made one morning at early Mass. As he was about to begin the Eucharistic Prayer, he told us that as a seminarian, he was told he should, for the rest of his life, celebrate every Mass as if it were his first. How would it be then, for us, if we attended every Mass as if it were our last?

(AMERICA, May 12, 2003, by Mary Sherry. Mary Sherry lives in Burnsville, Minn. Her latest book is *Sometimes I Haven't Got Prayer and Other "Real" Catholic Adventures (Catholic Book Publishing Co.)*.)

VIRGINITY LOST and FOUND

When infatuation fades, inexperienced teens can be appalled that they were so clueless.

While not every high school teacher regularly dons a purple stole, most of us have heard our share of confessions. In none of these remorse-filled conversations is there more poignancy than when the student realizes that his or her sexual choices are leading to one dead end after another. The popular message that has seduced this teenager is simple: the only moral issue in the world of recreational sex is consent. There is no cultural support for chastity, so sexual intercourse is as much a part of many teens' social lives as kissing was 50 years ago. This is certainly not true of every adolescent, but casual sex crosses into every group in a high school — you can find it among the intellectuals, the athletes, the artists and the disaffected.

When I first realized the immensity of this problem, I was so stunned that for a fleeting moment I was tempted to suggest that we set a goldfish bowl of condoms out on the school counselor's coffee table with an invitation to "Take one!" But sanity returned with lightning speed, because I realized that there is no prophylactic for a broken heart. There is no "safe sex," because nothing protects us from the self-disgust that can deaden our capacity for real intimacy. Recreational sex creates a world of the used and the users, a naked hell that leaves one convinced that love is illusion and fidelity a joke. If you become adept at taking off your clothes (especially at an early age) while emotional nakedness eludes you, then emptiness will be your only bedfellow. Your desolation is complete. Saint Paul knew what he was talking about when he advised us that the "wages of sin are death."

This is, of course, all the bad news. And if you minister to young people, it will not be news at all. But teens caught in this nightmare can wake up, and it is for this reason that I make a two-part plea:

First, we who are responsible for the spiritual formation of young people have got to be more intentional, more vocal, more explicit about promoting chastity. And frankly, we have got to give them some advice about how chastity can be lived. We have to arm our adolescents with psychological as well as sexual savvy.

Second, we have to help teens recover their virginity. We have to give them hope. We have to assure them that although their physical virginity is lost, virginity at its core is a commitment to a certain kind of loving, and that commitment can be recovered and renewed. We have to offer them the wisdom and the healing that will make it possible for them to make different sexual choices in the future.

In a wonderful open letter to Georgetown University students, the campus minister Mary Patricia Barth Fourqurean reminded her readers of what Aristotle said about bravery and wondered if the same thing might also be said of "the chaste": "The brave are found where bravery is honored" (Nicomachean Ethics, Bk. III). As Ms. Barth Fourqurean points out, if we as a culture and as a church do not applaud chastity, can we be surprised that our young do not value it?

Think for a moment: when was the last time that you heard a homily or a retreat talk on chastity? When in a classroom was chastity lauded along with Martin Luther King Jr.'s commitment to nonviolent social change or Mother Teresa's passion for the poor?

For many reasons, loving the "generic" neighbor can be preached or taught much more easily than asking the down-and-dirty questions about how we relate to people sexually.

We have made sexual morality a private matter, so private that we refrain from saying too much about it for fear of being intrusive. Some of this hesitancy is understandable. Pious people for centuries have made a habit of promoting chastity as a way of avoiding sex altogether. All passion was bad, all pleasure questionable-enough to tie any conscientious Christian into scrupulous knots!

Sadly, though, in the decades since the Second Vatican Council, we have not found a way to honor the paradox of human sexuality without collapsing it. Our sexual needs, desires and impulses are part and parcel of being human: they are good, holy, God-given. But just like any of our senses, our sexual desires have the capacity both to enrich our lives and

to wound us. Our society's acceptance of recreational sex has trivialized sexuality, but it has not diminished its power. We can walk around our thoroughly modern homes sure that we have domesticated fire until a spark from a frayed wire burns our house to the ground. So, too, men and women can pretend that the decision to "sleep together" (don't you love the absurdity of that euphemism?) has no more moral content than a tennis date until a heart gets broken or a baby is conceived. Sex is glorious and sex is dangerous. What it is not — and never will be — is safe. We have got to convince teenagers of this — and be patient if they scoff at the message. My experience over the last 15 years of sex education and spiritual direction with teenage males has told me that they do hear what we say — and yes, they do think about it — even if their original, public reaction may be one of disbelief.

Our conversation with these young people needs to be couched in such a way that the love relationship the teen cherishes is obviously also valued by the adult. The message must be clear: I believe you are capable of real intimacy; this is not just "puppy love." But let's talk about how it's going. What are you feeling? What do you hope for in this relationship? Teenagers (even teenage males) do want to talk to an adult about their love lives. It is a mysterious, confusing experience, this loving the opposite sex, and they do long to air what delights them, what frightens them, what makes them feel very grown-up. And surprisingly, if they trust you, you can ask a teen some down-to-earth questions — for example, how much time do you and your beloved spend alone in his house or hers?

Handled with tact, the implication does not have to be that teenagers are passion-driven maniacs, but it is helpful to acknowledge that sexual intimacy does have its own momentum, and they should not be surprised if, over time, one thing appears to lead to another. By discussing it with an adult, the young couple can be invited to make other choices, to realize that certain situations will by their very nature make remaining chaste more difficult. So, have they talked about it? Can they spend more time with groups of friends or do something else in their social life so that sexual restraint is not a constant stress?

Teachers and counselors can also talk appreciatively to students about the differences between real love and infatuation. This may seem like an obvious distinction, but many a rush to consummation occurs because adolescents honestly believe that, just like in the movies, their passionate reaction to the beloved must mean that this person is the ultimate, eternal "love of my life." When the infatuation fades and

Prince or Princess Charming is deposed, inexperienced teens can become disillusioned and appalled that they were so "clueless."

Without intervention, what opens next is the wide path to promiscuity. Either the young person believes that love is a joke, and therefore chastity makes no sense, or that love has escaped me this time but I will find it. And frankly, the popular wisdom in the dating world is that to find love, one must be sexually available. Either way, whether from bitterness or desperation, the merry-go-round of sexual partners now begins — and with it, the deadening of heart and soul that confuses young people even more. As absurd as it seems, at this point adolescents can believe that their sexual path is now set: virginity once lost is gone forever. They do not realize that forgiveness and recovery are possible for the "non-virgins" among us!

Happily, the Christian tradition is filled with much wisdom to guide such recovery. Sin wounds, and when dealing with people whose present suffering has been caused by their sexual choices, the pastoral minister or the confessor needs to discover how and where this person's capacity to love has been scarred. Not surprisingly, the damage tends to exist in both the person's self-love and in his or her ability to reverence the opposite sex. Whether they are experiencing the bitterness of an ended love affair or simply gagging from the memory of their promiscuity, our "recovering non-virgins" need to feel the love and forgiveness of others. Ultimately, they need to know the God who forgives them and is pursuing them so faithfully.

Beyond this critical reconciliation, our sexually wounded teens need to do as Saint Ignatius Loyola advises and recognize their patterns of desolation and their patterns of consolation. As any living, breathing (and honest) human being can testify, sexual temptation is an integral part of life. Handling one's sexuality in a wise way requires significant self-knowledge: know your patterns. In times of consolation, Ignatius would tell us, we are most "ourselves": most true to our deepest hopes, desires, commitments — most effortlessly capable of loving God and others — and, most likely to make good decisions. So, what brings you to that space? Who brings you there? What are you doing, what are you enjoying, what are you working on when you breathe that especially blest air?

Conversely, Saint Ignatius would say that in desolation we are least ourselves — we are likely to feel alienated from those we love, distant from God and unknown (and annoying) to ourselves. We are prey to unsettling feelings that lead us to make rotten

decisions. Again, Saint Ignatius is promoting self-knowledge: as with consolation, recognize your patterns of desolation. What has brought you to this nadir? How have you been spending your time? What have you been doing or reading? What music have you been listening to? Who have you been with?

The point of understanding your patterns of desolation is that, with practice and prayer, a person can develop a “flashing light” that will begin to blink in one’s consciousness as one treads this less than healthy path. There is a great acronym in the 12-step literature that captures this wisdom: HALT: Hungry, Angry, Lonely, or Tired. The message here is obvious: if one is desolate, if one is out of sorts, hungry, angry, lonely, or tired, one is apt to fall prey to one’s compulsions (we all have them). So stop; attend to what you really need. And, especially, pray to regain your interior composure.

This wisdom is invaluable when working with young people, because they often think that sexual morality springs from a sort of “stiff upper lip” willpower. This approach to changing one’s sexual habits can spell disaster, especially if recreational sex has been a regular part of the weekend scene. Never doubt it: for some teens, casual sex has been fun, pleasurable and an ego boost. To make different moral choices they need much more than a cold shower.

There is, alas, no spiritual laminate available to any of us, but to teens attempting to reverence their own bodies and the bodies of others, “know yourself” can be a great asset. HALT, too, can be helpful wisdom. Recognize when you are in a bad space; know when you need rest or food or a listening ear. When in consolation, consider what situations make it more likely for you to use or be used sexually. What do you really need when you are choosing casual sex as your anodyne? And remember, the exuberant God who created our sexuality wants it to be a source of joy, not a weapon that wounds us.

(AMERICA, May 21, 2001, by Julie A. Collins, *teacher of religious studies at Georgetown Prep in North Bethesda, Md.*)

BENEDICT XVI ANNOUNCES CAUSE of BEATIFICATION of JOHN PAUL II

VATICAN CITY, MAY 13, 2005 (VIS) - Benedict XVI today announced the opening of the cause of beatification of John Paul II, waiving the normal waiting period of five years after the death of a Servant of God. The Pope made the announcement in

the course of a meeting with the Roman clergy in the basilica of Saint John Lateran.

The rescript - or document authorizing the act - is dated May 9, 2005 and is signed by Cardinal Jose Saraiva Martins and Archbishop Edward Nowak, respectively prefect and secretary of the Congregation for the Causes of Saints.

This morning, after traveling by car to the Vicariate of Rome, the Pope, in a ceremony in the Hall of Conciliation, greeted the staff who work there and visited the pontifical apartments.

Benedict XVI then went to the basilica of Saint John Lateran where he met the clergy of his diocese. After a brief greeting pronounced by Cardinal Camillo Ruini, vicar general for the diocese of Rome, the Pope delivered his address.

He said that “the extraordinary experience of faith that we experienced with the death of our much-loved Pope John Paul II, has shown us a Roman Church profoundly united, full of life and rich in enthusiasm; all this is the fruit of your prayers and your apostolate.”

After underlining the need “to always go back to the roots of our priestly calling,” in other words, “Jesus Christ, the Lord,” Benedict XVI pointed out that as priests “we are charged not to say many words, but rather to echo and to be bearers of a single ‘Word,’ that is the Word of God, made flesh for our salvation. ... We have to be His true friends, to share His feelings, to want what He wants and not want what He does not want.”

The Pope invited the priests to make their own these words of John Paul II: “Mass is, in an absolute way, the center of my life and of each of my days.” Speaking of obedience to Christ, he recalled that this “takes concrete form in ecclesial obedience, which for a priest is, in everyday practice, above all obedience to his bishop.”

Benedict XVI also recalled what he had said in his homily prior to the conclave, when he referred to “holy restlessness; a restlessness to bring everyone the gift of faith.” After highlighting that Christ “calls us to be His witnesses,” the Pope mentioned the necessity of “being with God,” of seeking “intimate communion with Christ,” in order “not to give in to fatigue, but to resist and, even more so, to grow as people and as priests.”

“Time to be in the presence of God is a true pastoral priority,” he continued, “in the final analysis, the most important priority. John Paul II demonstrated this to us in the most tangible and luminous of ways in all the circumstances of his life and his ministry.”

The Holy Father affirmed that “our personal response to the call of sanctity is fundamental and decisive. This condition is essential, not only for our personal apostolate to be fruitful but also, and more broadly, for the Church’s face to reflect the light of Christ.”

“My ministry as bishop of Rome follows in the footsteps of my predecessors, in particular taking up the precious heritage left by John Paul II. Dear priests and deacons, let us walk together along this path with serenity and trust.”

After his address, Benedict XVI listened attentively to questions and reflections presented by various priests and religious, and thanked them for the remarks. He then returned to the Vatican by car.

(BXVI-VISIT LATERAN/BEATIFICATION JOHN PAUL/... VIS 050513 (610))

**HOLY FATHER JEAN PAUL II
VENERATED the STATUE of OUR
LADY of CIVITAVECCHIA
(MEDJUGORJE)**

Il Messagero of Wednesday, June 1, 2005 reports – “‘The opening’ of Ratzinger: Papa Wojtyla venerated the Madonna of Civitavecchia”, by Orazio Petrosillo.



Vatican City - “The Madonna of Civitavecchia will do great things” said Benedict XVI on Monday, as he was greeting Bishop Girolamo Grillo at the end of the meeting with the Italian Episcopal Conference. Exactly on April 1st, the day before the death of Jean Paul II, the Bishop of Civitavecchia gave a dossier to the Congregation for the Doctrine of faith chaired by the Cardinal Ratzinger. A commission under the auspices of the Congregation had emitted the verdict according to which it does not state the supernatural character of the lacrymation, which was affirmed publicly, during the emission “Door to door”, by Cardinal Tarcisio Bertone, already collaborator of Ratzinger.

Monsignor Grillo, in a meeting which took place yesterday, recalled the great veneration that Jean Paul

II had for the Madonnina of Civitavecchia, and his desire not to make public this unfavorable verdict, waiting for more profound studies. Repeating things partly already known, but adding other new details, Grillo told that one evening at the end of February 1995, he carried the miraculous statuette to the Vatican to Jean Paul II, who venerated it, prayed in front of it and, at the end, posed on the head of the Virgin a crown which he had brought himself.



The meticulous account of the evening and the veneration expressed by the Pontiff is written in the journal of Monsignor Grillo who, while fearing not to be believed after his death concerning the course of the accomplished gestures of the Pope Wojtyla, required of the secretary Monsignor Stanislaw Dziwisz a kind of testimony of the same Pontiff. A copy of the pages of the journal was sent to the Vatican, and the Pope authenticated it with his signature: “Joannes Paulus PP II”, October 20, 2000.

For recall, the statuette which represents the Virgin of Medjugorje was weeping blood (the clinical examinations proved that it was male human blood) 13 times at the house of Gregori, from February 2 to 6, 1995, in the presence of tens of witnesses, even public functionaries, and one 14th time at the bishop’s house, on the following March 15. A commission of theologians decided in favour of the supernatural origin of the events; another, made up under the auspices of the Congregation, denies its supernatural character.

<http://medjugorje.hr.nt4.ims.hr/News.aspx>

OTHER PONTIFICAL ACTS

VATICAN CITY, APR 25, 2005 (VIS) - The Holy Father confirmed members of the dicasteries of the Roman Curia in their current posts until the end of the five-year period for which they were appointed by the late lamented Pope John Paul II; and promoted Cardinal Francis Arinze, prefect of the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments, to the order of bishops, assigning him the suburbicarian see of Velleteri-Segni.

(NA/.../... VIS 050425 (80))

VATICAN CITY, APR 30, 2005 (VIS) - The Holy Father approved the election by cardinals of the Order of Bishops, of Cardinal Secretary of State Angelo Sodano as dean of the College of Cardinals. At the same time he approved the election of Cardinal Roger Etchegaray, president emeritus of the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace and of the Pontifical

Council “Cor Unum,” as vice dean of the College of Cardinals.

(NA/.../SODANO:ETCHEGARAY VIS 050502 (80))

VATICAN CITY, MAY 13, 2005 (VIS) - The Holy Father appointed Archbishop William Joseph Levada of San Francisco, California, as prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith.

(NER/.../SALAH VIS 050513 (70))

BIOGRAPHY of NEW PREFECT of the CONGREGATION for the DOCTRINE of FAITH

Archbishop William Joseph Levada is a fourth-generation Californian, born in Long Beach on June 15, 1936. Except for a three-year interval when his family lived in Texas, he attended elementary and high schools in Long Beach, followed by four years of seminary college in the Archdiocese of Los Angeles. In 1958, he was sent to pursue his seminary formation in Rome at the North American College, and took his graduate theological studies at the Pontifical Gregorian University, receiving a doctorate in sacred theology *magna cum laude*.

Following ordination to the priesthood in Saint Peter’s Basilica on December 20, 1961, he spent five years in parish work in the Archdiocese of Los Angeles, including part-time high school teaching and college campus ministry. After receiving his doctorate, he taught theology at Saint John’s Seminary School of Theology, located at Camarillo in the Archdiocese of Los Angeles. During these six years he also served as the first Director of Continuing Education for the Clergy in the Archdiocese.

In 1976, he was appointed an Official of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith in the Vatican. During his six years of service, he continued teaching theology part-time as an Instructor at the Pontifical Gregorian University. In 1982, he was assigned to be Executive Director of the California Catholic Conference of Bishops in Sacramento, the public policy arm of the Church in California. During his two years there, he was named Auxiliary Bishop of Los Angeles, and was ordained with the title Titular Bishop of Capri on May 12, 1983. Returning to the Archdiocese of Los Angeles in 1984, he served as Episcopal Vicar for Santa Barbara County until his 1986 appointment as Chancellor and Moderator of the Curia.

On July 1, 1986, he was appointed eighth Archbishop of Portland, Oregon, and was installed on September

***The PILGRIM*, Volume 16, Number 6 – June 2005**

21. During his nine years in Portland, Archbishop Levada was able to devote time to the recruitment of priestly vocations and enhancement of the seminary at Mount Angel, where he taught Ecclesiology.

Appointed Coadjutor Archbishop of San Francisco on August 17, 1995, Archbishop Levada was installed on October 24 that year, and succeeded Archbishop John Quinn, as seventh Archbishop of San Francisco on December 27, 1995. Since his ordination as a Bishop, he has been active on many committees of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, as well as on the governing boards of the Catholic University of America, the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception, and the National Catholic Bioethics Center.

From 1986 to 1993 he served as the only American bishop on the Editorial Committee of the Vatican Commission for a *Catechism of the Catholic Church*; he authored the Catechism’s Glossary, which was published in the English-language second edition of the Catechism.

In 1997, he participated in the Special Assembly of the Synod of Bishops for America, and was subsequently named to its post-Synodal Council. From July, 1999, to May, 2000, he was assigned additional duties as Apostolic Administrator of the Diocese of Santa Rosa. During 2000, he was designated Bishop Co-Chair of the Anglican-Roman Catholic dialogue in the United States (ARC-USA). In November the Vatican announced his appointment as a Member of the Congregation of the Doctrine of the Faith.

In 2003, he organized the sesquicentennial celebration of the 150 years of the Archdiocese of San Francisco, which culminated in a July 27 Jubilee Mass at Saint Mary’s Cathedral. In November, 2003, he began a 3-year term as Chairman of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops’ Committee on Doctrine. He also serves as Grand Prior of the Northwest Lieutenancy (USA) of the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem, and as Conventual Chaplain for the Western Association (USA) of the Sovereign Military Hospitaller Order of Saint John of Jerusalem of Rhodes and of Malta. He currently serves on the USCCB Delegation to the Mixed Commission for the *Charter and Essential Norms for the Protection of Children and Young People*, and on the Task Force on Catholics in Political Life.

http://212.77.1.245/news_services/bulletin/news/NOMINA%20DEL%20PREFETTO%20DELLA%20CONGR

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MESSAGE of 5/25/2005 via Maria Pavlovic Lunetti

Dear Children! Anew I call you to live my messages in humility. Especially witness them now when we are approaching the anniversary of my apparitions. Little children, be a sign to those who are far from God and His love. I am with you and bless you all with my motherly blessing. Thank you for having responded to my call.

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

REFLECTION on the MESSAGE of 5/25/2005

Witness my messages

The Virgin Mary invites us to live in humility the messages that she is giving us here for 24 years now. She is the humble servant of the Lord, and she knows well that the word of God can be understood only in humility. Mary found grace in God, God looked at his humble servant, and this is why all the generations call her blessed. This is why so many people come to the places of her apparitions, in the desire to be closer to her maternal heart. We are all her children. In the words of Mary, when she says: "Dear children", they see and recognise her love and her maternal care. With Mary, our Mother, we are sure that we will be neither misled nor disappointed.

The simple ones and the humble ones confirm here in Medjugorje the truth of the words of Jesus pronounced in the Holy Spirit: "I thank you, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that you have hid these things from the wise and intelligent, and have revealed them to little ones." (Lk 10,21)

Mary shows us Jesus and she guides us towards Jesus, but it is Jesus who sends his Mother to us, so that we may humbly listen to her and follow her words.

She is coming to us from the glory of the heavenly Father, and she is speaking simply, so that all can understand her. As a Mother, Mary is bending over towards us so that we, her children, can understand. She is doing just as the parents do, when they go down on their knees in front of their little children, so that the child can see them and understand what they want to say.

The word humility comes from the Latin word *humilitas*, which is close to the *humus*, the clay, the earth. This is why it is normal, as the Bible is saying, that we - who are made out of clay - are humble in order to be able to understand God and Our Lady. The Virgin Mary does not come to condemn or to accuse us. Those who accuse and condemn are not able to hear the others, they only hear themselves. When

Mary, our Mother, speaks to us, she wants also to hear us; she wants to hear our calls and our prayer. Each one of our prayers, which come from the heart, she takes them seriously.

In one of her messages, Gospa is saying: "Dear children, I bow down in front of your freedom." She, who is the all-pure, full of grace, is bowing down in front of man, his freedom. How great is the dignity of each person that even God respects his freedom!

The apparitions of Our Lady in Medjugorje are a grace and a gift of heaven. They do not belong to anybody, they are not the property of anyone, but a free gift for me, for you, for the Church and for the world. Our property, which belongs to us, we defend it, so that nobody takes it from us. With a gift, it is different. The gift obliges us to fidelity to Our Lady and to her love. The gift obliges us to give witness to the fact that heaven has opened up, and that rivers of grace started to flow through such an amount of hearts, waking them up from the spiritual torpor. This is why Gospa is calling us: "Especially witness them now when we are approaching the anniversary of my apparitions." Mary, our Mother, told us often: "Dear children, this is a time of grace."

Each humble, pure and simple heart can recognize the voice of the mother. Let us not allow this time of grace to be a time of our ruin, but a time of conversion and a new life with God.

Today also, the Virgin Mary tells us: "I am with you." Let us also be and remain with her.

Father Ljubo Kurtovic, Medjugorje, 26.5.2005

ANOTHER REFLECTION

"Dear children! Anew I call you to live my messages in humility." This first sentence of Our Lady's message of May 25, 2005 is both significant and appropriate. The need that we have *"to live"* these messages of Our Lady is quite apparent. In Her recent monthly messages, Our Lady has requested Her children to accept *"a call to prayer and to renew prayer in our families."* Also, She has

The PILGRIM, Volume 16, Number 6 – June 2005

called us, *"to be Her extended hands in this world – that puts God in the last place. You, little children put God in the first place of your life."* In this process, we have been called, *"to love as God loves."* As always these particular requests from Our dear Blessed Mother from Her recent monthly messages should become part of who we are. Let us again reflect upon this first sentence of Our Lady's message of May 25, 2005. *"Anew I call you to live my messages in humility."* I wonder will we reinvigorate ourselves with the opportunities given to us to live the messages of Our Lady? I hope we will answer this question with a resounding yes!

It would seem that a good place to start or to continue to live out these messages of Our Lady is to accept and embrace the humility of Jesus and Our dear Blessed Mother. This reality is so important for all Christian believers. We must find the strength to serve God and others as Jesus and Our Lady did by accepting their roles to be Savior of the world and Mother of God. This service of God and others can only be accomplished by being humble. Our lives should not be about our talents, abilities or a promotion of ourselves. Unfortunately, selfishness is rampant in this world, and its effects continually overcome us, constantly leading many into a realm of materialism that is very controlling. This control often prohibits believers, (ourselves included) from putting God first in our lives. However, when one strives to be humble rejecting that personal pride that leads to selfishness, one can begin to become more like Jesus and Our Lady.

Let us contemplate Our Lady's response to the angel Gabriel at the Annunciation: "I am the handmaid of the Lord, be it done to me according to your word." (Luke 1:38) During Her life, Our Lady concerned Herself fully with serving God in a humble way. Whether it was giving birth to Jesus in a stable, sharing a mother's love with the Savior of the world, standing underneath Jesus' cross or holding His dead body in Her arms, Our Lady served God in humility always embracing the will of the Eternal Father before Her own personal needs.

As Our Lady does, we must be willing to serve God in a humble way, accepting His will and trusting in Him through each situation of life that we experience. This is our call, it is also our destiny; but will we make a full-hearted choice for God during these days in late May and early June in this year of 2005? Where are our hearts? What has become of our faith? Are we half-hearted followers of Jesus or do we believe in Him in the fullest sense of the word? Again, let us consider the importance of Our Lady's

words in this first sentence of Her message of May 25, 2005.

"Anew I call you to live my messages in humility." Her words are simple, direct, profound, and life giving. If we are willing to live Our Lady's messages in humility, we will be coming close to Jesus and His presence can envelope us with grace. The choice for Jesus is ours to make. If we stay close to Our Lady, binding ourselves to Her Immaculate Heart, embracing Her unconditional love and humility while living out Her requests in these monthly messages, we will be able to make that choice for Jesus. However, we must remember on our own we will always choose the selfishness of the world. May others and we overcome this unfortunate malaise that seems to envelope so many.

"Especially witness them now when we are approaching the anniversary of my apparitions." This second sentence of Our Lady's message of May 25, 2005 can encourage us to witness Her profound love for all of Her children as we consider the astounding impact that Her apparitions in Medjugorje have had on so many people. As we celebrate the twenty-fourth anniversary of the beginning of Our Lady's apparitions to the visionaries of Medjugorje, may we be forever grateful to God the Father for the gift of these apparitions to the world. The conversions, the vocations, and the love of God that has entered the hearts of so many after going on pilgrimage to Medjugorje is so very prominent in the lives of many pilgrims. By going to Medjugorje, many have been spiritually touched by the grace of God and the presence of the Blessed Mother.

EUCCHARISTIC ADORATION

Spend some time with our **Eucharistic Lord** in the **Monstrance**, if only for 5 or 10 minutes. Please check out the **Directory of Eucharistic Adoration** maintained by **The Real Presence Association**: <http://www.therealpresence.org/chapels.htm>.

Consider sending them a donation for the maintenance of this wonderful **Directory of Eucharistic Adoration**. They receive mail and donations at:

The Real Presence Association, Inc.

7030 West 63rd Street, Chicago, Illinois 60638.

If you need a printout of specific location pages from the **Directory of Eucharistic Adoration** for your state or area, send us a note at the **PFMC** with a donation to cover printing and postage and we will print what you ask for and send it to you.

As we reflect upon God's and Our Lady's love for us, we must never become complacent. Conversion is that daily process needed by all of us. It can help us to be humble realizing that we are sinners, and without God's love we are nothing. We must continue to prepare ourselves spiritually for Jesus by giving our total being to Our Lady. As we strive to purify our souls, let us pray for the conversion of sinners and the salvation of souls offering ourselves to God the Father, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit for these two intentions.

"Little children, be a sign to those who are far from God and His love. I am with you and bless you all with my motherly blessing."

From these two sentences of Our Lady's message of May 25, 2005, may we be inspired to embrace Our Lady's call to become one with Her in our spiritual journey. Our Lady has more confidence in us than we have in ourselves. She knows that we have been given sufficient grace by God to be His profound witnesses in this world. Be willing to accept that grace, and live out the faith being a witness to God's love for all humanity. Again, in a spiritual way, we can make a difference in the lives of others if we witness to God's love. Each day may we *"be a sign to those who are far from God and His love."* With the presence of Our Lady in our lives, we can be successful in this endeavor.

I hope you are well. Give my best to all of your families. You are always in my thoughts and prayers. Be close to the Eternal Father, Jesus, the Holy Spirit, and Our Lady. Rejoice in God's love being forever grateful to Him for His divine presence. May Almighty God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit come upon you and remain with you forever and ever. Amen.

God's love and prayers always,

Father Ed

HEdwardChalmers@aol.com, June 1, 2005

PRESS BULLETIN 210, 5/26/2005

DO NOT BE AFRAID!

The Bible says 365 times in different occasions: do not be afraid! As God and man, Jesus deeply understands the reality of our existence. He knows at which point we vulnerable, disturbed, distressed and despaired. The words of Jesus are not just poor and false consolation, but the birth of hope in the space of our despair. Nowadays, the fear enters by the large door into the world, in the person. Each one is afraid of something: we are afraid for our children, we are

afraid of our parents, of our teachers, of the school, of the law, of marriage, of giving birth to children, of death... We are even afraid of God, although Jesus said to us that he did not come to judge the world but to save it. The fear is not a sickly state; it is an enemy of human beings. Mary was afraid - at the time of the visit of the angel Gabriel, at the time of the flight to Egypt, when she sought her Son who was lost, during the Passion of Jesus...

What can we do against fear? Firstly, what is most important, we have to believe deeply that nothing can arrive to me if I give everything into the hands of God and if, with the psalmist, I live the words: "Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for you are with me." Mary, for example, was completely released from fear by accepting until the end the will of God. It is also important to be conscious of one's own fear and to recognize it. The fear is not a sign of failure and fall. One should not deny or suppress the fear. The Cardinal Doepfner wrote: "When we recognize darkness which is in us, the step towards the light will be given to us."

When a child is afraid, it runs into in the arms of his mother. It asks protection and safety. It is not unusual that we run not only in the arms of our earthly mother, but also in those of our heavenly Mother. Mary, our Mother, offers safety and protection to all the children of the world. Let us thus not be surprised by the fact that Marian shrines are full. People go where they feel acceptance and love. The frightened and despaired man seeks God, and the door towards God is open for him. Only God can thus give earthly peace. Psalm 62 sings: "Only in God my soul finds peace". Gospa, the Queen of Peace, often speaks about peace. She knows that this world cannot give it to us. She reminds us in fact of the words of Jesus: "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world gives, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid." (Jn 14,27) Fear will not disappear by itself. It is necessary to overcome the fear by trust in God who can transform all our anguishes into a joyful game and eternal safety.

Father Mario Knezovic

COMMUNIONS and PRIESTS

During the month of *April*, **93,000** received Holy Communion and **1965** priests from this country and abroad signed the register for celebrating Holy Mass in Medjugorje.

16TH YOUTH FESTIVAL

The 16th International Youth Festival – Mladifest – will take place in Medjugorje from August 1 to 6, **The PILGRIM, Volume 16, Number 6 – June 2005**

2005. The theme “We come to adore him” (Mt 2,2) is in harmony with the Year of the Eucharist and the World Youth Day, which, later in August, will gather together in Cologne hundreds of thousands of young people around the Holy Father

FRANCISCAN SCHOOL SISTERS – SEVENTY YEARS in the PARISH

The 70th anniversary of the presence and of service of the Franciscan School Sisters in the Parish Medjugorje (1935 – 2005) was celebrated on Sunday, April 17, 2005, with a solemn Holy Mass presided by Father Branko Rados, parish priest, and concelebrated by 19 priests, among whom also the Franciscan OFM Provincial, Father Slavko Soldo. After Mass, in the New Hall, there was a special program organized for this occasion.

CONFIRMATION and FIRST COMMUNION in MEDJUGORJE



On Sunday, April 24, 2005, 93 candidates received in Medjugorje the sacrament of Confirmation from the hands of Monsignor Ratko Peric, Bishop of Mostar. Liturgical celebration began with a procession and the solemn entry into the church of the bishop, the priests and the candidates. Father Branko greeted the bishop and the candidates on behalf of the parish.

On Sunday, May 1st, 76 children from the Parish Medjugorje received the Sacrament of First Holy Communion in Saint James’ Parish church. Holy Mass was presided by Father Ljubo Kurtovic and concelebrated by Father Branko Rados, the parish priest, Father Petar Vlastic and other priests. The preceding day, the children made their first Confession. The occasion was embellished by the singing of the “Little Doves of Peace” - children’s choir under direction of Sister Slavica Kozul. Days of Confirmation and of First Communion always fill the parish community with a very special atmosphere. Numerous local and foreign pilgrims joined the young, the children and their parents in the celebration of these events.

FRANCISCAN SEMINARIANS



On Sunday, May 8th, a group of Franciscan seminarians from Sarajevo (Bosnian Franciscan Province) came to Medjugorje. With their singing and playing, they enriched the evening Mass, which was presided by their educator and professor, Doctor Father Miron Sikiric. After Mass, young seminarians

gave a concert of spiritual songs that was very well received by all the faithful that were present in the church, especially by foreign pilgrims. Doctor Father Slavko Topic and Maestro Pero Cubic directed their concert.

MARATHON: MEDJUGORJE - BLEIBURG



At the occasion of the 60th anniversary of the tragedy of Bleiburg, commemorated on Saturday, May 14, 2005, on the Bleiburg field (Austria), the honorary Bleiburg unit in coordination with the Club of Croatian Home Comers from the exile are organizing a 650 km long ultra marathon from Medjugorje to Bleiburg. Aleksandar Aco Golo, a marathon runner from Mostar, started this ultra marathon on May 7, 2005, at 9 AM in front of the church in Medjugorje. The marathon runner was accompanied by prayer, and the blessing given by Father Mario Knezovic. This pilgrim of peace was also given a rosary around his neck, which will accompany him on this long way.



THE NEW DOCUMENTARY “THE LIGHTS of MEDJUGORJE”

The new documentary entitled “The Lights of Medjugorje” was shown on Saturday, May 14, in the yellow hall. The documentary was made by three young men from Dubrovnik: Maro Jovic, director, who also wrote the screenplay; camera: Mato Kristovic; montage: Boris Jovic. The documentary is showing the visionaries, the Medjugorje Franciscans, priests from the country and from abroad, pilgrims and people who were converted or healed in Medjugorje.

A PRAYER CONVENTION of the CHINESE

The Second Prayer Convention of the Chinese in Medjugorje took place from May 13 to 15. This prayer meeting of more than 200 Chinese was consecrated to Our Lady, Queen of Peace. As Father Peter Chin (Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer, Toronto) told us, there were Chinese from North America, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Mauritius, Caribbean and China. In Medjugorje, they were praying for freedom of faith in their native country China, where the activities of the Church are forbidden.

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 6 PM. Holy Mass will be at 7 PM, followed by the prayer program according to the day of the week. Eucharistic adoration on Wednesday and Saturday will begin at 10 PM. Rosary on the Apparition Hill and the Way of the Cross on Krizevac will begin at 4 PM. Confessions every evening during the Evening Prayer Program.

SEMINARS of PRAYER, FASTING and SILENCE

Seminars will be lead by Father Ljubo Kurtovic. Dates, according to language groups, as well as contact persons are available at the **PFMC** in a printed copy of the PRESS BULLETIN.

THE 13TH INTERNATIONAL MEETING for LEADERS of PEACE CENTRES and MEDJUGORJE PRAYER, PILGRIM and CHARITY GROUPS

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

Schedules and speakers list with biographies are available at the **PFMC** in a printed copy of the PRESS BULLETIN.

THE 10TH INTERNATIONAL MEETING for PRIESTS

This meeting will take place in **Medjugorje** from **July 4 to 9, 2005**. The theme is "**The Eucharist and Mary** – Do whatever He tells you!" (Jn 2:5)

[Note: The Program and Speaker Information is available on the Internet or in print from the PFMC. The full text of this notice was printed in November 2004.]

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

[NOTE: The PFMC can make air and land arrangements for attendance at Medjugorje events. It is best to travel in groups of at least 3 or 4 due to cost of transport from either Split or Dubrovnik, Croatia. Call (856) 768-9228.]

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

VOCATIONS DEPARTMENT

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

(Kathleen, Keith, and all the **PFMC** Volunteers)

SEEDBED OF VOCATIONS

Forming the Next Generation of Priests and Religious

The chief objective of Catholic education, whether it is carried out in Catholic schools, parish religious education programs, or other settings, is to glorify the Eternal Father. It does this by shaping the minds and hearts of students in the image of Christ through the proclamation of that deposit of faith guaranteed by the Holy Spirit and defended by the Successor of Saint Peter and the bishops in union with him.

The Catholic instruction of the faithful is ongoing. Therefore, those who have left high school and various post-high school institutions must always be able to learn and relearn the Catholic faith. The Catholic education of young people is also of vital importance. This includes high school and college students, particularly as they discern their individual vocations.

One question that often comes up is: How can Catholic education foster vocations to the priesthood, the diaconate, and the consecrated life?

A concise presentation of the nature of each vocation. The Church sincerely respects and cherishes the various possibilities that God uses to draw men and women to Himself.

Concerning the priesthood, the diaconate, and the consecrated life, Catholic education has a unique obligation to inform young people as to the meaning of each; its duties, rights, and privileges. It would be difficult for one to reply affirmatively to the Lord's gracious invitation to the priesthood, the diaconate, or the consecrated life if one has no understanding of its exalted character.

Those who teach young people in the Catholic faith perform a magnificent work when they acknowledge and explain the splendor and dignity of each vocation.

A full discussion of the indispensability of “praying always,” but especially whenever crucial decisions must be made. The choice of one’s vocation is critical. Will one cheerfully accept or brazenly reject the life-giving summons bestowed by the Savior?

Prayer brings supernatural enlightenment! It is the Holy Spirit Himself who grants illumination upon those earnestly struggling with knowing their vocations. The Paraclete is the “Master of Vocations.” He inspires and encourages the individual and, if the recipient is receptive, sanctifies that vocation and makes it fruitful.

Catholic educators can advance love for prayer among their students. The profound “Part Four” of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* is a treasure trove of gems on the efficacy of prayer that should be a strong component of Catholic education.

A solid emphasis on the regular worthy reception of the sacraments during vocational discernment. No argument to the contrary may be admitted: Availing oneself of the sacraments is essential when considering one’s vocation.

If it is true that all Christians are to be nourished with the sacraments, it is all the more so for priests, deacons, and consecrated persons whose lives center on the Good News of the risen Jesus. Without that genuine link to the sacraments, primarily Penance and the Most Holy Eucharist, one is deficient both in his or her commitment to growth in holiness and in the ability to share the Messiah with others in an authentic way.

By promoting the frequent, worthy reception of the sacraments, Catholic education ensures that students will better understand what the Lord is asking of them, meaning that a new crop of vocations is in the offing.

A clear analysis of the unparalleled part played by the Blessed Virgin Mary as the model par excellence in embracing one’s vocation. Our Lady has demonstrated that not only can one be aware of his vocation but he also can fulfill it-with profound joy and gratitude. The Virgin Mary was entirely open to the divine will and didn’t hesitate to utter her humble, history-changing fiat.

Over the last four decades, the Catholic education of young people has not always treated accurately and adequately the stellar person and singular mission of the Madonna. The late Cardinal John O’Connor (1920-2000), the former Archbishop of New York, claimed that a whole generation of Catholics knows virtually nothing about Our Lady. It is difficult to refute this serious contention. And one must admit

that a second generation is quickly beginning to partake of this unfortunate sorrow.

Mary’s divine and spiritual maternities, Perpetual Virginity, Immaculate Conception, Assumption, role in our Redemption on Calvary, distribution of graces. . . all these Catholic teachings reiterate Our Blessed Mother’s constant, total surrender to the Almighty. By unfurling these elements, Catholic education assists students in seeing Our Lady in a fresh and valuable light.

A frequent reference to the saints, blessed, and others who have provided outstanding examples of the priesthood, the diaconate, and the consecrated life. The past 20 centuries are filled with Catholic heroes and heroines who lived their vocations to the utmost. There are married and single persons, priests, deacons, and consecrated persons among the ranks of “the cloud of witnesses.”

The lives of holy people continue to edify and challenge. By incorporating into its curriculum the stories of saints, Catholic education offers young people the golden opportunity to ponder well the abundant mercy of the Living God who calls and the remarkable testimony given by those who generously responded.

The saints and blessed who were priests, deacons, and consecrated persons manifested an incredible docility to the Lord. When revealing this reality, Catholic educators help open the eyes of their students to the vast patrimony of the Church’s holiness.

Nurturing vocations is expected of Catholic education since it seeks to impart the Church’s doctrines to young people, thereby disclosing the path to Christian perfection that is intrinsic to the vocations enjoyed by priests, deacons, and consecrated persons.

(from “LAY WITNESS” March/April 2003, by Father Charles M. Mangan, a priest of the Diocese of Sioux Falls and official in the Vatican Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life).

THE HOLY SPIRIT in OUR LIVES through HOLY ORDERS

One has but to read the rite of ordination to see what a prominent part holy Church attributes to the Holy Spirit in the Sacrament of Holy Orders. The bishop lays his hand upon the head of the ordinand he says, “Receive the Holy Spirit unto power, and to resist the devil and his temptations.” The priesthood is bestowed by the imposition of hands and the

invocation of the Holy Spirit. In the prayer accompanying the imposition of hands the bishop prays for a multiplication of heavenly gifts. The greatest gift of the Most High God is the Holy Spirit Himself, and He brings with Him in ever increasing abundance His gifts of grace. Holy Church sees in the Holy Spirit the Maker of the priest. How could it be otherwise? The priest is another Christ. What the Holy Spirit has done for Christ, He does for the priest who is to continue the mission of Christ. The Holy Spirit bestows upon him the priestly office as well as the holiness which this office calls for.

THE GIVER of the OFFICE

All office, rank, and honor in the Church comes from God. The Church is the divine institution for the salvation of men, but who can save but God alone? The Holy Spirit is the Sanctifier, and the office of the priest is to sanctify; he will do it through the teaching, the pastoral, and the priestly office just as the divine High Priest did. But Jesus gave testimony to the Holy Spirit, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me; wherefore He hath anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor, He hath sent me to heal the contrite of heart".

The priest continues the work of Christ. If we consider Him in his teaching office we know that the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of truth; He has preserved the truth of Christ in the Church in all its original purity. His light enlightens the mind and urges acceptance of the truth. If we consider the pastoral office, Saint Paul tells us, that all those that are led by the Spirit of God are the children of God. He enables the faithful to hear and understand the voice of the shepherd and to follow in His steps.

(Taken from APOSTLES of the HOLY SPIRIT BULLETIN, Winter 2004-2005)

POPE'S ADDRESS to CLERGY of ROME

Here is the Vatican's translation of Benedict XVI's address given to the clergy of Rome, which he delivered in Italian on May 13 in the Basilica of Saint John Lateran. "Dear Priests of Rome, the Lord Calls Us Friends"

Dear priests and deacons who serve the Diocese of Rome with your pastoral work, I am happy to meet you at the beginning of my ministry as Bishop of this Church, "which presides in charity." I greet with affection the Cardinal Vicar and thank him for his kind words, and I also greet the Vicegerent and the Auxiliary Bishops. I offer a friendly greeting to each one of you, and at this very first meeting I want to

express my gratitude to you for your daily efforts in the Lord's vineyard.

The extraordinary experience of faith that we lived on the occasion of the death of our beloved Pope John Paul II showed us a Church of Rome that is deeply united, full of life and rich in zeal: all this is also the fruit of your prayers and apostolate.

Thus, humbly attached to Christ, our One Lord, together we can and must encourage that "exemplarity" of the Church of Rome which is genuine service to our sister Churches across the world. The indissoluble bond between "romanum" and "petrinum" implies and indeed requires the Church of Rome's participation in the universal concern of her Bishops.

This responsibility for this participation concerns you in a special way, dear priests and deacons, united to your Bishop by the sacramental bond that also makes you his precious collaborators. I am therefore counting on you, on your prayers, your acceptance and your dedication, so that our beloved Diocese may respond ever more generously to the vocation the Lord has entrusted to it.

For my part, I assure you that despite my limitations, you can count on the sincerity of my paternal affection for you all.

Dear priests, the quality of your lives and your pastoral service seem to indicate that in this Diocese, as in many others of the world, we have now left behind us that period of identity crisis that troubled so many priests. However, still present are the causes of the "spiritual wilderness" that afflict humanity in our day and consequently also undermine the Church, which dwells among humankind. How can we not fear that they may also ensnare the lives of priests?

It is indispensable, therefore, to return ever anew to the solid root of our priesthood. This root, as we well know, is one: Jesus Christ our Lord. It is he whom the Father sent, he is the cornerstone (cf. 1 Peter 2:7). Through him, through the mystery of his death and Resurrection, the Kingdom of God is established and the salvation of the human race brought about.

This Jesus, however, possesses nothing of his own; everything he has is from the Father and for the Father. So he says that his doctrine is not his own but comes from the One who sent him (cf. John 7:16); and that he, the Son, cannot do anything by himself (cf. John 5:19,30).

Dear friends, this is also the true nature of our priesthood. In fact, all that constitutes our priestly ministry cannot be the product of our personal abilities. This is true for the administration of the Sacraments, but it is also true for the service of the

***The PILGRIM*, Volume 16, Number 6 – June 2005**

Word: we are not sent to proclaim ourselves or our personal opinions, but the mystery of Christ and, in him, the measure of true humanism. We are not charged to utter many words, but to echo and bear the message of a single “Word”, the Word of God made flesh for our salvation. Consequently, these words of Jesus also apply to us: “My doctrine is not my own; it comes from him who sent me” (John 7:16).

Dear priests of Rome, the Lord calls us friends, he makes us his friends, he entrusts himself to us, he entrusts to us his Body in the Eucharist, he entrusts to us his Church. Therefore, we must be true friends to him, we must have the same perception as he has, we must want what he wants and not what he does not want. Jesus himself tells us: “You are my friends if you do what I command you” (John 15:14). Let this be our common resolution: all of us together, to do his holy will, in which lies our freedom and our joy.

Since the priesthood is rooted in Christ, it is by its nature in the Church and for the Church. Indeed, the Christian faith is not something purely spiritual and internal, nor is our relationship with Christ itself exclusively subjective and private.

Rather, it is a completely concrete and ecclesial relationship. At times, the ministerial priesthood has a constitutive relationship with the Body of Christ in his dual and inseparable dimensions as Eucharist and as Church, as Eucharistic body and Ecclesial body

Therefore, our ministry is “*amoris officium*” (Saint Augustine, “*In Iohannis Evangelium Tractatus*” 123, 5), it is the office of the Good Shepherd who offers his life for his sheep (cf. Jn 10:14-15). In the Eucharistic mystery, Christ gives himself ever anew, and it is precisely in the Eucharist that we learn love of Christ, hence, love for the Church.

I therefore repeat with you, dear brothers in the priesthood, the unforgettable words of John Paul II: “Holy Mass is the absolute center of my life and of every day of my life” (Address at a Symposium in honor of the 30th anniversary of the Decree “*Presbyterorum Ordinis*,” Oct. 27, 1995, n. 4; *L’Osservatore Romano* English edition, Nov. 15, 1995, p. 7). And each one of us should be able to say these words are his own: Holy Mass is the absolute center of my life and of my every day.

Likewise, obedience to Christ, who made amends for Adam’s disobedience, is in practice expressed in ecclesial obedience, which for the priest in daily life means first and foremost obedience to his Bishop. In the Church, however, obedience is not something formalistic; it is obedience to the one who, in turn, obeys and personifies the obedient Christ. All this neither frustrates nor even attenuates the practical

requirements of obedience, but guarantees theological depth and its Catholic tone: in the Bishop we obey Christ and the whole Church which he represents in this place.

Jesus Christ was sent by the Father, through the power of the Holy Spirit, for the salvation of the entire human family, and we priests are enabled through the grace of the sacrament to share in this mission of his. As the Apostle Paul writes, “God... has given us the ministry of reconciliation. ... This makes us ambassadors for Christ, God as it were appealing through us. We implore you, in Christ’s name: be reconciled to God” (2 Corinthians 5:18-29). This is how Saint Paul describes our mission as priests.

Therefore, in the Homily prior to the Conclave, I spoke of the “holy restlessness” that must animate us, the concern to bring to everyone the gift of faith, to offer everyone the salvation that alone endures for ever. And in a city as large as Rome, which on the one hand is so steeped in faith yet in which so many people live who have not really perceived in their hearts the proclamation of faith, we should be especially impelled by this restless concern to bring this joy, this center of life, which gives it meaning and direction.

Dear brother priests of Rome, the Risen Christ is calling us to be his witnesses and gives us the strength of his Spirit to enable us to be truly such. It is necessary, therefore, to be with him (cf. Mark 3:14; Acts 1:21-23) for life. As in the first description of the “*munus apostolicum*” in Mark 3, an account is given of what the Lord thought being an apostle should mean: being with him and being available for the mission. The two things go together and only by staying with him are we also and always on the move with the Gospel towards others.

Thus, it is essential to be with him, and in this way that restlessness pervades us and enables us to bring the power and joy of the faith to others with our

HOLY MASS TIMES

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

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

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

whole lives and not only with just a few words.

The Apostle Paul's words can apply to us: "Yet preaching the Gospel is not the subject of a boast; I am under compulsion and have no choice. I am ruined if I do not preach it! ... Although I am not bound to anyone, I made myself the slave of all so as to win over as many as possible. ... I have made myself all things to all men in order to save at least some of them" (I Corinthians 9:16-22).

These words that are the self-portrait of the Apostle are also the portrait of every priest. Making oneself "all things to all men" is expressed in daily life, in attention to every person and family: in this regard, you priests of Rome have a great tradition, and I say so with deep conviction, and you are also honoring it today when the city has spread so much and is profoundly changed. It is crucial, as you well know, that the closeness and attention to everyone are always expressed in Christ's Name and constantly strive to lead people to him.

This closeness and dedication, of course, has a personal cost for each one of you, for us. It involves time, worry, the expenditure of energy. I am aware of your daily efforts and want to thank you on behalf of the Lord. But I also want to help you as much as I can so that you do not yield under this burden.

To be able to bear, indeed, even to grow, as persons and as priests, it is fundamental first of all to have intimate communion with Christ, whose food was to do the will of his Father (cf. John 4:34): all we do is done in communion with him, and we thus rediscover ever anew the unity of our lives in the many facets of our daily occupations.

Let us also learn from the Lord Jesus Christ, who sacrificed himself to do the will of the Father, the art of priestly asceticism which is also necessary today: it should not be exercised on a par with pastoral activities as an additional burden that makes our day even more difficult. On the contrary, we must learn how to surpass ourselves, how to give and how to offer our lives.

But, if all this is truly to happen within us so that our very action may truly become our asceticism and our self-giving, so that all this may not be just a wish, there is no doubt that we need moments in which to replenish our energies, including the physical, and especially to pray and meditate, returning to our inner selves and finding the Lord within us.

Thus, spending time in God's presence in prayer is a real pastoral priority; it is not an addition to pastoral work: being before the Lord is a pastoral priority and in the final analysis, the most important. John Paul II showed this to us in the most practical and

enlightened way in every circumstance of his life and ministry.

Dear priests, we can never sufficiently emphasize how fundamental and crucial our personal response to the call to holiness is. It is not only the condition for our personal apostolate to be fruitful but also, and more generally, for the face of the Church to reflect the light of Christ (cf. "Lumen Gentium," 1), thereby inducing people to recognize and adore the Lord.

We must first inwardly accept the Apostle Paul's plea that we let ourselves be reconciled to God (cf. 2 Corinthians 5:20), asking the Lord with a sincere heart and courageous determination to take away from us all that separates us from God and is contrary to the mission we have received. The Lord is merciful, we are certain, and will answer our prayer.

My ministry as Bishop of Rome follows in the wake of the ministry of my Predecessors. I welcome in particular the precious heritage bequeathed by John Paul II: dear priests and deacons, let us walk on this path with serenity and trust.

We will continue to seek to increase communion in the great family of the diocesan Church and to collaborate to develop a missionary approach in our pastoral work in conformity with the basic guidelines of the Roman Synod, translated into action with special effectiveness by the City Mission. Rome is a very large Diocese and truly a very special one, because of the universal concern that the Lord has entrusted to his Bishop.

Therefore, dear priests, your relationship with the diocesan Bishop, who unfortunately I am, cannot have the daily immediacy I would have liked and which may be possible in other situations. Through the work of the Cardinal Vicar and the Auxiliary Bishops, to whom I express my deep gratitude, I can nonetheless be concretely close to each one of you, in the joys and difficulties that accompany every priest on his journey.

I would like above all to assure you of that deeper and more decisive closeness that binds the Bishop to his priests and deacons in daily prayer, and you may be sure that the clergy of Rome are truly particularly present in my prayers. And we are close in faith and love for Christ and in entrustment to Mary, Mother of the one High Priest. That serenity and trust which we all feel we need, both for our apostolic work and for our personal lives, derive precisely from our union with Christ and with the Virgin.

Dear priests and deacons, these are some of the thoughts that I wanted to bring to your attention. Before giving the floor to you for your questions and reflections, I still have some very joyful news to

announce. We received a communiqué today. It was written by Cardinal Saraiva Martins, prefect of the Congregation for the Causes of Saints, together with Archbishop Nowak, secretary of the Congregation.

[The Holy Father then read the Latin text regarding the cause of the late Pope John Paul II:]

Instante Emmo ac Revmo Domino D. Camillo S.R.E. Cardinali Ruini, Vicario Generali Suae Sanctitatis pro Dioecesi Romana, Summus Pontifex BENEDICTUS XVI, attentis peculiaribus expositis adiunctis, in audentia eidem Cardinali Vicario Generali die 28 mensis Aprilis huius anni 2005 concessa, dispensavit a tempore quinque annorum exspectationis post mortem Servi Dei Ioannis Pauli II (Caroli Wojtyla), Summi Pontificis, ita ut causa Beatificationis et Canonizationis eiusdem Servi Dei statim incipi posset. Contrariis non obstantibus quibuslibet.

Datum Romae, ex aedibus huius Congregationis de Causis Sanctorum, die 9 mensis Maii A.D. 2005.

Iosephus Card. Saraiva Martins

Praefectus

Eduardus Nowak

Archiepiscopus tit. Lunensis a Secretis

(Vatican translation of Italian original VATICAN CITY, MAY 20, 2005 ZE05052020)

MYSTICAL BODY

I am mocked in the mob forever, love –
I am lashed to a lonely tree –
I am bled from a thousand wounds, but you
Surely will succor Me?

I sift the dust of time and space,
Naked, bereft and sere.
But you, the solace of spendthrift grief,
Surely, embrace Me here?

To quench My thirst of Calvary,
To close My wounds, I need
Your love, your love in branch and flower
Fruiting My Vine in deed.

(from “THE MARYFAITHFUL” Spring/Summer
2002, by Maria Rafael)

MARY’S GENEALOGY?

Q. When the Gospel of Matthew speaks about the genealogy of Jesus, it says that He is the son of David

and son of Abraham, understood to be their descendant. But Jesus was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and is the Son of God the Father, so Jesus does not have a biological father. Is that correct? Is the genealogy of the Blessed Mother ever considered in the genealogy of Jesus? Elizabeth Smith, via e-mail

A. It is correct to say that Jesus is the Son of God the Father and does not have a biological father. But look at the pattern in Matthew’s genealogy (see 1:1-17): so-and-so the father of so-and-so the father of so and-so, and so on. When the genealogy comes to the name of Joseph, however, it breaks the pattern.

Matthew 1:16 speaks of Joseph not as the father of Jesus but as “the husband of Mary. Of her was born Jesus who is called the Messiah.” In the Jewish tradition, as the adopted son of Joseph, Jesus would receive all rights of inheritance and would be regarded as standing in succession eventually from Abraham.

Now go back to Abraham. In Genesis 12:3, God tells Abraham that through him “all the communities of the earth shall find blessing in you.” That promise comes to sharper focus in Genesis 17:6, when God tells Abraham that “kings shall stem from you.”

To David, descendant of Abraham, God promises, “Your house and your kingdom shall endure forever before me; your throne shall stand firm forever” (2 Sm 7:16). Matthew’s genealogy shows that through His adoptive father Jesus shares in this line of descent, and this is His basic Messianic credential.

With regard to Our Lady’s genealogy: As a Jew, the Blessed Mother was herself a descendant of Abraham, making her Son, Jesus, a descendant of Abraham as well.

In addition, Saint Paul says that Jesus Christ “was descended from David according to the flesh” (Rom 1:3). Since Our Lord’s flesh came from Mary, this seems to be saying that she too was descended from David, and Marian tradition has often spoken of her that way - for example, the Marian title “Tower of David.” We also know from Numbers 36:3-4 that to safeguard a tribe’s inheritance a daughter of Israel was supposed to marry only within her own tribe.

Some biblical commentators read Luke 1:26-27 in this light: “In the sixth month, the angel Gabriel was sent from God. . . to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David.” These commentators insist that the last clause - “of the house of David” does not refer to Joseph, but rather to Mary, who is the main character in the narrative.

To render this meaning, we could punctuate the passage this way: “In the sixth month, the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a virgin (betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph) of the house of David.” Unfortunately, there is no punctuation in the original Greek to help clarify the meaning.

Though the genealogy found at the beginning of Matthew is identified as that of Saint Joseph, the 15th-century Dominican historian Annius of Viterbo suggested that Saint Luke’s genealogy gives the pedigree of Mary. (Saint Augustine had alluded to this opinion a thousand years before.) Luke 3:23 can be interpreted to imply that Heli was the father of Mary: “Jesus ... being the son (as was supposed of Joseph) of Heli”; or “Jesus ... being the son of Joseph, as was supposed, the son of Heli”; or even “Jesus ... being as was supposed the son of Joseph, who was [the son-in-law] of Heli.”

According to these explanations, though Mary’s name is not explicitly mentioned, it is implied, since Jesus would have been the son of Heli through Mary. (Again, the Greek has no punctuation to help us out here.)

Many scholars reject this interpretation of the text. But interestingly enough, we might note that the name “Joachim” could be a variation of “Heli,” or “Eliachim,” substituting one Divine name (“Yahweh”) for the other (“Eli, Elohim”).

And, of course, the ancient tradition - first recorded in a second-century text called the Protoevangelium - is that Mary’s father was named “Joachim.” It’s an intriguing possibility.

(THE CATHOLIC ANSWER, Jan/ Feb 2005, by Father Ray Ryland, Ph.D., J.D., chaplain for several national Catholic apostolates, an adjunct professor of theology at Franciscan University of Steubenville, Ohio, and an assistant pastor at Saint Peter’s Church in Steubenville.)

FATHER’S LOVE LETTER

The cry of a Father’s Heart from Genesis to Revelation

My Child...You may not know me, but I know everything about you -Psalm 139:1

I know when you sit down and when you rise up - Psalm 139:2

I am familiar with all your ways -Psalm 139:3

Even the very hairs on your head are numbered - Matthew 10:29-31

For you were made in my image -Genesis 1::27

In me you live and move and have your being -Acts 17:28

For you are my offspring -Acts 17:28

I knew you even before you were conceived - Jeremiah 1:4.5

I chose you when I planned creation -Eph 1:11-12

You were not a mistake, for all your days are written in my book -Ps.139:15-16

I determined the exact time of your birth and where you would live -Acts 17:26

You are fearfully and wonderfully made -Psalm 139:14

I knit you together in your mother’s womb -Psalm 139:13

And brought you forth on the day you were born - Psalm 71:6

I have been misrepresented by those who don’t know me -John 8:41.44

I am not distant and angry, but am the complete expression of love -1 John 4:16

And it is my desire to lavish my love on you -1 John 3:1

Simply because you are my child and I am your Father -1 John 3:1

I offer you more than your earthly father ever could - Matthew 7: 11

For I am the perfect father -Matthew 5:48

Every good gift that you receive comes from my hand -James 1:17

For I am your provider and I meet all your needs - Matthew 6:31-33

My plan for your future has always been filled with hope -Jeremiah 29:11

Because I love you with an everlasting love -Jeremiah 31:3

My thoughts toward you are countless as the sand on the seashore -Ps. 139:17-18

And I rejoice over you with singing -Zephaniah 3:17

I will never stop doing good to you -Jeremiah 32:40

For you are my treasured possession -Exodus 19:5

I desire to establish you with all my heart and all my soul -Jer. 32:41

And I want to show you great and marvelous things - Jeremiah 33:3

If you seek me with all your heart, you will find me -
Deut. 4:29

Delight in me and I will give you the desires of your
heart -Psalm 37:4

For it is I who gave you those desires -Philippians
2:13

I am able to do more for you than you could possibly
imagine -Eph. 3:20

For I am your greatest encourager -2 Thessalonians
2:16-17

I am also the Father who comforts you in all your
troubles -2 Cor.1 :3-4

When you are brokenhearted, I am close to you -
Psalm 34:18

As a shepherd carries a lamb, I have carried you close
to my heart -Is. 40:11

One day I will wipe away every tear from your eyes -
Revelation 21:3-4

And I'll take away all the pain you have suffered on
this earth -Rev. 21:3-4

I am your Father, and I love you even as I love my
son, Jesus -John 17:23

For in Jesus, my love for you is revealed -John 17:26

He is the exact representation of my being -Hebrews
1:3

He came to demonstrate that I am for you, not against
you -Romans 8:31

And to tell you that I am not counting your sins -2
Corinthians 5:18.19

Jesus died so that you and I could be reconciled -2
Corinthians 5:18.19

His death was the ultimate expression of my love for
you.-1 John 4:10

I gave up everything I loved that I might gain your
love -Romans 8:31.32

If you receive the gift of my son Jesus, you receive
me -1 John 2:23

And nothing will ever separate you from my love
again -Romans 8:38.39

Come home and I'll throw the biggest party heaven
has ever seen -Luke 15:7

I have always been Father, and will always be Father
-Ephesians 3:14-15

My question is: Will you be my child? -John 1:12.13

I am waiting for you -Luke 15:11.32

Love, Your Dad, Almighty God

IN THE HEART of JESUS

This call by Mary is not new (see, for example, the
message of 25 Oct. last), yet it renews life. It
doesn't reveal yet it is decisive for the future. It
doesn't expound difficult doctrine yet it is full of
Wisdom. **"Also today I urge you to consecrate
yourselves to my Heart and to the Heart of my Son
Jesus."** To consecrate oneself means to reserve
oneself. To consecrate oneself to the Heart of Mary
and Jesus means to place oneself within their Hearts,
to live life from within their Hearts. It means to love
with their Love, to pray with their Prayer, to speak
with their Word, to think in their Thought.

Heart stands for soul, body and mind all together.
Thus, to stay in their Heart means to live of Them.
How can this be possible? Mary asked a similar
question (Lk 1:34) and the Angel's reply is valid also
for us: the Holy Spirit will descend upon us and will
make possible that which is humanly impossible. Let
us ask the Holy Spirit for this gift, and let us ask with
faith, hope, love, and all our strength. After all, He
would be simply carrying out His job, for the Spirit
generates life, and with Love He accomplishes the
Father's Will. He who bore God to a human creature,
Mary, will bear us in the Heart of Mary and Jesus,
and rouse up the *new life* marked by our life in God
and God's life in us.

Then, life will no longer be a succession of days and
seasons, but existence unshackled by time; no longer
a slave to the transient, but free in God; no longer
conditioned by the laws of physics, but enraptured in
God's Love. And the *civilization of Love*, upon which
our beloved Pope often calls our attention, will
blossom. This *civilization of Love* isn't an optional,
for it is clear to all that without it the world will fall
headlong into self destruction.

Consecration to Mary and to Jesus can't be an
isolated gesture; something you do once and for all.
Since it is *life* in Jesus and Mary, it must develop and
grow day by day. **"Only in this way will you belong
to me more with each passing day, and you will
inspire each other all the more to holiness."** Yes,
the fruit of lived consecration is holiness, which is to
belong definitely to God, to remain in God. The soul,
not weighed down by oppression or envy, will ascend
because we will exhort and encourage each other
because we will care about the holiness of the others
as much as our own. **"This way joy will reign in
your hearts and you will be bearers of peace and
love."**

Peace, love, and joy unmistakably express life in God. The world, too, seems to offer these gifts, but while the former are consequences of holiness, the latter are a feeble imitation. In God, peace, love and joy aren't aspects of life, but are Life itself; they are Jesus. "Abide in me and I in you" (Jn 15:4). "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give to you" (Jn 14:27). "I have told you this so that my own joy might be in you and that your joy be complete. This is my commandment: love one another as I have loved you" (Jn 15:11-12). Holiness is not imitating some of Jesus' virtues, but is accepting Him without reserve. Not even the awareness of our sin must obstruct this acceptance. When we are stripped of everything - of our sins and virtues, our doubts and fears, our earthly certainties and precautions founded on worldly wisdom - then there will be room in us for the Holy Spirit, and we shall be "joyous bearers of peace and love".

(from "ECHO OF MARY, QUEEN OF PEACE" July-August 2004 by Nuccio Quattrocchi)

HOW DOES A NEW POPE CHOOSE A NAME?

Q. How does the pope go about choosing his name once elected, and may he use his own birth name, such as Karol Wojtyla? I have inquiring eighth-graders at bay! Mrs. Gwen Eldred's eighth-grade religion class, Saint Thomas More Catholic School, Chapel Hill, N.C., via Mike Kapp

A. First some background: The earliest popes did not choose a different name once they took the papal throne. The first to do so was Pope John II (d. 535). He was Roman by birth, bearing the pagan name Mercurius - that is, he was named after the Roman god Mercury. So he took the Christian name John, because he thought a pagan name would be a dishonor to the papal office. Pope John III (d. 574) may also have adopted his name.

In the latter part of the 10th century, four more popes chose new names for themselves upon ascending the throne. The custom was firmly established by the middle of the 11th century.

The choice of name belongs to the pope himself. Though there is no canon law requiring that someone take a different name upon becoming pope, the tradition now has the weight of centuries behind it. In addition, the practice has a certain usefulness, since it allows each new pope to make a kind of statement about his hopes and intentions for his papacy.

Reasons for the names chosen have varied. Popes John II and John III apparently took that name to honor their martyred predecessor, Pope Saint John I. When a German named Bruno was named pope in 996, he probably took the name Gregory V as a way to reassure the Romans that even though he was a "foreigner," he would serve them faithfully as earlier Italian popes had done.

In our own day, Blessed Pope John XXIII and Pope Paul VI were the popes who presided over the Second Vatican Council. As a way of honoring them and associating themselves with the work of that council, Pope Paul's successor took the name John Paul (the first instance of a pope taking a double name), and Pope John Paul's successor chose to be called Pope John Paul II.

One final note: A Roman named Peter was elected pope in 1009, but he changed his name to Sergius IV. His reason? Since the first pope, Saint Peter, held a unique position as the "Prince of the Apostles," Sergius thought there should not be a "Pope Peter II."

To this day, the name Peter has never been taken by another pope. Nevertheless, a centuries-old prophecy, attributed, with considerable controversy, to Saint Malachy (d. 1148), makes this intriguing prediction: "In the final persecution of the Holy Roman Church there will reign Peter the Roman, who will feed his flock among many tribulations; after which the seven-hilled city [Rome] will be destroyed and the dreadful Judge will judge the people."

(By Paul Thigpen, THE CATHOLIC ANSWER, Jan/Feb 2005)

IS IT A SIN TO BE WEALTHY?

After the rich young man turned away from Christ, Jesus said: "It is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for one who is rich to enter the kingdom of God" (Mk 10:25).

What was it that had persuaded the young man to run away from the Master? The words "sell your possessions" (v. 21).

Exactly what is this command? Jesus did not, as some people casually assume, simply tell him to throw away the wealth he possessed and abandon his property. He was commanding him to banish from his soul his wrong notions about wealth, his passion for it, his disordered attachment to it - the anxieties that are the thorns of human existence and that choke the seed of life (see Mt 13:22).

After all, it's no great thing, nor is it desirable in itself, to be poor, unless someone becomes poor for a

special purpose - that is, for the sake of eternal life. Otherwise, we would have to say that all those who are materially destitute - including those who don't know God or live according to His righteousness - are the most blessed and most dear to God, the only ones who have eternal life, simply by virtue of their extreme poverty! But even though someone has rid himself of the burden of wealth, he may nonetheless retain his innate lust and desire for money.

Using Wealth the Right Way

Consider how beneficial it is when a man, through possessing sufficient income, is able both to avoid financial difficulty and to give assistance to those in need. For if no one had anything, who would have anything to give away? How could anyone give food to the hungry and drink to the thirsty, clothe the naked and shelter the homeless (see Mt 25:31-46), if each person first divested himself of all these things?

So riches that benefit our neighbors as well are not to be thrown away. They lie at hand ready to be employed, as instruments for good use - to those who recognize them as such. If you use an instrument skillfully, it is of benefit. If you use it incompetently, the instrument itself is not to blame - the deficiency is your own. Such an instrument is wealth.

There are those who hold possessions, gold, silver and houses, as the gifts of God. They use them as a source of ministry to the God who gives them for the salvation of human beings. They know that they possess these riches more for the sake of others than for their own sake.

Such people are the masters of what they possess, not the slaves of it. They do not bind their lives or define themselves by the things they possess. Even if they should be of necessity deprived of these possessions, they are nevertheless able with a cheerful mind to accept the loss of possessions as well as they accept their abundance.

[Others] carry their riches in their souls. Instead of bearing God's Spirit in their hearts, they fill their hearts with gold or land. They are always acquiring possessions without end, and they are perpetually on the outlook for more.

In this pursuit they bend themselves downward more and more, fettering themselves in the toils of the world. How can such people desire the kingdom of heaven, if they carry in their hearts only earthly things such as land or metal? "For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also" (Mt 6:21).

Unwounded by Wealth

No doubt some people have to reject wealth for the sake of their souls. You may say, "Certainly Christ

does not debar me from property. The Lord does not envy." But do you find yourself overcome and overthrown by your wealth? If so, then leave it, throw it away, hate it, renounce it, flee from it.

"If your right eye causes you to sin," quickly "pluck it out," Our Lord said (Mt 5: 28). How much more, then, our wealth! Better is the kingdom of God to a man with one eye, than the fire of hell to one who has both eyes.

Nevertheless, the Savior by no means has excluded the rich on account of wealth itself.

(by Saint Clement of Alexandria from **THE CATHOLIC ANSWER**, Volume 18, No. 3, July/August 2004. *SAINT CLEMENT of ALEXANDRIA (c. 150-c.215), a theologian, probably of Greek birth, was head of the great Catechetical School of Alexandria, Egypt, an institution known throughout the ancient Christian world for both its illustrious teachers and its brilliant students. This excerpt comes from his treatise "Who Is the Rich Man That Shall Be Saved?"*)

POPE MARKS 25TH ANNIVERSARY of JOHN PAUL'S VISIT to UNESCO

VATICAN CITY, JUN 2, 2005 (VIS) - Made public today was a Message from Pope Benedict XVI to Cardinal Jean-Louis Tauran, the Holy Father noted the "immense recognition due to Pope John Paul who, with his personal and cultural experience, always underlined in his teachings the central and irreplaceable position of man, as well as his fundamental dignity, the source all of his inalienable rights. Twenty-five years ago the Pope declared at UNESCO headquarters that 'in the cultural domain, man is always first: man is the primordial and basic fact of culture'."

The Pope then echoed John Paul's words on that day, when, at UNESCO, he reminded his interlocutors of their responsibility: "Build peace by starting with the foundation: respect for all of man's rights, those linked to his material and economic dimension as well as those linked to the spiritual and interior dimension of his existence in this world."

Benedict XVI, reiterating the Holy See's concern for and involvement in the work of UNESCO, through her permanent observer to this organization, went on to say that, "in a world which is both multiple and divided, and often submissive to the strong demands of globalization of economic relations and, even more, of information, it is important at the highest levels to mobilize the energies of intelligence so that

man's rights to education and culture are recognized, especially in the poorest countries. In a world where man must learn more and more to recognize and to respect his brother, the Church wishes to make her own contribution to the service of the human community, while pointing out ... the relation that binds each person to the Creator of all life and the source of the inalienable dignity of each person, from conception to life's natural end."

(MESS/CULTURE/UNESCO:TAURAN VIS 050602
(350))

PILGRIMS of FAITH MARIAN CENTER (PFMC)

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

Most **PFMC** volunteers profess that faith through the apostolic and universal teachings of the Roman Catholic Church. Those volunteers who are practicing Roman Catholics profess allegiance to the Magisterium of the Church founded upon the Rock (Kephas / Cephass or Petros depending on original or translation) of Simon bar Jonah and led by his apostolic successor **Pope John Paul II**.

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

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

Operating for many years on a cash only basis, the **PFMC** now accepts **DISCOVER/PRIVATE ISSUE (NOVUS)**, **MASTER CARD (CIRRUS)** and **VISA (PLUS)** for all transactions requiring donations to the **PFMC**. This includes for books and religious articles, pilgrimages, retreats, conferences, seminars, "**The PILGRIM**," or any of the various funds. We

ask that those who use credit cards assist us with the costs associated with their use, about 3%.

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

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

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

If you wish to order, please determine what you want with as much description as possible. If you do not have an order form, call us at (856) 768-9228 with a FAX number or mailing address and we will send you an order form. If you know what you want and we carry it, you can order over the telephone using your credit card. If you have an order form, complete it, make out a check or complete the information for use of a credit card, i.e. card type, number, expiration date, and name on card, sign, and mail everything to the **PFMC** at the address shown on page 24.

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, Keith, and the PFMC Volunteer Staff

BULLETIN NOTICES for PFMC AREA EVENTS

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

Please help get the word out on **PFMC** activities, events, and pilgrimages.

Ask your pastor to allow information materials to be put out in church. Please do not put material in your church without obtaining permission from the pastor or his representative.

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

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

10-17 OCTOBER 2005 PILGRIMAGE to SAN GIOVANNI ROTONDO (Saint Pio of Pietrelcina), MONTE SANT' ANGELO, LANCIANO (Eucharistic Miracle), ROME

The Double Occupancy Package Price is \$2499 and Single Supplement is \$350. Father Glen Hartman, Saint John Neumann, Sicklerville, NJ is Spiritual Director. Call (856) 768-9228 for information sheet with reservation form.

2006 PFMC RETREAT CONFERENCE

17-19 February 2006 at the Clarion Hotel, Cherry Hill, NJ. Father Bill Halbing, Father Edgardo "Bing" Arellano, Father Michael Semana, Al Barbarino, REFUGE. Reserve rooms (\$92 per night) via (856) 428-2300. Register for weekend events (Adults \$50 Single, \$95 Couple, Youth / Young Adult \$20) via (856) 768-9228. Ask for information packet with reservation / registration forms.

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

(Kathleen as well as all the PFMC Volunteer Staff)

CONFERENCE CORNER

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

June 24-25, 2005 - 24th Medjugorje Anniversary Celebration - 2005, Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton Church, 4600 Belle Terre Pkwy, Palm Coast, FL. Contact: (386) 445-1564 / Fax: (386) 445-1552. Speakers: **Father John Corapi, SOLT.** <http://www.medjugorje.org/medconf.htm>.

August 5-7, 2005 - Scranton Charismatic Conference, University of Scranton, Scranton, PA. Contact: (570) 346-0922. Speakers: **Bob Canton, Aggie Neck, Peter Herbeck, Monsignor John Lewis, Linda Schubert, Father Richard Loch, and Bob Valiante.**

September 2-4, 2005 - Fourth Annual Marian Conference, Winnipeg, Manitoba. Speakers: **Father Andrew Apostoli, Father Joseph Iannuzzi, Father Louis Guardiola, Dan Lynch, Al Barbarino, Roy**
The PILGRIM, Volume 16, Number 6 - June 2005

Shoeman, Stan Rutherford. Youth Conference on Saturday. Contact: (204) 268- 2046; <http://www.marianconference.com>

October 7-9, 2005 - Camden Charismatic Conference, Wildwood Convention Center, Wildwood, NJ. Contact: (856) 589-7205. Speakers: **John Michael Talbot, Babsie Bleasdel, Father Michael Moses, and Bob Valiante, MC.**

October 28-30, 2005 - Catholic Unity Conference, Hilton Hotel, King of Prussia, PA. Contact: (610) 527-2906. Speakers: **Father Andrew Apostoli, Mother Nadine Brown, Ralph Martin, Josyp Terelya, Father Clement Machado, Jim Cowan.** www.inhissign.com.

(compiled from various sources by Keith Werner)

PFMC DISPLAYS and / or PRESENTATIONS



Kathleen and Keith are available to participate in parish or prayer group meetings with witness, and/or videotape or slide presentations, followed by a question and answer session. The experiences and continuation of the **PFMC** ministries for Our Lady and her Son in this time of manifestation of Our Lord's mercy and graces are shared at no cost. Free will offerings are accepted. This is especially true for books, tapes, and religious articles, when they are made available in displays at the presentation sites. Recipients are asked to donate at or above the suggested value posted on each article on display. Displays may be set up without a presentation.

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

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

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

(Keith and Kathleen Werner)

PRO-LIFE ALERT

Visit <http://www.expectantmothercare.org> and consider supporting them. They are in need of help.

CALENDARS:

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

In *July* the Church celebrates the Feast of *Saint James, Apostle (25)*, the Memorials of *Saints Benedict, Abbot (11)*, *Bonaventure (15)*, *Mary Magdalene (22)*, *Joachim and Ann (26)*, and *Martha (29)*, and *Blessed Kateri Tekakwitha (14)*, and the Optional Memorials of *Saints Elizabeth of Portugal (4)*, *Anthony Mary Zaccaria (5)*, *Maria Goretti (6)*, *Augustine Zhao Rong and his Companions (9)*, *Henry (13)*, *Apollinaris (20)*, *Lawrence of Brindisi (21)*, *Bridget of Sweden (23)*, *Peter Chrysologus (30)* and *Blessed Junipero Serra (1)* as well as *Our Lady of Mount Carmel (16)* and *Camillus de Lellis (18)*. Church calendars recognize **Independence Day (4)**.

AROUND the *PFMC* AREA

Please review the announcements on *pages 1* through *4*, and on *page 31* in **Bulletin Notice** and **Conference Corner**. Thank you for your support in all we try to do for Jesus Christ, Our Lord and Savior, and His Blessed Virgin Mother, Mary.

Please help get the word out on *PFMC* activities, events, and pilgrimages. Pray for us.

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

POPE BENEDICT XVI PRAYER INTENTIONS for *JUNE*

VATICAN CITY, JUN 1, 2005 (VIS) - The Holy Father's general prayer intention for the month of *June* is: "That our society should, with concrete acts of Christian and brotherly love, come to the aid of the millions of refugees who live in extreme need and abandonment."

His mission intention is: "That the Sacrament of the Eucharist should be more and more recognized as the beating heart of the Church's life."

(BXVI-PRAYER INTENTIONS/JUNE/... VIS 050601 (80))

Page 32

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

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

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The PILGRIM, Volume 16, Number 6 – June 2005

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

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

