



The **PILGRIM**

Vol. 16, No. 11

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

November 2005

The PILGRIM is a periodical from **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



Dearest Mary, you are the Queen of Heaven, embraced in the ecstasy of your Son Jesus, your God and Whom you adore. In these days of preparing for your child's birth, keep our praise silent and thankful in our nothingness, and help us to leave everything abandoned into your hands to present to the Father.

I wish to humble myself in the presence of your Maternal Heart. Your heart is always ready to receive me, even in my unworthiness. Oh Mary show me how to love deeply You are the Mother of fair love and goodness. Show me the ways of perfection in the virtues. Open my heart more each day to the gifts of wisdom and joy. Ready my soul for the coming of Jesus this Christmas season. AMEN

(Kathleen)

HAPPY THANKSGIVING

Please gather your family together at **Thanksgiving** and encourage them to pray together as the early settlers of **America** did on this day. "A family that prays together stays together!" is a time worn cliché but it works. Enjoy a very **Happy Thanksgiving**.

(All the **PFMC** Volunteers)

PREPARE FOR CHRISTMAS with a MEANINGFUL ADVENT SEASON

We have now officially ended the **Year of the Eucharist** but the habits of prayer and adoration of the **Blessed Sacrament** encouraged during this past year should not be soon forgotten.

The **October MESSAGE**, from **GOSPA, Our Lady, Queen of Peace**, to an alleged visionary from **Medjugorje, Bosnia-Herzegovina**, are presented beginning on page **18** (centerfold page) with **REFLECTION** and **PRESS BULLETIN**.

Spend time in silence with the **Blessed Sacrament** during **Advent** asking Jesus to enlighten you on what to do for His birthday celebration on **Christmas** day.

(All the **PFMC** Volunteers)

MERRY CHRISTMAS and HAPPY NEW YEAR – A BIT EARLY!

We have not finalized the **December** plans for the volunteers at the **PFMC**. As of now, we plan to have the **PFMC** and its displays open on **Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday** from **9 AM** until about **3 PM** with **Colleen** available to help you. We welcome a new volunteer, **Sylvia Cappuccio**, who with her daughter, **Teresa**, is learning **Inventory** entries using our **Access** database. On **Monday** and **Wednesday** the **PFMC** and its displays should be open from **10 AM** until around **2 PM** with **Sylvia** available. Please call **(856) 768 9228** to see if the **PFMC** is open. Because we are all volunteers there are times that we might not have someone available.

Because of the original plan, we may not put out a **December** issue of "**The PILGRIM**" at all or it may be delayed for mailing until **12/17/05** or **12/20/05**.

We want to make sure that you all enjoy the **Birthday of Jesus Christ** and remember Him in your **Christmas** plans. If we don't send out a **December** issue of "**The "PILGRIM"** there will be a combined **December 2005** and **January 2006** issue mailed out about **1/11/2006**. **God Bless You** and have a very **Blessed and Happy New Year**.

We definitely need your helping hands to put out "**The "PILGRIM"** monthly. If you would give us one hour or part of one day each month we would not be so stressed to get this out on time. We also need people who could learn how to publish "**The "PILGRIM"**", and this too, would help us with the many hours of fatigue each month. Please help us. We truly need you, and Our Lady will bless you.

"**The PILGRIM**" for **November 2005** is dedicated to "**Mary, Rose of all Roses.**" See page 3 for "**IN THIS ISSUE . . .**" or **Table of Contents**.

CONSIDER GIVING RELIGIOUS GIFTS for CHRISTMAS

Don't know what to give Mom or Dad, the Family, the Kids, Grand Parents, or Grand Kids? Give something NEW and wonderful for **Christmas**.

For those very special, have the family pitch in and give them a **Pilgrimage** to the **HOLY LANDS of ISRAEL and JORDAN, 17-30 April 2006**, or with the **Extension** for an **Excursion to Mount Sinai in Egypt** returning home **1 May 2006**.

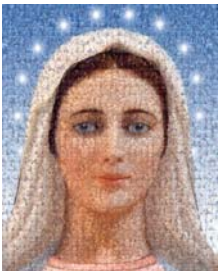
Mom and Dad, give a family registration for the **RETREAT CONFERENCE, 17-19 February 2006**, and, if the children or grandchildren are between 7 and 17, registrations for the **Youth Track**.

Do you have a friend and you don't know what to give them? Try a registration for the **RETREAT CONFERENCE, 17-19 February 2006**.

See the enclosed information packets. Cut out the registration coupons, fill them out, and send them in to us. Indicate this is a gift and we will personally write them a letter telling of your wonderful gift.

(All the **PFMC** Volunteers)

NEW *JesusMosaic* of OUR LADY



Frank Bear of *JesusMosaics* has worked since the **2005 RETREAT CONFERENCE** on producing a new computer generated picture and *JesusMosaic* of *Our Lady* based on the face of the *Immaculate Conception* statue in *Saint Elijah Church, Tihaljina, Bosnia-Herzegovina*. He wanted to do this as a fund raising effort for both *JesusMosaics* and the **PFMC**. He is offering both the beautiful computer generated picture and the *JesusMosaic*. Order from either the **PFMC** (856) 768-9228 or our web site: <http://www.geocities.com/pilgrimsfaith>.

See the enclosed color information sheet or view it at: <http://www.geocities.com/pilgrimsfaith/ImmaculateConceptionJM.pdf> and consider ordering this beautiful *JesusMosaic* or picture of *Our Lady* to include with your **Christmas** presents.

PFMC GIFT ROOM IS OPEN before the HOLIDAYS

Please come and look around our gift room. We have so many wonderful books to give for Christmas gifts. We also have an assortment of statues, rosaries, medals, and other religious articles. Please come and look around, and know that we can order anything for you from the many catalogues we have on hand.

It is always good to give religious articles for the holidays, birthdays, anniversaries, christenings, baptisms, confirmations, marriage, and we encourage you to choose from the many things we carry. Our usual hours are **9 AM to 5 PM Monday through Friday**, unless otherwise noted (as on page 1).

(All the **PFMC** Volunteers)



NEW BOOKS to ORDER

"A CHILD SHALL LEAD THEM" *Stories of transformed young lives in Medjugorje* by **Wayne Weible**. This is a wonderful book for teens and young adults to understand the many stories of young people who have visited this home of Our Lady. **Wayne** has drawn a collection of stories and anecdotes covering a full range of emotions, trials, and miracles, from heartbreak to intense happiness. Each account gives solid proof of what happens when a heart is converted to that of a child: a return to innocence, and the openness and receptivity to faith. The book is **\$14.95** plus shipping and handling.

"WHEN JESUS SLEEPS" *Finding Spiritual Peace amid the storms of Life* by **Luis Martinez** is a new book from **Sophia Press**. It is a book to help you to understand what to do when you think God doesn't answer. These pages show you how to trust God even when He seems unresponsive and remote, even when, as in the famous incident in the Gospels, He seems to sleep while you are buffeted by the storms of life. It is **\$9.95** plus shipping and handling. This is a great gift for some one in sorrow or having difficulties.

"HEALING WOMEN'S EMOTIONS" by **Paula Sandford** is a book for women everywhere and the men who love them. It gives a message of hope and healing that hears the anguished cries for understanding, love, acceptance, and fulfillment. It is a book that speaks to every woman individually, and

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.

puts one in tune with the feelings to today's woman. **Paula Sandford** writes with compassion from her heart to yours and helps you to experience emotional wholeness, identifies your sources of pain, deals with grief and sorrow, how to cope with your feelings, and to express them, and how to sort through confusing signals. It also shows how to find positive affirmation of the worth of womanhood. You will love this book. Order it now for your wife, girlfriend, or just for your own self. It is **\$12.95** plus shipping and handling.

"TRUE DEVOTION TO THE HOLY SPIRIT" is another wonderful book by **Luis Martinez**. Here is the guide you need to lead you through the maze of careless and imprecise talk that goes around nowadays about the Holy Spirit. It explains how you maintain devotion to the Holy Spirit, and your devotion to Him should be profound and encompassing. In beautiful and practical terms, the difference the Spirit can and should make when He is given His proper place in your soul will move you to an increase in virtue and to carry the characteristics of true love of the Spirit. This is a guide for man and woman, for every confirmation student, for every grandmother or grandfather. You will enjoy that **Father Benedict Groeschel** has said it is so profound and beautiful that one should use it for meditation. Order it now from the **PFMC**. It is **\$14.95** plus shipping and handling.

All these books and many many more are available from the **PFMC** Display and Gift Room. We have many books on healing, deliverance, Saints, and prayer. You may come in and browse or order by phone. We accept MasterCard, Visa and Discover donations. Just call us and enjoy! All books are shipped Priority Mail.

(The All-Volunteer Staff at the **PFMC**)

BISHOP JOSEPH GALANTE VISITS the **PFMC**

On **October 5th, 2005**, **Bishop Joseph Galante** visited the **PFMC**. It was his first tour of the **PFMC** and **Epiphany House**. **Father Joseph Byerley**, **Diocese PFMC** liaison, accompanied him.

Members of the all volunteer staff were here to welcome him, and to discuss with him the fruits of the workings of **16** years of the **PFMC** from pilgrimages, retreats, conferences, healing ministry, book and gift room along with our mailing functions. The extensive library for use by the public is available for research. We were able to speak out many of our concerns for the future of the **PFMC**.

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The **Bishop** was personally invited to say the closing **Holy Mass** of the **RETREAT CONFERENCE, 17-19 February 2006**, to be held at the **Clarion Hotel in Cherry Hill**. He will let us know if he will be able to fit that into his schedule.

With his blessing of the staff and of the **PFMC**, we want to thank him for his visit, and we pledge our obedience to him and to our Holy Catholic Church in all our work.

(**Kathleen and Keith Werner and all the other Volunteers on the PFMC Staff**)

PLEASE MARK YOUR 2005 CALENDARS for **PFMC** EVENTS

See **Conference Corner** on *page 35* as well as **Bulletin Notices** on *pages 34* and *35*. Most **PFMC** area events will be preceded by their own information sheets with reservation forms.

December 2005

There may not be a *December* issue of "**The PILGRIM**" due to vacations for **PFMC** volunteers in late *November* and early *December*. If this happens, the *November* message, reflections, and **Press Bulletin** items will appear in a *December 2005 – January 2006* issue of "**The PILGRIM**" put out early in *January 2006* along with the *December* message, reflections, and **Press Bulletin** items.

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

CONCERT for LIFE



SUNDAY, 11/20/05, 3 PM at
Middle Township Performing Arts Center

Carl Granieri / Hearts AFire Productions in conjunction with the **Father Araneo Chapter** of the **Knights of Columbus (KofC)** of **Southern New Jersey** will present **THE CONCERT FOR LIFE** to benefit the **KofC Pro-Life and Charity Fund** providing Free Transportation to the annual "**March for Life**" in **Washington, DC, January 23, 2006**.

This is the 1st **Hearts AFire** presentation of its kind.

It is going to be excellent and uplifting and will feature Pro-Life professional performers with a heart for God.

The venue is the beautiful **Middle Township Performing Arts Center (PAC)**, 1 **Penkethman Way, Cape May Court House, NJ 08210**. (609) 463-1924. Email: mtpac@fcc.net. The PAC seats 1000 people. It is just east of the **Garden State Parkway Exit 10, Stone Harbor Blvd**, first right onto **Bayberry Drive**, then ½ mile down on the left. Well worth the drive.

Tickets are \$15 for Adults and \$12 for Seniors and Children under 12. They are available from **Carl Granieri Orchestras** – (609) 927-5999 or email: cgorch@hotmail.com.

Tickets are also available at the **PAC Box Office** any weekday during morning hours. They may be ordered on a charge card and mailed out. Tickets will also be available at the door on the day of performance as availability allows.

Tickets should be available from all **Knights of Columbus Councils** at any Parish in **South Jersey**.

Will you help us sell this out?

There is a poster and a handout available for printing from the **PFMC** website <http://www.geocities.com/pilgrimsfaith> using: <http://www.geocities.com/pilgrimsfaith/2005/LifeConcertPoster.jpg> for the poster and <http://www.geocities.com/pilgrimsfaith/2005/LifeConcertHandout.doc> for the handout.

We really need your help with this - so please pray about it and if you can help by coming to the concert and or promoting this effort please do. **Hearts AFire** have been great supporters of the Youth and the **RETREAT CONFERENCE** in the past.

May Jesus fill your heart to overflowing eternally.

(edited from Carl Granieri at Hearts AFire
cgranieri@comcast.net Wednesday, October 19, 2005)

PLEASE MARK YOUR 2006 CALENDARS for **PFMC** EVENTS

See **Conference Corner** on *page 35* as well as **Bulletin Notices** on *pages 34* and *35*. Most **PFMC** area events will be preceded by their own information sheets with reservation forms.

February 2006

Friday, 17 February 2006, 4 PM, through Sunday, 19 February 2006, 6 PM: **RETREAT CONFERENCE** and **YOUTH TRACK** at **CLARION HOTEL, Cherry Hill, NJ**. See **green** information packet enclosed.

April 2006

Easter Monday, 17 April 2006, through Sunday, 30 April 2006, or Monday, 1 May 2006: **Pilgrimage** to the **Holy Lands of Israel and Jordan** with an extension to travel into the **Egyptian Sinai Desert** to visit **Saint Catherine Monastery** and **Mount Sinai**. See **blue** information packet enclosed.

May 2006

Tuesday, 9 May 2006, thru Thursday, 11 May 2006: **Bride of Christ Community Retreat** in the **Upper Room** at **Epiphany House**. Lodging in nearby hotels is available. **Retreat Master** will be **Father Marty Jones, Pastor of Saint Francis of Assis Parish, Middletown, CT**. An information packet will be available soon. This retreat is open to non-members of the community. See community article on page 7.

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

2006 RETREAT CONFERENCE

Please complete the appropriate registration forms from the **green** information packet enclosed. The dates are *Friday, 17 February 2006* through *Sunday, 19 February 2006*.

The location is 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.

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.

The **PFMC RETREAT CONFERENCE** registration rates are **\$50** per person and **\$95** for a married couple. A **green** color information packet with registration forms for the **RETREAT CONFERENCE** and **YOUTH TRACK** is enclosed and a color version of it is available online at: www.geocities.com/pilgrimsfaith/2006/06RET2.pdf.

You must register for the **PFMC RETREAT CONFERENCE** with the **PFMC** using a **PFMC** registration form from the **green** information packet mentioned above or by calling **(856) 768-9228**. Early registration is recommended. Walk-in registration is limited to room available at the time of walk-in.

You may use facsimile (FAX) to send room reservations to the *Clarion Hotel* at **(856) 354-7662** or **PFMC RETREAT CONFERENCE** registrations to the **PFMC** at **(856) 768-9428**. This is recommended after *2/3/06* when mail might be delayed.

Order your food plan through the **PFMC** to purchase hot meals for *Saturday noon* and *evening* as well as *Sunday noon* meals. On the premises of the *Clarion*

Hotel is a restaurant, the **Elephant and Castle**, that will facilitate anyone who just wants to order from the menu. They will also provide a breakfast buffet on both *Saturday* and *Sunday* with an option for just coffee and a bakery item. 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*.

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. There will be **daily Rosary, Angelus, Divine Mercy Chaplet, Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, Confessions** and much more.

Music will be by **"REFUGE"** with selections by **Al Barbarino** and **Father Michael Semana**.

Al Barbarino has agreed to be our **Master of Ceremonies** as well as provide his music ministry witness on *Sunday*.

The **PFMC** will have a gift or display room with all of our stock of books, statues, and religious articles

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CAMDEN DIOCESE LIAISON: Father E. Joseph Byerley
SPIRITUAL GUIDANCE: Father John Tino, Father Ronan Murphy, Father John McFadden, Father Bill McCarthy, MSsA, Father John Hampsch, CMF, Father Brendan Williams, as well as many of Mary's other beloved priests from the Philadelphia and Newark and New York Archdioceses as well as the Allentown, Brooklyn, Camden, Harrisburg, Metuchen, Norwich, Pittsburgh, Rockville Center, Scranton, Trenton and Wilmington Dioceses.
OFFICE HELP, ASSEMBLY, LABELS and MAILING: Too many wonderful pilgrims and volunteers to mention them all by name.

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 and parents / guardians / chaperones must attend the adult program. Youth / young adult participants are expected to be at all sessions and take an active part in the program. Parents should make arrangements to 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)

MAKE YOUR RESERVATIONS for A PILGRIMAGE to the HOLY LANDS of ISRAEL and JORDAN

**PLEASE MAKE YOUR RESERVATIONS
NOW, JOIN WITH US NOW to WALK in
the FOOTSTEPS of JESUS and MOSES**

This pilgrimage of a lifetime to the **Holy Lands** of **Israel, Jordan, (and Egypt)** would be a perfect gift, Christmas, birthday etc., for daughter, son, family, parents, or even yourself. Numerous successful pilgrimages have now been completed with stories of joy to be able to go back to these **Holy Lands**. **Keith** and **Kathleen** have taken several pilgrim groups to **Israel**. This pilgrimage allows time to see many holy places, to pray, and to spend quality time learning of the **Footsteps of Jesus and Moses**.

Bans on travel have been lifted, and we want to take advantage of this time while we can.

Please sign up now to join **Father Tino, Keith** and **Kathleen** on this pilgrimage opportunity for a lifetime of memories. The **2006 Package Donation** of **\$2499** covers nearly everything a pilgrim might need including taxes as well as morning and evening meals.

We have completed the planning and arrangements for an extension to the standard pilgrimage package to allow a day for an excursion to **Mount Sinai** in **Egypt** and a visit to the **Monastery of Saint Catherine**. The **Burning Bush** where **Moses** received the **Ten Commandments** (twice) is memorialized here. The donation for this excursion is **\$350** as long as we get a **minimum of 10 pilgrims paying** for this extension. It was not included in the pilgrimage package in order to get those who have to work back on **Sunday** for work on **Monday**. Those making this extension and excursion will return on **Monday, May 1, 2006** with an extra night in **Eilat**.

We plan to stay in 3 to 4 star hotels and will have the best of all we can see shown to us. Our guide will be both **English** and **Spanish** speaking.

Our daily walk will be a very prayerful with **Father John Tino** as our **Spiritual Director**. Father has led several of our pilgrimages, and has been ministering in **Healing Prayer** with **Keith** and **Kathleen**.

Our daily prayer will include the **Angelus, Holy Mass, Rosary, and Divine Mercy**. There will be times of prayer at each site visited. You will experience one of the greatest gifts of a lifetime on this pilgrimage. Scripture will dance before your eyes.

We have worked very hard to keep expenses down, and offer you air fare, taxes and baggage handling, bus transfers, hotels, all breakfasts and suppers, and the services of an excellent guide. All you need to do is fill out and send us with your deposit, the registration page from the **blue** colored information sheet enclosed with this issue of **"The PILGRIM"** or the page printed from the Internet online at: www.geocities.com/pilgrimsfaith/2006/06HLP04.pdf.

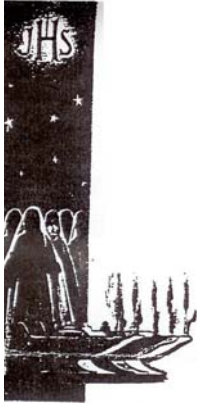
Please, look over the planned itinerary enclosed, and do send in your deposit NOW. We need deposits to lock in your name on an airline seat.

If you have any questions, please call **Kathleen, (856) 768-9228**.

Upon receipt of your registration form and deposit, we will send you an excellent travel insurance policy to look over. We do ask that you take out cancellation / medical / travel insurance and know

that should anything come up that would endanger anyone, this pilgrimage and its planned itinerary would be subject to change.

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



"Behold, the bridegroom is coming, go forth to meet Him!" [Mt. 25:6]

Bride of Christ

After this I had a vision of a great multitude, which no one could count, from every nation, race, people, and tongue. They stood before the throne and before the Lamb, wearing white robes and holding palm branches in their hands. [Rev 7:9]

Then I heard something like the sound of a great multitude or the sound of rushing water or mighty peals of thunder, as they said: "Alleluia! The Lord has established his reign, (our) God, the almighty. Let us rejoice and be glad and give him glory. For the wedding day of the Lamb has come, his bride has made herself ready. She was allowed to wear a bright, clean linen garment." (The linen represents the righteous deeds of the holy ones.) Then the angel said to me, "Write this: Blessed are those who have been called to the wedding feast of the Lamb." And he said to me, "These words are true; they come from God." [Rev 16:6-9]

I also saw the holy city, a new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. [Rev 21:2]

The Spirit and the bride say, "Come." [Rev 22:17]

To Jesus through Mary in the Spirit with the Saints under the Pope

What is the Bride of Christ Community? The Bride of Christ Community is a new ecclesial movement of nuptial spirituality for intimate communion with our Beloved Bridegroom, Jesus in the Eucharist, open to His Spirit like Mary, our model and mother, and the other saints of every culture and time, and faithful to the teachings of the Holy Father. This movement toward community through prayer (liturgia), fellowship (koinionia) and service (diakonia) to the parish and the diocese has its special mission to prepare each person, and thus the universal Church, as the Bride of Christ in joy for the wedding of the Lamb.

What is the "wedding of the Lamb"? The "wedding of the Lamb" has two closely related dimensions: eucharistic and eschatological: in every Eucharist we are invited to partake in the wedding feast of the Lamb of God which hastens and realizes the

eschatological fulfillment when our Bridegroom comes in glory to wed His Bride, the Church.

When did the Bride of Christ start? The Bride of Christ was conceived in Rome on March 25, 1984, during the celebration of the Annunciation of the Lord and the Consecration of the world to the Immaculate Heart of Mary by Pope John Paul II and all the bishops in communion with him. Since our first retreat at the Carmelite Monastery in Williamstown, MA, for the Solemnity of the Annunciation, March 23-25, 1987, members of the Community have prayed the Divine Office together daily as well as sponsored pilgrimages, conferences and retreats in Massachusetts, Maine, Connecticut, Rhode Island, and New Jersey.

How does one become a member of the Bride of Christ? Through baptism one becomes a member of the Church, the Bride of Christ, and for those who are called to share in the special mission of the Community, there is available a self-paced program of spiritual formation through reading, spiritual direction, devotional practices and retreats which depends on the prior development of the person. However, everyone is encouraged to join the "Bridal Lace" communication network to keep informed of upcoming events of the Community. To join this network or a local "bridal party", contact BLANCHE WILLIAMS (860) 873-1581.

[The *PFMC* will host a **3-day** retreat or "bridal party" **9-11 May 2006**. Information packet in next issue.]

HOLY HOUR: 6:00 PM on 2nd SUNDAYS at: MY FATHER'S HOUSE

(from Father Marty Jones, via MY FATHER'S HOUSE, p.O. Box 22, North Moodus Rd, Moodus CT 06469 (860) 873-1581)

IN MEMORIAM

Please pray for the repose of the souls of:
All those lost in Hurricanes Katrina, Rita, and Wilma as well as the flooding in their paths,
Donald Prince (6/4/05), husband of Linda Prince,
Mother (Jan 2005) and Husband (April 2005) of Mary Krywopusk.

Please send us death notices, prayer cards, etc. so we can pray for the deceased.

(Requested by Colleen Thomas, *PFMC* Volunteer)

HERE IN THIS NOVEMBER

CHRISTIANS BELIEVE THERE IS LIFE after death, but that does not mean they take death lightly. Like everyone else, they learn sooner or later why Saint Paul called death the last enemy to be destroyed.

Paul also said that Christians should not mourn for those who have died like people who have no hope, but he did not say there should be no mourning whatever. Although among Christians a favorite image of death is that of dawn and an awakening to unimaginable fulfillment, Christians quite properly grieve for their dead and promise themselves not to forget those from whom they have been separated by death, albeit only temporarily.

In fact, for more than 1,000 years now successive generations of Catholic Christians have had the custom of remembering their dead and commending them to the divine mercy with special devotion throughout the month of November. Those prayers for the departed are bound to be made with particular intensity this November because the terrorist attacks on Sept. 11 created such a massive and shattering confrontation with evil, suffering and death.

The destruction of the World Trade Center, the battering of the Pentagon and the crashing of United Airlines Flight 93 in a field in western Pennsylvania were not just local events. Their impact had a worldwide resonance. Two months later they continue to shadow the consciousness of millions of people in the United States and abroad. For those closest to the victims the grief has been immeasurably bitter, because the deaths were so violent and, as far as human reason could see, were so untimely-as though a day were suddenly to end at noon.

In the weeks following the attacks, many Americans turned, as though by a common impulse, to their churches, synagogues and mosques for strengthening and enlightenment. It could hardly have been otherwise. Science and philosophy are no help in dark hours. Lord Bryce put it neatly when he said that no one can be comforted in a supreme crisis "by reflecting that the angles at the base of an isosceles triangle are equal."

It is likely that all these worshippers, Jewish, Christian or Muslim, were consoled by a certain awareness, however fleeting and indeterminate, of the overwhelming presence of God who is light and in whom there is no darkness at all (1 John 1:5), the incomprehensible Absolute, the creator of all things, in whom the three great monotheistic religions profess their faith.

Between God and ourselves, however, there always stands the scaffolding of human thought. Pascal compressed the theologians' classic perplexity into a phrase when he observed that God alone knows how to speak of God. Christians believe that God has done that most fully in the Incarnation of the Word. The prayer of Christians centers most often, therefore, on the person of Jesus whom they believe to be the Son of God and God the Son.

UNDER AFFLICTION AND SORROW, Christians are usually inclined to reflect upon Jesus' passion, death and resurrection, because they believe he brought peace to the world through the blood of his cross (Col. 1:20). They see the cross as symbolizing their faith that suffering can be transformed into victory and death into a passage to a life without end and without tears. No doubt that is why some rescue workers at the World Trade Center stopped long enough to fashion a few pieces of steel wreckage into a cross set up amid the debris.

All the same, even though all Christians at some time or other must recommend consideration of the cross to themselves, no one dares speak easily of the cross to those who are suffering greatly. Few have understood the truth of the cross as well as Edith Stein, a Carmelite nun and a gifted philosopher, who was canonized by Pope John Paul II in 1998. She was born into a Jewish family in 1891, became a Catholic in 1922 and a Carmelite in 1933. She was put to death in the Auschwitz gas chambers in 1942.

Edith Stein had, as she herself reported, a decisive experience on her road to conversion. One of her friends at the University of Gottingen was Adolf Reinach, who was killed in action in the First World War. His wife was able to endure this sorrow because she was a devout Protestant Christian. Edith Stein was deeply impressed by that faith. "This was," she said, "my first encounter with the cross and the divine strength which it imparts to those who carry it... It was the moment when my unbelief collapsed and Christ shone forth-Christ in the mystery of the Cross."

What shines from the cross is the revelation that God so loved the world that he gave his only Son so that all who believe in him might have eternal life (John 3:16). That is the truth that can steady sad hearts and dry all tears in this November, and at any other time.

(An Editorial from "America" The National Catholic Weekly, Vol. 185, No. 14, Whole No. 4546, 11/5/2001)

MARY

When you follow her,
You will not go astray;

When you pray to her,
You will not despair;
When you think of her;
You will not err;
When she holds you up,
You will not fail;
When she protects you,
You will not fear;
When she leads you,
You will not be fatigued;
When she favors you,
You will arrive safely.
She keeps her Son
From striking us;
She keeps the devil
From hurting us;
She keeps our virtues
From escaping us;
She keeps our merits
From being destroyed;
She keeps our graces
From being lost.

(Prayer Card TJP 144– Attributed to Saint Bernhard)

WHAT the UNBORN SENSE in the WOMB - INTERVIEW with DOCTOR CARLO BELLIENI

During its gestation the fetus is “already a member of the family and company for the mother even before being born,” says neonatologist Carlo Bellieni.

Doctor Bellieni of the Department of Neonatal Intensive Therapy of the University Polyclinic Santa Maria Le Scotte of Siena talked with ZENIT about his research on life-before-birth for his latest book “L’Alba dell’Io” (Dawn of the I), published by Società Editrice Fiorentina.

Q: Until the 1980s it was thought that the maternal uterus was a sort of strongbox for the fetus. What has changed since then?

Bellieni: Very much. Today we know that the fetus is a pluri-sensorial being whose senses enter into action with a pre-ordained sequence: first, tactility is manifested; then the chemical; the sense of balance; hearing; and finally sight.

The early development of the senses in the uterus has a double function: that of forming the central nervous system, providing stimuli which interact with the growth of groups of neurons, directing it on a physiological path, and of introducing the unborn to the exterior world -- bringing about a kind of learning in the uterus.

Q: Is it true that the senses enter into action precociously before birth?

Bellieni: Already in the eighth week after conception the receivers of touch are present in the fetus in the area of the mouth, which later are extended throughout the whole surface of the body in a few months. But it is around the 22nd to 24th week when the connections will be ready with the cerebral cortex. The fetus responds to the stimuli that come through the mother’s womb.

Q: Tell us about the fetus’ hearing and taste.

Bellieni: Toward the 25th week of gestation, the fetus has developed hearing. Within the uterus the mother’s voice comes with much greater intensity than another’s voice -- or the father’s! -- and the fetus gets used to this voice, so much so that several experiments have shown us that the newborn is able to distinguish the mother’s voice from that of a strange voice, just as it is able to distinguish the mother’s scents.

This will serve to recognize the maternal milk, which has a taste and smell similar to the amniotic fluid which for nine months has soaked its tongue and lips.

Q: Does the fetus have memory?

Bellieni: Research was published in Pediatrics in 2001 which showed that at the moment of weaning the child prefers tastes that it perceived in the uterus in a certain period, although these tastes were not given to it during lactation. Therefore the fetus has memory.

This, which seemed to be only the prerogative of psychiatrists, today is the patrimony of the pediatrician to explain several phenomena.

We recently carried out a study on what happened to the children of ballerinas who during pregnancy did

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not stop dancing: They needed to be rocked to sleep more energetically than the others!

Moreover, what is it to rock the newborn to sleep if not to reconstruct that serene environment he had in the uterus: rhythmic movements, the mother's perfume, an indistinct voice but present and humming, darkness -- but the presence of walls and limits that he would not find if left abruptly in a bed?

Q: Have you carried out other studies on the fetus' memory?

Belliemi: Yes, for example on short-term memory, demonstrating that the fetus gets used to external stimuli as a child that is already born.

We have used sonorous stimuli sent through the wall of the uterus and have measured echo-graphically how the fetus reacts, ill-at-ease, blinking his eyes and then how it gets used to the noise.

Q: Is it true that the fetus dreams?

Belliemi: Studies on the premature newborn give increasing data on the characteristics of sleep in the uterus.

In 2000, professor Rivkees of Yale University showed the presence of a day-night rhythm from the midpoint of gestation. Today we know that from the 28th week of gestation the phases of sleep can be differentiated. From the 30th week, active sleep is present, which is equivalent to an adult's REM sleep, when most dreams take place.

Therefore nothing prevents us from saying that in the uterus the fetus has all the "instruments" to dream: an appropriate cerebral electrical activity and the presence of stimuli that will make their contents.

Sleep is also most important in the uterus because the greatest proliferation of nervous cells occurs there, and the preferential production of certain hormones.

Q: Does the fetus feel pain?

Belliemi: It seems impossible, but the pain of the fetus and the newborn was acknowledged only at the end of the '80s.

Nevertheless, it is clear that our premature babies born at 23-24 weeks feel pain. And the hormonal changes after the painful stimulus have been demonstrated in fetuses of 20 weeks or slightly more.

On the very little ones born before their term, we have recently experimented with a system of analgesia based on non-pharmacological techniques of distraction. We were right.

The premature newborn feels pain, cries, but is also able to interact with the one near him, accepting being consoled and distracted, so much so that he/she no

longer feels pain! A video of three American scholars on the fetus' crying may be downloaded online <http://fn.bmjournals.com/cgi/content/full/adc.2004.062257/DC1>.

Q: How does a child spend the day before being born?

Belliemi: The fetus has a world of sensations, but also of actions. The fetus responds in its own way to external stimuli. It is frightened if it hears noise; it responds to patting.

But it exercises itself for life in the open air: It does breathing exercises constantly, even when immersed in the amniotic fluid, and attempts have been registered to emit sounds visualizing the vocal cords.

It has hiccups and makes faces as though smiling or crying. Its movements respond to phases of calm or movement of the mother, and also of the amount of sugar the mother eats.

Q: What would you say in conclusion?

Belliemi: That the fetus is already a new member of the family and company for the mother even before being born.

ROME, OCT. 4, 2005 (Zenit.org).- ZE05100422

http://www.zenit.org/english/send_friend/index.phtml?sid=77640

AUTUMN SIGHS

In pensive mood I trod
My garden plot one day;
October's smile was weary so!
It's green was gloomy gray.
Where are the strains of summer gone?
Its sun the livelong day?
With sudden sadness I then thought
On how all human things decay.

Two months ago I'd seen
The thrilling joys of earth,
The roses blushing in their glee,
And swallows' mellow mirth.
Then something briny from eye
Fell with the faded leaves;
I wept at beauty gone to shreds,
At naked boughs of wailing trees.

I understood how we,
As mortals here below,
Will flourish for a moment, then
To tryst with death must go.
But when on summer's fruits I mused,
On ripened harvests fair,

On all the wealth from Heaven's store,
On blossomed beauties precious rare.

I knew that for a cause,
A purpose grandly good,
The Lord had minted summer days;
And thus I understood
That we must lead a noble life
With inspiration filled,
To give the living, when we die
The aims with which our spirit thrilled!

That I, a mortal man
With life divine in me,
Must purify that priceless soul
With God's sweet sanctity;
Must leave to men the heritage
Of virtue and of love,
And help to make a better world,
A bit like Heaven above.

The fight for sanctity,
For virtue's steep-set path,
And ways of love and gentleness
In place of vice and wrath –
Dear Lord, all these You will from me,
I know You give the grace, -
I trust You faithfully,
But tell me how my steps to trace.

The breeze was whistling loud,
In havoc with the trees;
And God, who gave the breeze its breath,
And God, who made the leaves,
Was telling of the Masterpiece
Arisen from His hand,
"To Mary, Mother Mine and yours,
Explain, she sure will understand!"

With Mary for my Love,
My Model and my Queen,
Since that October day, she knows
How happy I have been!
I trust in her, and make her loved,
And thus my life's short day,
Will, as a fruitful manna, help
The souls that come, to keep the Way!

(Robert, Cyril, *Our Lady's Praise in Poetry*,
Poughkeepsie, New York: Marist Press, 1944.

<http://www.udayton.edu/mary/resources/poetry/october01.html#sparks>)

SAINTLY FRIENDSHIPS

In the traditions of my culture, many Hispanic women pray faithfully to Saint Joseph. He is the patron saint for young women seeking a faithful husband to be both provider and protector. His role as the patron saint of husbands always seemed a natural connection since St Joseph was known for his loving and respectful care for Mary as well as being a model for the Holy Family.

If Saint Joseph didn't work hard enough to find a suitable spouse, the young woman praying to him might put his statue away in a drawer or store it somewhere upside down. He would stay in isolation with the reprimand, "I'll leave you there until you get me a good husband."

This common practice among Hispanics to "castigar" a saint – that is, to punish his or her image – was done by turning the saint's face to the wall, or tucking it away in a drawer for a time, for not working hard enough for one's intention. It is part of a very personal and familial relationship, the communion which Hispanics have with their saintly patrons.

This friendship with the saints begins at birth and is reinforced at baptism, when a child is given a patron saint's name. My twin sister was named Maria Louisa after the Blessed Mother and my birth name, Josefina, was in honor of Saint Joseph.

I would dress up as Saint Joseph for our CCD classes when we celebrated All Saints Day and we had a procession of the saints. Just as many children still do today. As a child, my Saint Joseph costume included a green robe and a staff. Even today I have a staff in my office like the ones I always picked up when I went hiking in New Mexico.

The staff, now located just inside my office door, is one I decorated and painted in many colors. The diversity of colors reminds me of the diversity of leadership. I often look at it and reflect on Saint Joseph as leader and head of his household while I ponder my own leadership qualities. During his life, Joseph had to grow in faithfulness and I feel I have to do that, too.

Although our relationships with the saints form an ongoing part of our lives, most people are more familiar with the annual traditions of celebrating All Saints Day, Nov.1 and All Souls Day, Nov.2. On All Saints Day, we honor and call to mind all Christian saints, even those not known by name.

All Souls Day, remembering our loved ones who have died, is a strong tradition among Hispanic families that continues to be preserved. Respect for death is a value of Mexicans which continues in Mexican-

American families. As a young girl, I went with my parents to clean my grandparents' graves. We worked in sacred silence, being very careful as we removed weeds, building up the little mounds or lomitas of earth which had flattened. The lomita looked like a little stomach, reminding one of being in the womb of the earth. A cross was at the head of the grave announcing that our bodies go back to earth while our spirits go to God.

We placed flowers, pictures and lighted candles on the earthen mounds. There was a feeling of being in the presence of my grandparents as we prayed their special prayers, letting them know they were not forgotten. It was a tradition which my grandparents did for their own parents, building little altars of love to remember them.

In many cities with Hispanic families, the cemeteries will begin to be decorated, as if awaiting a famous dignitary to arrive, with hundreds of colorful flowers everywhere. The graves become beautiful gardens as All Saints and All Souls days get closer. Flickering lights of the candles at night can be seen when passing by. Altars are made with pictures and personal souvenirs of the loved one. Teenage boys leave a favorite can of beer or pack of cigarettes for friends who died young, while baby rattles and colorful balloons are left for infants and children. Serenades by mariachis are ordered for mothers and sisters, and Holy Mass is celebrated in solemn reverence for all loved ones. Despite the sorrow of memories and loss, hope and comfort comes through this communion of saints, our loved ones in heaven and we who struggle to be saints on earth, all connected to God.

The Dia de los Muertos or Day of the Dead, a Mexican tradition, is also remembered in some communities in the United States. Nov.1 is set aside to remember infants and children who have died, often referred to as angelitos (little angels). The adults are remembered on Nov.2. Colorful altars are set up at home with pictures, flowers, favorite items and photos of the deceased. Offerings or ofrendas of favorite foods will be set out as well as pan de muerto (bread of the dead), candy skulls and skeletons. Visits from loved ones are expected Oct.31 through Nov. 2, with night-long vigils at the graves. Some in Mexico will lay out a trail of yellow marigold petals from the grave all the way back to the home so the deceased can find their way. As traditions become forgotten in the passing from one generation to another here in the U.S., cultural groups try to keep them alive with exhibits, altars and Dia de los Muertos festivities. In some churches, deceased loved ones will be

remembered with their pictures displayed throughout the month of November.

The saints are family who are there for us, beginning with birth and baptism, remaining as we grow older and develop different needs for help and encouragement, to impending death and the journey to Heaven. My uncle was a cotton grower who prayed to Saint Isidoro, the patron of farmers. He would take the saint's image to the fields and leave him there, warning him the stay would be long if rain didn't arrive. As my uncle grew older, he built a little house in the middle of the field for the saint's image.

The saints answered God's call when they searched for meaning and purpose here on earth. Now they answer our calls for help. Saint Joseph did deliver on my cousin's petition for a good husband. Although I wasn't in search of a husband, I was in search of the right vocation. I believe Saint Joseph guided me to the right choice – my vocation as a sister of the Adorers of the Blood of Christ.

Just as the saints help us with our life situations, the Adorers of the Blood of Christ have LifeChoices®, a spiritual discernment program to help people searching for meaning and purpose in their lives. I invite you to visit our website at www.adorers.org to learn more.

We are all part of the family of saints, living and deceased, connected to God by serving one another, whether here on earth or in heaven. Please contact me. I'd love to tell you more. You can call me at 1-877- ADORERS or send an e-mail to

(Sister Josie Mendoza, ASC mendozaj@adorers.org.)

JESUS the CHILD

Jesus, you decided to become a child,
and I'm coming to you full of trust.

I believe that your attentive love
forestalls all my needs.

Even for the intercession of your holy Mother,
you can meet my necessities,
spiritual as well as material,
if I pray according to your holy will.

I love you with all my heart, all my strength,
I beg your pardon if my weakness makes me sin.

I repeat with the Gospel

“Lord, if you want you can heal me”.

I leave you decide how and when.

I'm ready to accept suffering, if this is your will,
but help me not to become hardened to it,
rather to bear fruit.

Help to be a faithful servant

and for your sake, holy Child,
to love my neighbor as myself.
Almighty Child, unceasingly I pray you
to support me in my necessities
of the present moment (you can mention it here).
Grant me the grace to remain in you,
to be possessed and too possess you entirely,
with your parents, Mary and Joseph,
in the eternal praise
of your heavenly servants. AMEN

(by Father F. Cyril, OCD, Prayer Card, Klasster
Prazakeho Jezulatka, Karmellitska 9, 118 00 Praha 1,
CZ

MARY MAGDALENE, FIRST WOMAN EVANGELIST

**(content is a pious tradition rather than
absolute fact)**

We praise the Good Lord for the wondrous works
he has performed in this world. His ways are
truly mysterious, wonderful and awe-inspiring.

A woman of many sins, Mary Magdalene's soul had
been touched at the house of Simon the Pharisee. The
beautiful courtesan weeps at the feet of Jesus as she
anoints Him with her tears of sorrow and the fragrant
ointment. Jesus looks at her lovingly, "Go in peace,"
He says, "your sins are forgiven, your faith has saved
you." (Luke 7:36-50) Jesus anointed Mary Magdalene
with the message of Peace. Mary Magdalene had
these words indelibly written on her heart as she
followed Jesus throughout his ministry.

Three years later, our Lord is crucified, and we find
Mary Magdalene at the foot of the Cross, with His
mother Mary, and the beloved disciple John. She
hears the last words of Christ, is present at His burial,
and witnesses His Resurrection. All this has been
faithfully recorded in the gospel so that we may
remember and venerate Saint Mary Magdalene.

From the Acts of the Apostles, we believe she
witnesses the Ascension of our Lord on Mount Olive,
and is in the Cenacle at Pentecost. For the next twelve
years, she accompanies and shares the lot of the
Apostles. Then, during the persecution of the
Christians, according to oral tradition, she leaves
Palestine with Martha, Lazarus and several disciples.
The little group of pilgrims crosses the Mediterranean
in a small boat and lands in France. They come ashore
in a port near Marseilles, and Lazarus remains there.
Martha travels inland and her saintly remains are now

in Tarascon. The family of Christ, on pilgrims' feet,
has come to preach the Gospel of Peace!

Mary Magdalene adopts a contemplative life, and
lives in peace in the hills of La Saint Baume, about 40
miles northeast of Marseille, where she spent the
remainder of her life. Some of her companions were
Maximin, Sidonius, Suzanna and Marcella, who
helped to Christianize those parts of ancient France.

Mary Magdalene died around the year 75 and was
buried by Maximin in the crypt of his chapel in
Villalata, later renamed Saint Maximin. Between the
third and fourth century, her body was placed in a
magnificent white marble tomb, and remained therein
until the year 710. The Cassian Monks had founded
their Monastery in Saint Maximin in 415 and were the
guardians of the Magdalene relics. But when the
Saracens invaded France, destroying all Christian
symbols, the Monks transferred the relics to a more
modest tomb for safety reasons. Before fleeing, they
completely buried the tomb and their chapel. When
the invaders left in 973, nothing could be found of the
relics, though many searches were made.

On December 9, 1279, Charles, nephew of King
Louis IX of France (who was canonized as Saint
Louis) finally uncovered the remains of Saint Mary
Magdalene. The transfer of the remains was made to
the crypt on May 5, 1280. On July 22, the Feast day
of Saint Mary Magdalene, her relics were taken in
procession through the streets of Saint Maximin to the
joy of pilgrims. This was the beginning of hundreds
of years and thousands of pilgrims paying homage to
Saint Mary Magdalene, the beloved of Christ, apostle
to the apostles, patron of lovers, and bearer of Peace.

Father Bernard, OP, describes this holy place:
"During the many years of my priesthood in the
Dominican Order, my eyes have been able to
contemplate the delicate head of Mary Magdalene
which is visible behind the screen in the Crypt in
Saint Maximin. I am not speaking of a veil, or a
statue, or some work of art, but the true head of Mary
Magdalene. And each time I pray in the Crypt, I
remember that this is the woman who shared the
Ministry of Christ, who walked and talked with Him,
heard Him preach, felt His touch, stirred His heart,
and saw Him die. And above all, the one who first
saw our Lord risen from the dead. Here, too, in the
Crypt stands her white marble tomb, the tombs of her
companions, and reliquaries containing other precious
remains, including strands of her hair."

Society of Saint Mary Magdalene, <http://www.st-mary-magdalene.org/history.htm>

OUR LADY of SILENCE

Today's Gospel is an exhortation to vigilance. It pricks, goads and spurs us to cast off drowsiness. It wants to be a manifest against grogginess, listlessness and indolence. Yes, there is something in Christianity that speaks out against catching forty winks, visiting the sandman or going to the land of Nod. Languishing, drooping and flagging do not seem to fit the catalog of human behaviors a Christian would be proud of.

To foster vigilance I would like to suggest silence, for no other reason than the fact that Our Lady on Saturday is primarily Our Lady of Silence. On Saturdays, Mary does not speak; she does not put forward one of her many privileges or celebrate a special event of her life. On Saturdays Mary is simply present. She has the comfortable appeal of a familiar face and a well-thumbed book. She is – on Saturdays especially – the faithful companion, an integral part of the annual liturgical cast, but inconspicuous and unobtrusive, a homemaker rather than a pacemaker, humble, but casual. Content to stay in the background, she points to her child. Standing at the end of a week and wrapping it up in the folds of her mantle, she rings in the day of her Son.

Our Lady of Silence is neither tightlipped nor close-mouthed. Her bearing is soundless, but peaceful. She may be wordless, but she is never voiceless. Our Lady's message on Saturday is an unspoken one; much of what she has to tell us is implicit or implied. But never ever could we be so foolish as to call her inactive, quiescent or passive. For Our Lady of Silence is also Our Lady of Vigilance.

Remember the Greek God, Harpokrates. Borrowed from the Egyptians, he is the God of Silence. He is usually depicted as a baby, nude and sitting on his mother's lap. She offers him her breast as he sucks his thumb.

How can the God of Silence be typified as a baby? The heart of the matter is that silence holds the power to renew and rejuvenate us. Silence strips us of our defenses. Silence makes us naked of those cardboard rationalizations and projections we so often employ. Slowly, if we allow it, silence strips away our need to engage in those arguments in which we insist that we are right. Silence clearly and cleanly cuts through the constant flow of words and rituals that so often keep God at a safe distance.

Silence carefully places us in Our Mother's lap, where Our Lady of Silence can feed us with the milk of vigilance. The image of Harpokrates sitting on his mother's lap is very much like the host of paintings and sculptures of the Virgin Mother with the infant

Jesus on her lap. The silent image of Mother and Son suggests the childlike contemplative prayer of being absorbed in God. And this is the bridge between silence and vigilance. To be absorbed in God makes us both silent and vigilant.

May Our Lady of Silence remind us where we truly belong: absorbed in God in childlike contemplative prayer.

<http://www.udayton.edu/mary/meditations/LadySilence.html> by Rev. Johann G. Roten, SM

POPE APPEALS FOR VICTIMS OF NATURAL DISASTERS

VATICAN CITY, OCT 9, 2005 (VIS) - At midday today, before praying the Angelus, Benedict XVI recalled the figure of Cardinal Clemens August von Galen, who was beatified this morning in the Vatican Basilica. He also asked the pilgrims gathered in Saint Peter's Square to continue to pray "for the Synod, that it may yield the desired fruits."

The Pope went on: "In particular in this month of October, when all ecclesial communities are called to renew their missionary commitment, I invite you to go back to what John Paul II wrote in ... his Apostolic Letter 'Mane nobiscum Domine,' about the Eucharist being 'principle and plan of mission': 'The encounter with Christ, constantly intensified and deepened in the Eucharist, issues in the Church and in every Christian an urgent summons to testimony and evangelization'."

After the Angelus, the Holy Father commended "to God's loving mercy," the thousands of victims of the earthquake in Pakistan, India and Afghanistan, expressing his "deepest sympathy" to the injured and bereaved. "I pray that the international community will be swift and generous in its response to the disaster and I ask the Lord to grant courage and strength to those involved in the task of rescue work and reconstruction."

Benedict XVI also recalled "the dear nations of Central America and Mexico - especially El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua - suffering the effects of torrential rains and flooding, which have caused numerous victims and great material damage. I pray to the Lord for the eternal repose of the deceased and express my spiritual closeness and affection to those who have been deprived of their homes and of the instruments of their trade. I also call upon institutions and upon people of good will to give effective help in a spirit of true fraternal solidarity."

Finally, the Pope greeted Italian teachers of Catholic religion who are currently holding their first national meeting. "Your commitment in schools represents a precious contribution to the formation of the new generations, and to their development in the knowledge of Catholic culture and tradition, in the awareness of personal responsibilities and in adherence to the values of civil coexistence."

(ANG/SYNOD:NATURAL
CATASTROPHES:SCHOOLS/... VIS 051010 (370))

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)

A PRAYER for PRIESTS

O My Jesus,
I beg you on behalf of the whole Church:
Grant it love and the light of Your Spirit,
Give power to the words of priests
So that hardened hearts
Might be brought to repentance
And return to You
Lord, give us holy priests;
You, yourself maintain them in holiness
O Divine and Great High Priest
May the power of Your Mercy
Accompany them everywhere and protect them
From the devil's trap and snares, which are
continually being set for the souls of priests.
May the power of Your Mercy,
O Lord, shatter and bring to naught
All that might tarnish the sanctity of priests,
For You can do all things. AMEN

(from the Handbook of Devotion to Divine Mercy.

<http://www.iipg-queenofpeace.org>)

THANKSGIVING

Thanksgiving is almost here, and I'll bet most of you have already begun the myriad preparations that have come to symbolize one of our most cherished national holidays. Frozen turkeys are flocking out of the grocery stores. Moms and grand-moms are stockpiling thousands of pumpkin pies. And I'm guessing there might even be a wager or two floating around the office on perennial Thanksgiving

football combatants the Dallas Cowboys or the Detroit Lions.

Amidst all the hoopla, good tidings and fellowship, we should add the most important "thank you" of all to our "to do" lists – gratefulness for God's grace, salvation and guidance in our lives. After all, it was with thoughts of homage to God that George Washington made the first official proclamation in recognition of our national feast: Whereas it is the duty of all nations to acknowledge the providence of Almighty God, to obey His will, to be grateful for his benefits, and humbly implore his protection, aid and favors... Now therefore, I do recommend and assign Thursday, the 25th day of November next, to be devoted by the people of these States to the service of that great and glorious Being, Who is the Beneficent Author of all the good that was, that is, or that will be...

Wow, Old George hit the nail right on the head! Thanksgiving really is more than just a day of culinary over-exuberance. Of course all good Catholics know that giving thanks occurs every day of the year at Holy Mass. Eucharist in the original Greek means a "great thanksgiving," as pointed out by Rod Bennett at CatholicExchange.com. "Every single time the Catholic Mass is offered throughout the world it is offered in thanks to God for our creation, our preservation, and all the blessings of this life: chief among these being our glorious redemption through the death and resurrection of His son Jesus Christ," writes Bennett.

And in fact, the Bible implores us to make thankfulness the watchword in our lives: "In everything give thanks; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus." (1 Thes 5:18).

All of this talk of Thanksgiving is really a preamble to my grand scheme for this message to you. In an effort to practice what I preach, I would like to offer great thanks to the Lord right now for the tremendous success of LifeChoices®, our nationally known

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.

ministry of spiritual discernment.

Earlier this year we “graduated” our 1,000th participant from LifeChoices®, a special program of prayer, gifts assessment and life vocation exploration through a spiritual lens. Five years ago we were struck by the fact that while our culture offers lots of education and job training, there isn’t much out there that marries a person’s talents, interests and temperament to their spiritual calling. We felt that if we could help people discover what gifts God had given them and what potential those gifts presented, we would be providing a real service. LifeChoices® was born and is now available to anyone regardless of gender, age or marital status.

We never imagined how quickly this simple but powerful idea would catch on, especially with today’s service-oriented younger generation. And to be honest, we’ve even been a bit overwhelmed at times with all the work that is necessary to walk with 1,000 men and women along their path to spiritual and vocational fulfillment. I’m sure everyone involved here would agree that what might have started as a part-time informational program has now become a full-time ministry.

We are most thankful for the impact LifeChoices® has had on the lives of those who have participated. “I was 41 years old and I still didn’t know what I wanted to be when I grew up!” admitted Jim Wallaesa, a married father of five. “I was selling insurance and hating the job. I’d been struggling about what to do, so LifeChoices® got me to take a good inventory of what my gifts and talents are.”

Jim found LifeChoices® helped him see his vocation was exactly in the place where God and his talents had placed him. His primary vocation as a husband and father provides constant opportunity to live a life of meaning and purpose while practicing God’s love and compassion with his family. Jim also felt the LifeChoices® inventory showed him that he should be involved in a career of service to people. “It made me realize I’m not a leader, I’m not a technical guy, not mechanical,” he said. “I don’t want to be in the spotlight, I just like to serve people.”

A number of LifeChoices® “alums” – primarily women but recently both men and women – have chosen to pursue a religious vocation, and are in formation with a variety of religious communities, not just with the Adorers of the Blood of Christ.

Michelle Woodruff, a nurse from Hutchinson, KN, was fairly certain of her calling to religious life. She found that working through the LifeChoices® process made her comfortable that she was making the right decision. “I think the best asset of the program is that

you have somebody taking you through the process,” Woodruff said. “You’re making the choices, but you’re not alone – you’re with someone who isn’t pressuring you but who honestly wants the best for you.

If God has touched you with a true calling in your life, list this amongst your greatest blessing this Thanksgiving. However, if you are still searching for direction, I encourage you to pray and consider allowing us to help you along your journey with LifeChoices®.

Sister Rita Schilling is a member of the LifeChoices® team for the Adorers of the Blood of Christ, a worldwide community of 2,200 members who serve in 26 countries, including 430 in the United States. For more information about LifeChoices®, call 1-877-236-7377, visit www.adorers.org and click on the LifeChoices® box, or e-mail her at schillingr@adorers.org.

THE MYSTICAL ROSE

Blessed Mother Mary,
throughout centuries of devotion,
roses have been your symbol.
They recall for us the blossom of your love,
the freshness of your life
and your role in bringing newness to all things.
Help us when we see,
smell and enjoy the gentle softness of a rose,
to understand
how close you are to us. AMEN

(from a prayer card. Author unknown)

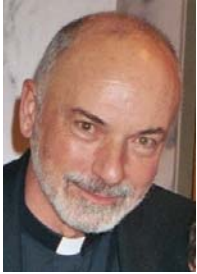
NEW JERSEY CATHOLIC RADIO

89.3 FM in Monmouth County www.893fm.org
with an advertised coverage area including parts of **Monmouth, Middlesex**, and a little bit of **Somerset** counties as well as parts of **Staten Island**. [**Kathleen** and **Keith** heard it but very weak at the **Grover Cleveland Rest Area** between **Exits 11 and 12** on the **New Jersey Turnpike**. They could not receive on the turnpike itself or on **I-278** across **Staten Island**.]

Please pray for **Jim** and **Cheryl Manfredonia** and all those involved in **Catholic Radio**. If you can, help them to get the word out. It is their prayer (if it is God’s Will) to bring **Catholic Radio** to many other parts of **NJ** – they know that the Lord will send them the individuals whom He has blessed financially to help them out.

(Edited from what Jim Manfredonia, President,
Domestic Church Media Foundation, Inc., P O Box
192, Fairless Hills PA 19030, TEL 215-269-4446,
www.DomesticChurchMedia.org sent to us in e-mail:
Mon, 19 Sep 2005)

FATHER CORAPI - FRIDAY, 2 and SATURDAY, 3 DECEMBER 2005



Domestic Church Media
Presents A Conference by
Father John Corapi at the
National Shrine
of Our Lady of
Czestochowa,
Doylestown, PA



Tickets Are Required and Can
ONLY Be Obtained From Domestic
Church Media. Please DO NOT
call the Shrine for Tickets.

A full schedule and information about this event was
printed in the *October* issue of "*The PILGRIM.*"
You may view "*The PILGRIM*" on line or visit:

[http://www.domesticchurchmedia.org/Corapi%20Con
ference%202005.htm](http://www.domesticchurchmedia.org/Corapi%20Conference%202005.htm))

FRIENDS or RELATIVES NOT RECEIVING "*The PILGRIM*"

We have received several notes from people
concerned about why they have stopped getting
regular bulk mailings of "*The PILGRIM.*"

Please tell all your friends and relatives who wish to
receive "*The PILGRIM*" to review the information
in the blocks on *pages 3 and 7, 9 or 11* for "PLEASE
RESPOND TO THIS NOTICE and STAY ON the
BULK MAILING" in their past issues.

We do need to hear from people at each address *in
writing at least once a year* in order to keep them on
our bulk mailing list. Bulk Mail is not required to be
returned if the delivery name or address is incorrect.
In Christian charity we do not wish to waste God's
precious resources.

There is no "subscription" fee. We do ask for free
will donations monthly, semi annually or annually to
support "*The PILGRIM*" and the other activities
and operations of the **PFMC**.

With increasing costs for production and mailing as
well as declining numbers and levels of donations we
have been forced to watch the bulk mailing list very

closely and remove those names and addresses where
there has been *no written contact in the last year.*

(The All-Volunteer Staff at the **PFMC**)

ENCLOSED ITEMS

In this *November* issue of "*The PILGRIM*" is a
booklet on "PRAYERS of a Guardian Angel"
provided to us by Covenant House, 346 West 17th
Street, New York, NY 10011-5020 on the Internet
at: www.covenanthouse.org. Please remember them
as well as us in your holiday gift giving.

Note that there is a special **Prayer of Thanksgiving**
two pages inside the back cover based on **Psalm
100:1-5**. You might pray this with your family for
Thanksgiving.

Also enclosed in a small colored brochure on **NEW
BOOKS** from **Saint Anthony Messenger Press /
Servant Books**. Please look this over and call us if
you want one of these books for a Christmas gift. If
we do not have it in stock yet, we will special order it
for you.

As mentioned on page 2, there is enclosed a color
information sheet enclosed on the new picture and
JesusMosaic of the **Immaculate Conception** which
can be ordered through the **PFMC** as a joint
fundraising effort of *JesusMosaics* and the **PFMC**.

As mentioned on pages 5 and 6, there is a **green**
information packet for the **2006 RETREAT
CONFERENCE** and **Youth Track, 17-19 February
2006**.

As mentioned on pages 7 and 8, there is a **blue**
information packet for the **Pilgrimage to the Holy
Lands of Israel and Jordan, 17-30 April 2006** with
extension to **1 May 2006** for an excursion to **Mount
Sinai in Egypt** to tour **Saint Catherine's Monastery**.

Also enclosed is the usual **PFMC** envelope and the
new donation coupon explained in the **July 2004
special financial support appeal letter** for the **PFMC**.

Please respond if you are able. We need to hear from
our readers that their addresses are still correct and we
would love to receive a donation from each reader on
a regular basis.

If "*The PILGRIM*" publication process is not
supported by the readers we will have to cease
production. It costs approximately \$3 an issue to
gather articles, put them in format, publish the
formatted paper, assemble the enclosures, bag it, label
it and prepare it for bulk mail. Bulk mail costs about
\$600 per month which is about \$0.20 of the \$3.

(Keith Werner and all the other **PFMC** Volunteers)

MESSAGE of 10/25/2005 via Maria Pavlovic Lunetti

Little children, believe, pray and love, and God will be near you. He will give you the gift of all the graces you seek from Him. I am a gift to you, because, from day to day, God permits me to be with you and to love each of you with immeasurable love. Therefore, little children, in prayer and humility, open your hearts and be witnesses of my presence. 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 10/25/2005

I AM A GIFT TO YOU

The Virgin Mary came to lead us to Jesus, the Saviour. Only in His Name is our salvation and our life. For 24 years and 4 months now, she is showing us the way, she is inspiring us and calling us. God is with us. Jesus promised to us: "I am with you every day until the end of the world". God is with us at every moment. The problem is that we are not always with Him. God remains always faithful. He has never misled or disappointed somebody who trusted in Him.

The Virgin Mary teaches us that – in order to be with God - it is necessary to believe, to pray, and to love. To be a Christian means to be on the way and to seek God unceasingly. Every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened - Jesus has promised this.

God awaits only one thing: that we address ourselves to Him. He awaits our prayer and our trust. Our prayer should not be petty and selfish, but great as God is great. The most important in prayer is to seek God. When we find Him and encounter Him, we have everything. When we put God at the first place, all the rest finds its place.

God is close to us. It is in Him that "we live, and move, and have our being" (Ac 17,28) and this is why we can make the experience of God. God is a person, and this is why we can know Him by our person, by our heart. We can know God because He revealed to us and He continues to reveal to us the incommensurability of His love. Through her apparitions, Our Lady is revealing to us her inner heart, which loves infinitely. She grants us her trust, and this is a gift, this is a grace. In trust, she is speaking to us and she is making herself known to us. When we grant our trust to her as a Mother, we know her. The depth, the beauty, and the purity of her heart attract us then more and more towards her.

The Virgin Mary desires so much that we are close to God. This is why she is telling us: "believe, pray and love". If we speak to God, if we kneel down in front of Him and if we pray, He reveals Himself to us, He grants us His richness.

A woman tells that, during Adoration in the church, in one moment, she made the experience of the simplicity of God; she understood that, only in simplicity, we can know Him. She felt sweetness and tenderness, and she was seized by clarity, beauty, and truth, which were revealed to her at that moment. She was transformed; and ever since, she is not the same any more. She says that, ever since, her problems aren't an insurmountable barrier any more. The experience gives the certainty that God exists, and that He is with us.

Similar experiences were made many people here in Medjugorje. Mary, our Mother, is with us; we can encounter Her, we can make the experience. After an encounter with her, our life is not the same any more; it changes, it becomes new, transformed. We need experiences in life in order to become wise, prudent, and sober people. Youthful enthusiasm, as noble as it is, disappears quickly. Gospa does not want to lead us towards a superficial optimism, but towards true wisdom of life, wisdom that we also obtain through suffering and pains, which beget a new life in us. May Gospa, our Mother, guide us always on the ways that lead to God. May Mary, our Mother, lead us towards a new life with God.

Father Ljubo Kurtovic, Medjugorje, 26.10.2005

ANOTHER OCTOBER REFLECTION

"Little children, believe, pray, and love, and God will be near you." With the concern of a compassionate mother, Our Lady begins this message of October 25, 2005 using three simple but very profound verbs. To *"believe, pray and love,"* is the essence of the Christian call; but to accept the fact

that when we ***“believe, pray, and love,”*** that ***“God will be near you”*** is a very relevant and important step that must be taken by one who considers Jesus to be his/her personal Lord and Savior. Again, we have been challenged by our dear Blessed Mother to seek out our loving God by making a serious commitment to Him. Let us look into our inner being and begin the process to become more aware of the sacred presence of God among us.

For many people, the need and the willingness to believe in God is very apparent. In fact, it would seem that just about all of us can improve when it comes to believing in the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

To embark upon this journey, may we place ourselves with the Lord during His Paschal Mystery. Will we take the time and make the effort to embrace and accept the sacrificial love of Jesus? Will we reject the half-hearted and part time belief so prevalent in our own lives and the lives of many other folks? The lack of faith in Catholics and non-Catholics alike is very obvious to most of us. In a personal way, I, you, and other serious people of faith, can change this reality. This change that we often refer to as a process of conversion will only come about however, when we become fully committed to Jesus and His message of love and mercy.

As one contemplates the opportunity to become one with Jesus, he or she must embrace with his/her heart, the full meaning of the passion, crucifixion, death, and resurrection of Jesus. This endeavor is where most people fall back into the malaise of part time belief. Carrying Jesus cross, suffering for others, offering oneself to Jesus is just too darn hard for most. Many are more than soft. We want the good life and the easy way. We are tempted beyond belief while allowing ourselves to be overcome by guilt and sinful actions. Since many are overcome by their own selfishness and the selfishness of others, these folks find it difficult to seek out God’s forgiveness and mercy. Our Triune God is always ready to receive us in a very profound way through the Sacrament of Penance. This sacrament, which is a spiritual encounter with the love of God, unfortunately, is passed over by most Catholics. This is tragic but very prevalent in our present day Church.

Although we may not be able to change others (family and friends alike) appropriately, you and I can change. We must begin to ***“believe, pray, and love,”*** within the depths of our souls. On our own, we will never make it, but Our Lady through the power of the Holy Spirit can bring us to Jesus. When God is near us it is then that we can have a serious impact in bringing folks away from the reality of sin and evil

that is such a horror and abomination to the love of God. With God and Our Lady we can help to convert this world, ***“that is so far away from the love of God,”*** as Our Lady has related to us in these messages. Let us be the ***“little children”*** of our dear Blessed Mother, and through these words of Her message of October 25, 2005, She can help us along the road to sanctity.

“He will give you the gift of all the graces you seek from Him.” As we reflect upon this second sentence of Our Lady’s message of October 25, 2005, may we pray continuously to the Holy Spirit asking for His gifts and the virtues that come from those gifts. Let us believe that the Holy Spirit can help us to understand the message of Jesus while teaching us the truth about the passion, death, and resurrection of our dear Lord. The Holy Spirit will give us, ***“the gift of all the graces,”*** but we must seek out our dear Sanctifier in the quietness of our souls where he dwells within each of us by his undying presence.

“I am a gift to you, because from day to day, God permits me to be with you and to love each of you with immeasurable love.” The presence of our dear Blessed Mother to us is a beautiful gift from our loving God. The apparitions of Our Lady to the visionaries of Medjugorje are part of this gift. May we truly thank our Eternal Father for permitting Our Lady to be with us. Medjugorje has become a special place of prayer and worship where many pilgrims have been spiritually affected in a positive way by the presence of God and Our Lady in that holy place. Our triune God has been so good to us, and the Father, Jesus and the Holy Spirit continue to call us to a higher level of belief.

This challenge is ours to accept. Our Lady is with us to help us along the way. I wonder in what way will we respond to this call from God? The choice is there for us to make. Will it be for God or for the selfishness promoted by the world in which we live? This choice for God cannot be part time that is only made when we feel like doing it. We should be willing to say yes to God each day of our lives. Again, in the next sentence of Her message of October 25, 2005, Our Lady shows us the way. ***“Therefore, little children, in prayer and humility, open your hearts and be witnesses of my presence.”***

These beautiful loving and inspiring words of Our Lady should encourage us to be Her devoted children while being witnesses of Her motherly presence among us. Hopefully, we are ready to accept Her call. We must reject those lame excuses that prohibit us from being what we have been called to be. Let us make prayer a very important part of our daily existence. Let us be totally humble, while opening

our hearts to the unconditional love of God. Our Lady knows that we are capable of living out these requests found in Her monthly messages, let us pray that we will find the courage to be willing to do so.

I hope you are well. Give my best to all of your families. Be strong and be filled with courageous faith being forever grateful to God for His grace and His gifts that come to each one of us. 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, 28 October, 2005)

PRESS BULLETIN 215, 10/26/2005

OUR FIRM POINTS

As long as 250 years before Christ, Greek scientist Archimedes said: «Give me a firm point to affix my lever and I will move the whole universe.» There are many hidden messages in these words. A firm point is a condition for moving. However, let us see what one relies on today: parents, friends, knowledge, money, power, insurance, beauty and - increasingly on luck - which is not interpreted any more as God's providence but as something "written in the stars". Without a firm point we fall. This is so evident in everyday life. That is why we are in search of firm and reliable places to stand on.

Let us remember a detail from the Old Testament when to already tired Moses his brother Aaron is holding his hands up and supporting him in prayer (See Exodus 17,12). He was his firm point. If we apply this biblical scene to Medjugorje, we can easily see where is our firm point. Our Lady is always accompanying us in our rises after we fall, and she is inviting us to pray, to fast, to do penance, and to rely on Jesus. All those who wanted to throw themselves into Jesus' arms and to leave earthly security have found this firm point. God only knows how fragile and weak we are. That is why he makes himself our companion – our corner stone. In the image of a house built on sand, Jesus warns us that we need firm foundations to start building. There is no way we can build strong and magnificent buildings on fragile soil. The same is with our lives. As the Scriptures teach us – "Except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain that build it" (Ps 127,1).

We are all faced with a danger of choosing wrong and uncertain positions. False security can be found anywhere, everybody wants to earn our trust. There is a wonderful instruction given to us by saint Paul in his epistle to the Colossians: "Beware lest any man

spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ." (Col. 2,8)

These words sound as if they had been written today. People want to create their own world forgetting that God has created this world as well as them. Although he is a creature, human being wants to be the creator, relying solely on himself. No wonder the world is powerless when it comes to the most essential things: peace, human dignity, justice, ... Therefore, if we find our firm point in Christ, we will not fail to have success. It is precisely through Our Lady, in Medjugorje, that God has once again moved humanity. The message is clear: To accept Jesus, and only then can we expect to move the universe from the state of chaos into the state of prosperity. The same is with our private lives. Things do not happen by themselves. Let us learn from Jesus who relied on the Father completely and who persevered until the end. So, you who are tired, burdened, deceived, disillusioned and sinful, rely on the One who makes everything new and sets everything in motion all over again.

.....
Father Mario Knezovic

COMMUNIONS and PRIESTS

During the month of *September*, **178,000** received Holy Communion and **4048** priests from this country and abroad signed the register for celebrating Holy Mass in Medjugorje.

VISIT of a CANADIAN BISHOP

Monsignor Pearce Lacey, retired auxiliary bishop of Toronto, made his fourth private pilgrimage with a group of pilgrims from Canada to Medjugorje from 9 to 17 October 2005. Monsignor Lacey took part in the pilgrims' programme, regularly heard confessions, and met with Franciscan friars of Medjugorje.

His first visit to Medjugorje was in 1987. He believes that Our Lady is appearing here.

VISIT of a BISHOP from CONGO

In September 2005, Monsignor Stanislas Lukumwena Lumbala, OFM., Bishop of the Kole Diocese in the Democratic Republic of Congo made his second private pilgrimage to Medjugorje. He was ordained a priest in 1979, and a bishop in 1998. Monsignor Lukumwena is the first African made a Franciscan Provincial in Congo, and the first African ordained a bishop in Congo. He came to Medjugorje to spend time in personal prayer and spiritual renewal. He spent many hours hearing confessions of pilgrims in Italian and in French.

He talked about his impressions during an interview he gave to the “Mir” Radio Medjugorje. He said:

«I have come to Medjugorje to seek inner peace. A bishop in Africa is a builder, the one who reconstructs roads, builds bridges and schools. A bishop does everything, so there are times when what he really needs is spiritual peace. That is why I have come here. To retire for a few days, to pray together with the pilgrims. What I found very good here is the fact that I can hear confessions. I spent four hours in the confessional yesterday. It is wonderful to see how many people come here for confession.

The Church has been increasingly insisting on the sacrament of the Eucharist and reconciliation lately. Exactly these two important sacraments are present here. In the beginning, there was much talk on the apparitions, and now the stress is more on spirituality. A deep spirituality is developing here. A message of peace and conversion has been given. All these messages are now to be used and lived. People like sensations. When messages and seers were discussed, people were flowing in. Now less talk is spent on them, but everything is moving towards a deeper level. Man needs a firm spiritual support. Man’s inner life should rely on solid evangelic values. That is why I say that deepening of the message, that is prayer, communion and confession, is becoming the basis of a deep spiritual life.

I speak of Medjugorje from a very private point of view. I am a bishop of another diocese and I do not want to speak of matters that do not concern me directly. I come here because of my own devotion. One should not worry about approval all the time. The approval will certainly be given. Bishops come, and they come to pray. There is something that we are drawn to, something that has impressed us. Little by little, Medjugorje will be approved. Let each one live one’s own devotion.

We are making way to set up a radio station in my Kole Diocese, which will allow us to let people know more about Medjugorje.»

VISIT of an EPARCH from AUSTRALIA and NEW ZEALAND

Monsignor Issam John Darwish, BSO, DD., eparch of the Melchite Catholic Church in Australia and New Zealand, was on a private pilgrimage in Medjugorje from September 12 to 19, 2005. In Medjugorje, he celebrated the 33rd anniversary of his priestly ordination. Before becoming bishop for the Melchites in Australia and New Zealand in 1996, he worked in Lebanon in favour of abandoned children. Here are his impressions:

“Last Sunday, I was in Castel Gandolfo with my group of pilgrims, and we prayed the Angelus with the Pope. After the Angelus, as it was arranged before, I went to visit the Holy Father. The program of this visit was specified in advance. At the end of our conversation, I asked the Holy Father to give his blessing to the group of pilgrims, which was going to Medjugorje the following day. If you have ever met the Pope, you know that he has a splendid smile. He smiled with great kindness and he said: ‘May God watch over you and bless you’.

The devotion towards the Virgin Mary is very widespread among our parishioners. They came to me and they asked me to accompany them this year to Medjugorje. I have much work, but I accepted immediately. Then, I thought that I should have perhaps said no, but now I am glad to have come. With the group, we contemplate each day the life of Mary from the beginning to the cross. For me, it is a Marian retreat. I wanted to transmit to the faithful what our Byzantine Church is saying on Mary. All the prayers were directed towards a better knowledge of the role of Mary in our life. For me and for the whole group, the coming here is a blessing. We see Mary as a person who leads us to Jesus. She plays an important role in our life. She is leading us to Jesus and she is deepening our faith.

The number of pilgrims coming to Medjugorje is a sign of God. The atmosphere of prayer spread by the priests from here is very deep. I believe that Medjugorje is a place of expectation, a place that is questioning our faith: how to deepen our faith? The prayer in front of the cross, adoration, the Eucharist - all this gives to the pilgrims a deep spirituality. It is a place of prayer.

I think that the role of the priest who accompanies the pilgrims is very important. In order to bring fruits, the pilgrims must be accompanied by a priest. His role is to help them to go further than seeking signs. I said to my pilgrims that we have already the signs: it is the Blessed Sacrament of the altar and other sacraments. All the sacraments should be lived: sacrament of penance, the Eucharist; their spiritual role should be discovered. The Mother of God speaks to each one of us. It is not necessary to see her. We can see her with our interior eyes, the eyes of faith.

I think that the priests from here are giving to the pilgrims a very good orientation, but the priests who accompany the pilgrims should pay more attention to the teaching of the Church. The priests from here could give the priests who accompany the pilgrims some directions: how to live the interior conversion in a deeper way. And let us allow the Lord to act in the

hearts of the faithful! Some people need feelings, others don't. This is Christian life.

The messages of Medjugorje are messages of the Gospel. I do not see anything else. Eucharist, penance, prayer... it is the Gospel. The apparitions? I do not know. I do not have any clear idea, but I think that God can do all that He wants.

I will write a booklet on my impressions of Medjugorje. I will encourage the faithful to come to make this pilgrimage, to live a few days of prayer and interior conversion. I will encourage them. I also will encourage the priests to come with them.

I have a desire: that Medjugorje opens to the environment, to the Orthodox and to the Moslems, that Medjugorje becomes a centre of dialogue with them."

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PURGATORY - WHAT THE CATHOLIC CHURCH SAYS

The following article has been edited from the 1917 edition of the Catholic Encyclopedia.

Purgatory (Lat., "purgare", to make clean, to purify) in accordance with Catholic teaching is a place or condition of temporal punishment for those who, departing this life in [God's grace](#), are, not entirely free from venial faults, or have not fully paid the satisfaction due to their transgressions. The faith of the Church concerning purgatory is clearly expressed in the Decree of Union drawn up by the [Council of Florence](#) (Mansi, t. XXXI, col. 1031), and in the decree of the [Council of Trent](#) which (Sess. XXV) defined: "Whereas the Catholic Church, instructed by the Holy Ghost, has from the Sacred Scriptures and the ancient tradition of the [Fathers](#) taught in Councils and very recently in this Ecumenical synod (Sess. VI, cap. XXX; Sess. XXII cap.ii, iii) that there is a purgatory, and that the souls therein are helped by the suffrages of the faithful, but principally by the acceptable Sacrifice of the Altar; the Holy Synod enjoins on the Bishops that they diligently endeavor to have the sound doctrine of the Fathers in Councils regarding purgatory everywhere taught and preached, held and believed by the faithful" (Denzinger, "Enchiridion", 983). **Temporal Punishment**

That temporal punishment is due to sin, even after the sin itself has been pardoned by [God](#), is clearly the teaching of Scripture. [God](#) indeed brought man out of his first disobedience and gave him power to govern

all things (Wis. x, 2), but still condemned him "to eat his bread in the sweat of his brow" until he returned unto dust. [God](#) forgave the incredulity of Moses and Aaron, but in punishment kept them from the "land of promise" (Num., xx, 12). The Lord took away the sin of David, but the life of the child was forfeited because David had made [God's](#) enemies blaspheme His Holy Name (II Kings, xii, 13, 14).

In the New Testament as well as in the Old, almsgiving and fasting, and in general penitential acts are the real fruits of repentance (Matt., iii, 8; Luke, xvii, 3; iii, 3). The whole penitential system of the Church testifies that the voluntary assumption of penitential works has always been part of true repentance and the [Council of Trent](#) (Sess. XIV, can. xi) reminds the faithful that [God](#) does not always remit the whole punishment due to sin together with the guilt. [God](#) requires satisfaction, and will punish sin, and this doctrine involves as its necessary consequence a belief that the sinner failing to do penance in this life may be punished in another world, and so not be cast off eternally from [God](#).

Venial Sins

All sins are not equal before [God](#), nor dare anyone assert that the daily faults of human frailty will be punished with the same severity that is meted out to serious violation of [God's law](#). On the other hand whosoever comes into [God's](#) presence must be perfectly pure for in the strictest sense His "eyes are too pure, to behold evil" (Hab., i, 13). For unrepented venial faults for the payment of temporal punishment due to sin at time of death, the [Church](#) has always taught the doctrine of purgatory.

So deep was this belief ingrained in our common humanity that it was accepted by the Jews, and in at least a shadowy way by the pagans, long before the coming of [Christianity](#). ("Aeneid," VI, 735 sq.; Sophocles, "Antigone," 450 sq.).

II. ERRORS

Epiphanius (haer., lxxv, P.G., XLII, col. 513) complains that Acrius (fourth cent.) taught that [prayers for the dead](#) were of no avail. In the [Middle Ages](#), the doctrine of purgatory was rejected by the [Albigenses](#), [Waldenses](#), and [Hussites](#). Saint Bernard (Serm. lxvi in Cantic., P. L. CLXXXIII, col. 1098) states that the so-called "Apostolici" denied purgatory and the utility of [prayers for the departed](#).

Much discussion has arisen over the position the Greeks on the question of purgatory. It would seem that the great difference of opinion not concerning the existence of purgatory, but concerning the nature of purgatorial fire; still Saint Thomas proves the

existence of purgatory in his dissertation against the errors of the Greeks, and the Council of Florence also thought necessary to affirm the belief of the [Church](#) on the subject (Bellarmine, “De Purgatorio,” lib. I, cap. i). The modern Orthodox Church denies purgatory, but is rather inconsistent in its way of putting forth its belief.

At the beginning of [the Reformation](#) there was some hesitation especially on [Luther’s](#) part (Leipzig Disputation) as to whether the doctrine should be retained, but as the breach widened, the denial of purgatory by the Reformers became universal, and [Calvin](#) termed the Catholic position “exitiale commentum quod crucem Christi evacuat . . . quod fidem nostram labefacit et evertit” (Institutiones, lib. III, cap. v, 6). Modern [Protestants](#), while they avoid the name *purgatory*, frequently teach the doctrine of “the middle state,” and Martensen (“Christian Dogmatics,” Edinburgh, 1890, p. 457) writes: “As no soul leaves this present existence in a fully complete and prepared state, we must suppose that there is an intermediate state, a realm of progressive development, (?) in which souls are prepared for the final judgment” (Farrar, “Mercy and Judgment,” London, 1881, cap. iii).

III. PROOFS

The Catholic doctrine of purgatory supposes the fact that some die with smaller faults for which there was no true repentance, and also the fact that the temporal penalty due to sin is at times not wholly paid in this life. The proofs for the Catholic position, both in Scripture and in Tradition, are bound up also with the practice of [praying for the dead](#). For why pray for the dead, if there be no belief in the power of prayer to afford solace to those who as yet are excluded from the sight of [God](#)?

So true is this position that [prayers for the dead](#) and the existence of a place of purgation are mentioned in conjunction in the oldest passages of the [Fathers](#), who allege reasons for succouring departed souls. Those who have opposed the doctrine of purgatory have confessed that [prayers for the dead](#) would be an unanswerable argument if the modern doctrine of a “particular judgment” had been received in the early ages.

But one has only to read the testimonies hereinafter alleged to feel sure that the [Fathers](#) speak, in the same breath, of oblations for the dead and a place of purgation; and one has only to consult the evidence found in the catacombs to feel equally sure that the [Christian faith](#) there expressed embraced clearly a belief in judgment immediately after death.

Intercession has been made for the soul of the dear one departed and [God](#) has heard the prayer, and the soul has passed into a place of light and refreshment.” “Surely,” Wilpert adds, “such intercession would have no place were there question not of the particular, but of the final judgment.

Some stress too has been laid upon the objection that the ancient [Christians](#) had no clear conception of purgatory, and that they thought that the souls departed remained in uncertainty of salvation to the last day; and consequently they prayed that those who had gone before might in the final judgment escape even the everlasting torments of [hell](#).

The earliest [Christian traditions](#) are clear as to the particular judgment, and clearer still concerning a sharp distinction between purgatory and [hell](#). The passages alledged as referring to relief from [hell](#) cannot offset the evidence given below (Bellarmine, “De Purgatorio,” lib. II, cap. v). Concerning the famous case of Trajan, which vexed the Doctors of the [Middle Ages](#), see Bellarmine, loc. cit., cap. Viii.

Old Testament

The tradition of the Jews is put forth with precision and clearness in II Maccabees. [Judas](#), the commander of the forces of [Israel](#), making a gathering sent twelve thousand drachmas of silver to Jerusalem for sacrifice to be offered for the sins of the dead, thinking well and religiously concerning the [resurrection](#) (For if he had not hoped that they that were slain should rise again, it would have seemed superfluous and vain to pray for the dead). And because he considered that they who had fallen asleep with godliness, had great grace laid up for them. It is therefore a holy and wholesome thought to pray for the dead, that they may be loosed from sins. (II Mach., xii, 43-46)

At the time of the Maccabees the leaders of the people of [God](#) had no hesitation in asserting the efficacy of prayers offered for the dead, in order that those who had departed this life might find pardon for their sins and the hope of [eternal resurrection](#).

New Testament

There are several passages in the New Testament that point to a process of purification after death. Thus, [Jesus Christ](#) declares (Matthew 12:32): “And whosoever shall speak a word against the [Son of man](#), it shall be forgiven him: but he that shall speak against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, nor in the world to come.”

According to Saint Isidore of Seville (Deord. creatur., c. xiv, n. 6) these words prove that in the next life “some sins will be forgiven and purged away by a certain purifying fire.”

Saint Augustine also argues “that some sinners are not forgiven either in this world or in the next would not be truly said unless there were other [sinners] who, though not forgiven in this world, are forgiven in the world to come” (De Civ. Dei, XXI, xxiv).

The same interpretation is given by [Gregory the Great](#) (Dial., IV, xxxix); Saint Bede (commentary on this text); Saint Bernard (Sermo lxvi in Cantic., n. 11) and other eminent theological writers.

A further argument is supplied by Saint Paul in I Cor., iii, 11-1,5: “For other foundation no man can lay, but that which is laid; which is [Christ Jesus](#). Now if any man build upon this foundation, gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay stubble: Every man’s work shall be manifest; for the day of the Lord shall declare it, because it shall be revealed in fire; and the fire shall try every man’s work, of what sort it is. If any man’s work abide, which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man’s work burn, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved, yet so as by fire.”

While this passage presents considerable difficulty, it is regarded by many of the [Fathers](#) and theologians as evidence for the existence of an intermediate state in which the dross of lighter transgressions will be burnt away, and the soul thus purified will be saved. This, according to Bellarmine (De Purg., I, 5), is the interpretation commonly given by the [Fathers](#) and theologians; and he cites to this effect:

Tradition

This doctrine that many who have died are still in a place of purification and that prayers avail to help the dead is part of the very earliest [Christian tradition](#). [Tertullian](#) “De corona militis” mentions [prayers for the dead](#) as an Apostolic ordinance, and in “De Monogamia” (cap. x, P. L., II, col. 912) he advises a widow “to [pray for the soul](#) of her husband, begging repose for him and participation in the first resurrection”; he commands her also “to make oblations for him on the anniversary of his demise,” and charges her with infidelity if she neglect to succour his soul.

This settled custom of the [Church](#) is clear from [Saint Cyprian](#), who (P. L. IV, col. 399) forbade the customary [prayers](#) for one who had violated the ecclesiastical law. “Our predecessors prudently advised that no brother, departing this life, should nominate any churchman as his executor; and should he do it, that no oblation should be made for him, nor sacrifice offered for his repose.”

Long before [Cyprian](#), Clement of Alexandria had puzzled over the question of the state or condition of

the man who, reconciled to [God](#) on his death-bed, had no time for the fulfillment of penance due his transgression. His answer is: “the believer through discipline divests himself of his passions and passes to the mansion which is better than the former one, passes to the greatest torment, taking with him the characteristic of repentance for the faults he may have committed after baptism. He is tortured then still more, not yet attaining what he sees others have acquired. The greatest torments are assigned to the believer, for [God’s](#) righteousness is good, and His goodness righteous, and though these punishments cease in the course of the expiation and purification of each one, “yet” etc. (P. G. IX, col. 332).

In Origin the doctrine of purgatory is very clear. If a man depart this life with lighter faults, he is condemned to fire, which burns away the lighter materials, and prepares the soul for the [kingdom of God](#), where nothing defiled may enter. “For if on the foundation of Christ you have built not only gold and silver and precious stones (I Cor., 3); but also wood and hay and stubble, what do you expect when the soul shall be separated from the body?

Would you enter into heaven with your wood and hay and stubble and thus defile the [kingdom of God](#); or on account of these hindrances would you remain without and receive no reward for your gold and silver and precious stones? Neither is this just. It remains then that you be committed to the fire which will burn the light materials; for our [God](#) to those who can comprehend heavenly things is called a cleansing fire. But this fire consumes not the creature, but what the creature has himself built, wood, and hay and stubble. It is manifest that the fire destroys the wood of our transgressions and then returns to us the reward of our great works.” (P. G., XIII, col. 445, 448).

The Apostolic practice of [praying for the dead](#) which passed into the liturgy of the [Church](#), is as clear in the fourth century as it is in the twentieth. Saint Cyril of Jerusalem (Catechet. Mystog., V, 9, P.G., XXXIII, col. 1116) describing the liturgy, writes: “Then we pray for the Holy Fathers and Bishops that are dead; and in short for all those who have departed this life in our communion; believing that the souls of those for whom prayers are offered receive very great relief, while this holy and tremendous victim lies upon the altar.”

[Saint Gregory of Nyssa](#) (P. G., XLVI, col. 524, 525) states that man’s weaknesses are purged in this life by prayer and wisdom, or are expiated in the next by a cleansing fire. “When he has quitted his body and the difference between virtue and vice is known he cannot approach [God](#) till the purging fire shall have cleansed the stains with which his soul was infested.

That same fire in others will cancel the corruption of matter, and the propensity to evil.”

About the same time the Apostolic Constitution gives us the formularies used in succouring the dead. “Let us pray for our brethren who sleep in Christ, that [God](#) who in his love for men has received the soul of the depart one, may forgive him every fault, and in mercy and clemency receive him into the bosom of Abraham, with those who in this life have pleased [God](#)” (P. G. I, col. 1144). Nor can we pass over the use of the diptychs where the names of the dead were inscribed; and this remembrance by name in the Sacred Mysteries--(a practice that was from the Apostles) was considered by [Chrysostom](#) as the best way of relieving the dead (In I Ad Cor., Hom. xli, n. 4, G., LXI, col. 361, 362).

The teaching of the [Fathers](#), and the formularies used in the Liturgy of the Church, found expression in the early [Christian](#) monuments, particularly those contained in the catacombs. On the tombs of the faithful were inscribed words of hope, words of petition for peace and for rest; and as the anniversaries came round the faithful gathered at the graves of the departed to make intercession for those who had gone before. At the bottom this is nothing else than the faith expressed by the [Council of Trent](#) (Sess. XXV, “De Purgatorio”), and to this faith the inscriptions in the catacombs are surely witnesses.

In the fourth century in the West, Ambrose insists in his commentary on Saint Paul (I Cor., iii) on the existence of purgatory, and in his masterly funeral oration (De obitu Theodosii), thus prays for the soul of the departed emperor: “Give, O Lord, rest to Thy servant Theodosius, that rest Thou hast prepared for Thy saints. . . . I loved him, therefore will I follow him to the land of the living; I will not leave him till by my prayers and lamentations he shall be admitted unto the holy mount of the Lord, to which his deserts call him” (P. L., XVI, col. 1397).

Saint Augustine is clearer even than his master. He describes two conditions of men; “some there are who have departed this life, not so bad as to be deemed unworthy of mercy, nor so good as to be entitled to immediate happiness” etc., and in the [resurrection](#) he says there will be some who “have gone through these pains, to which the spirits of the dead are liable” (De Civ. Dei, XXI, 24).

Thus at the close of the fourth century not only (1) were [prayers for the dead](#) found in all the Liturgies, but the [Fathers](#) asserted that such practice was from the Apostles themselves; (2) those who were helped by the prayers of the faithful and by the celebration of the Holy Mysteries were in a place of purgation; (3)

from which when purified they “were admitted unto the Holy Mount of the Lord”.

So clear is this patristic Tradition that those who do not believe in purgatory have been unable to bring any serious difficulties from the writings of the [Fathers](#). The passages cited to the contrary either do not touch the question at all, or are so lacking in clearness that they cannot offset the perfectly open expression of the doctrine as found in the very [Fathers](#) who are quoted as holding contrary opinions (Bellarmine “De Purg.”, lib. I, cap. xiii).

Duration

The very reasons assigned for the existence of purgatory make for its passing character. We pray, we offer sacrifice for souls therein detained that “[God](#) in mercy may forgive every fault and receive them into the bosom of Abraham” (Const. Apost., P. G., I col. 1144); and Augustine (De Civ. Dei, lib. XXI, cap. xiii and xvi) declares that the punishment of purgatory is temporary and will cease, at least with the Last Judgment. “But temporary punishments are suffered by some in this life only, by others after death, by others both now and then; but all of them before that last and strictest judgment.”

Nature of Punishment

It is clear from the Liturgies and the [Fathers](#) above cited that the souls for whose peace sacrifice was offered were shut out for the time being from the sight of [God](#). They were “not so good as to be entitled to eternal happiness”. Still, for them “death is the termination not of nature but of sin” (Ambrose, “De obitu Theodos.”); and this inability to sin makes them secure of final happiness. This is the Catholic position proclaimed by [Leo X](#) in the Bull “Exurge Domine” which condemned the errors of [Luther](#).

Are the souls detained in purgatory conscious that their happiness is but deferred for a time, or may they still be in doubt concerning their ultimate salvation? The ancient Liturgies and the inscriptions of the catacombs speak of a “sleep of peace”, which would be impossible if there was any doubt of ultimate salvation.

Some of the Doctors of the [Middle Ages](#) thought uncertainty of salvation one of the severe punishments of purgatory, but this opinion finds no general credit among the theologians of the [medieval period](#), nor is it possible in the light of the belief in the particular judgment.

Saint Bonaventure gives as the reason for this elimination of fear and of uncertainty the intimate conviction that they can no longer sin. (Fear is cast

out because of the strengthening of the will by which the soul knows it can no longer sin), and Saint (unless they knew that they are to be delivered, they would not ask for prayers).

Merit

In the Bull “Exurge Domine” [Leo X](#) condemns the proposition that they [the souls in purgatory] cannot merit or increase in charity). For them “the night has come in which no man can labour”, and [Christian tradition](#) has always considered that only in this life can man work unto the profit of his own soul.

The Doctors of the [Middle Ages](#) while agreeing that this life is the time for merit and increase of grace, still some with Saint Thomas seemed to question whether or not there might be some non-essential reward which the souls in purgatory might merit (IV, dist. xxi, q. i, a. 3). Bellarmine believes that in this matter Saint Thomas changed his opinion and refers to a statement of Saint Thomas (“De Malo”, q. vii, a. 11). Whatever may be the mind of the [Angelic Doctor](#), theologians agree that no merit is possible in purgatory, and if objection be urged that the souls there merit by their prayers, Bellarmine says that such prayers avail with [God](#) because of merit already acquired “(They avail only in virtue of past merits as those who are now saints intercede for us not by merit but by prayer).

Purgatorial Fire

At the Council of Florence, Bessarion argued against the existence of real purgatorial fire, and the Greeks were assured that the Roman Church had never issued any dogmatic decree on this subject. In the West the belief in the existence of real fire is common. Augustine in Ps. 37 n. 3, speaks of the pain which purgatorial fire causes as more severe than anything a man can suffer in this life, [Gregory the Great](#) speaks of those who after this life “will expiate their faults by purgatorial flames,” and he adds “that the pain be more intolerable than any one can suffer in this life.

Following in the footsteps of [Gregory](#), Saint Thomas teaches that besides the separation of the soul from the sight of [God](#), there is the other punishment from fire. Saint Bonaventure not only agrees with Saint Thomas but adds (IV, dist. xx, p.1, a.1, q. ii) that this punishment by fire is more severe than any punishment which comes to men in this life; How this fire affects the souls of the departed the Doctors do not know, and in such matters it is well to heed the warning of the [Council of Trent](#) when it commands the bishops “to exclude from their preaching difficult and subtle questions which tend not to edification’,

and from the discussion of which there is no increase either in piety or devotion.

V. SUCCOURING THE DEAD

Scripture and the [Fathers](#) command prayers and oblations for the departed, and the [Council of Trent](#) (Sess. XXV, “De Purgatorio”) in virtue of this tradition not only asserts the existence of purgatory, but adds “that the souls therein detained are aided by the suffrages of the faithful and principally by the acceptable sacrifice of the altar.” That those on earth are still in communion with the souls in purgatory is the earliest [Christian teaching](#), and that the living aid the dead by their prayers and works of satisfaction is clear from the tradition above alleged. That the [Holy Sacrifice](#) was offered for the departed was received Catholic Tradition even in the days of [Tertullian](#) and [Cyprian](#), and that the souls of the dead, were aided particularly “while the sacred victim lay upon the altar” is the expression of Cyril of Jerusalem quoted above. Augustine says that the “prayers and alms of the faithful, the [Holy Sacrifice of the altar](#) aid the faithful departed and move the Lord to deal with them in mercy and kindness, and,” he adds, “this is the practice of the universal Church handed down by the [Fathers](#).” Whether our works of satisfaction performed on behalf of the dead avail purely out of [God’s](#) benevolence and mercy, or whether [God](#) obliges himself in justice to accept our vicarious atonement, is not a settled question.

INDULGENCES

The [Council of Trent](#) (Sess. XXV) defined that [indulgences](#) are “most salutary for [Christian](#) people” and that their “use is to be retained in the Church”. It is the common teaching of Catholic theologians that [indulgences](#) may be applied to the souls detained in purgatory; and

that [indulgences](#) are available for them “by way of suffrage” (per modum suffragii).

Augustine (De Civ. Dei, XX, ix) declares that the souls of the faithful departed are not separated from the Church, which is the kingdom of Christ, and for this reason the prayers and works of the living are helpful to the dead.

“If therefore”, argues Bellarmine (De indulgentiis, xiv) “we can offer our prayers and our satisfactions in behalf of those detained in purgatory, because we are members of the great body of Christ, why may not the Vicar of Christ apply to the same souls the superabundant satisfaction of Christ and his saints--of which he is the dispenser?”

This is the doctrine of Saint Thomas (IV, Sent., dist. xlv, q. ii, a. 3, q. 2) who asserts that [indulgences](#) avail principally for the person who performs the work for which the [indulgence](#) is given, if they but secondarily may avail even for the dead, if the form in which the [indulgence](#) is granted be so worded as to be capable of such interpretation, and he adds “nor is there any reason why the Church may not dispose of its treasure of merits in favour of the dead, as it surely dispenses it in favour of the living”.

Saint Bonaventure (IV, Sent., dist. xx, p. 2, q. v) agrees with Saint Thomas, but adds that such “relaxation cannot be after the manner of absolution as in the case of the living but only as suffrage. This opinion of Saint Bonaventure, that the Church through its Supreme Pastor does not absolve juridically the souls in purgatory from the punishment due their sins, is the teaching of the Doctors. They point out (Gratian, 24 q. ii, 2, can.1) that in case of those who have departed this life judgment is reserved to [God](#); they allege the authority of Gelasius (Ep. ad Faustum; Ep. ad Episcopos Dardaniae) in support of their contention (Gratian *ibid.*), and they also insist that the Roman Pontiffs, when they grant [indulgences](#) that are applicable to the dead, add the restriction “per modum suffragii et deprecationis”. This phrase is found in the Bull of [Sixtus IV](#) “Romani Pontificis provida diligentia”, 27 Nov. 1447.

Bellarmino himself says: “The true opinion is that [indulgences](#) avail as suffrage, because they avail not after the fashion of a juridical absolution. But, according to the same author the suffrages of the faithful avail at times (by way of merit), at (by way of supplication) at times by way of satisfaction; but when there is question of applying an [indulgence](#) to one in purgatory it is only “per modum suffragii satisfactorii” and for this reason “the pope does not absolve the soul in purgatory from the punishment due his sin, but offers to [God](#) from the treasure of the Church whatever may be necessary for the canceling of this punishment”.

If the question be further asked whether such satisfaction is accepted by [God](#) out of mercy and benevolence, or “ex justitia”, theologians are not in accord--some holding one opinion, others the other. Bellarmine after canvassing both sides (pp. 137, 138) does not dare to set aside “either opinion, but is inclined to think that the former is more reasonable while he pronounces the latter in harmony with piety (“admodum pia”).

Condition

That an [indulgence](#) may avail for those in purgatory several conditions are required:

The [indulgence](#) must be [granted by the pope](#).

There must be a sufficient reason for granting, the [indulgence](#), and this reason must be something pertaining to the glory of [God](#) and the utility of the Church, not merely the utility accruing to the souls in purgatory.

The pious work enjoined must be as in the case of [indulgences](#) for the living.

If the state of grace be not among the required works, in all probability the person performing the work may gain the [indulgence](#) for the dead, even though he himself be not in friendship with [God](#) (Bellarmine, *loc. cit.*, p. 139). Suarez (De Poenit., disp. liii, s. 4, n. 5 and 6) puts this categorically when he says: “Status gratiae solum requiritur ad tollendum obicem indulgentiae” (the state of grace is required only to remove some hindrance to the [indulgence](#)), and in the case of the holy souls there can be no hindrance. This teaching is bound up with the doctrine of the Communion of Saints, and the monuments of the catacombs represent the saints and martyrs as interceding with [God](#) for the dead.

The prayers too of the early liturgies speak of [Mary](#) and of the saints interceding for those who have passed from this life. Augustine believes that burial in a basilica dedicated to a holy martyr is of value to the dead, for those who recall the memory of him who has suffered will recommend to the martyr’s prayers the soul of him who has departed this life **VII**.

INVOCATION of SOULS

Do the souls in purgatory pray for us? May we call upon them in our needs? There is no decision of the Church on this subject, nor have the theologians pronounced with definiteness concerning the invocation of the souls in purgatory and their intercession for the living. In the ancient liturgies there are no prayers of the Church directed to those who are still in purgatory. On the tombs of the early [Christians](#) nothing is more common than a prayer or a supplication asking the departed to intercede with [God](#) for surviving friends, but these inscriptions seem always to suppose that the departed one is already with [God](#).

Saint Thomas ([II-II:83:11](#)) denies that the souls in purgatory pray for the living, and states they are not in a position to pray for us, rather we must make intercession for them. Despite the authority of Saint Thomas, many renowned theologians hold that the souls in purgatory really pray for us, and that we may invoke their aid. The souls in purgatory are holy, are dear to [God](#), love us with a true love and are mindful of our wants; that they know in a general way our

necessities and our dangers, and how great is our need of Divine help and divine grace”.

When there is question of invoking the prayers of those in purgatory, Bellarmine says it is superfluous, ordinarily speaking, for they are ignorant of our circumstances and condition. This is at variance with the opinion of Suarez, who admits knowledge at least in a general way, also with the opinions of many modern theologians who point to the practice now common with almost all the faithful of addressing their prayers and petitions for help to those who are still in a place of purgation.

Scavini (Theol. Moral., XI, n. 174) sees no reason why the souls detained in purgatory may not pray for us, even as we pray for one another. He asserts that this practice has become common at Rome, and that it has the great name of Saint Alphonsus in its favor.

Saint Alphonsus in his work the “Great Means of Salvation”, chap. I, III, 2, concludes: “so the souls in purgatory, being beloved by [God](#) and confirmed in grace, have absolutely no impediment to prevent them from praying for us. Still the Church does not invoke them or implore their intercession, because ordinarily they have no cognizance of our prayers. But we may piously believe that [God](#) makes our prayers known to them”. He alleges also the authority of Saint Catharine of Bologna who “whenever she desired any favor had recourse to the souls in purgatory, and was immediately heard”.

UTILITY of PRAYER for the DEPARTED

It is the traditional faith of Catholics that the souls in purgatory are not separated from the Church, and that the love which is the bond of union between the Church’s members should embrace those who have departed this life in [God’s grace](#). Hence, since our prayers and our sacrifices can help those who are still waiting in purgatory, the saints have not hesitated to warn us that we have a real duty toward those who are still in purgatorial expiation.

Holy Church through the Congregation of Indulgences, 18 December 1885, has bestowed a special blessing on the so-called “[heroic act](#)” in virtue of which “a member of the Church militant offers to [God](#) for the souls in purgatory all the satisfactory works which he will perform during his lifetime, and also all the suffrages which may accrue to him after his death”.

The practice of devotion to the dead is also consoling to humanity and eminently worthy of a religion which seconds all the purest feelings of the human heart. “Sweet”, says Cardinal Wiseman (lecture XI), “is the consolation of the dying man, who, conscious of

imperfection, believes that there are others to make intercession for him, when his own time for merit has expired; soothing to the afflicted survivors the thought that they possess powerful means of relieving their friend. In the first moments of grief, this sentiment will often overpower religious prejudice, cast down the unbeliever on his knees beside the remains of his friend and snatch from him an unconscious prayer for rest; it is an impulse of nature which for the moment, aided by the analogies of revealed truth, seizes at once upon this consoling belief. But it is only a flitting and melancholy light, while the Catholic feeling, cheering though with solemn dimness, resembles the unfailing lamp, which the piety of the ancients is said to have hung before the sepulchres of their dead.”

Edited from the 1917 edition Catholic Encyclopedia
<http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/12575a.htm>

UNITY and COMMITMENT in TRANSMITTING EUCHARISTIC FAITH

VATICAN CITY, OCT 13, 2005 (VIS) - Late this morning in the Holy See Press Office, the second press conference on the Eleventh Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops was held, following yesterday’s presentation in the Synod Hall of the “Relatio post disceptationem” (the document summarizing the main themes that emerged from the Synod Fathers’ discussions).

Participating in the press conference were the three president delegates, Cardinals Francis Arinze, Juan Sandoval Iniguez and Telesphore Placidus Toppo, as well as Archbishop John Patrick Foley, president of the Commission for Information of the Assembly of the Synod of Bishops, and Bishop Sofron Stefan Mudry O.S.B.M., vice-president of the same commission.

Cardinal Arinze stressed how the Synod had impressed him, above all, with the commitment of all its participants to transmitting the faith, and with the importance given “to ‘ars celebrandi,’ that the faith upon which the people of God have fed in the church may accompany them when they leave the building, and encourage them to share what they have received with others.”

For his part, Cardinal Sandoval made reference to the depth of faith in the Eucharist. As an example of such faith, he quoted the words of a disabled person who, being unable to speak, before receiving communion wrote on his computer: “The Lord appears to be on

the Crucifix, yet He is not there, He appears not to be in the Eucharist, yet He is.” All of us, the cardinal said, “share this faith in the real presence of Christ.” He then affirmed that one of the central moments of the Synod had been the presence and the words of Benedict XVI on the first day of the assembly, as well as the participation of the Pope “as just another Synod Father” during the free discussions at the end of the afternoon sessions.

Cardinal Toppo underlined the Synod’s capacity to bring together, having gathered people from five continents “united by the same faith.” He observed that in his own continent, Asia, where so many religions coexist, the mark of identity for Catholics is unity in the Eucharist under the figure of the Holy Father. He also recalled how the president of the Indian delegation to the funeral of John Paul II, impressed by the involvement and unity of Catholics in the ceremony, had told him: “Today I felt the presence of God.”

Scarce participation at Sunday Mass in Western countries was what most called Archbishop Foley’s attention during the Synod meeting, while he identified the most emotional moments as those in which certain Synod Fathers and delegates from Central and Eastern Europe told of the persecutions suffered and sacrifices made under the totalitarian regimes.

Bishop Mudry concluded, stressing the importance of faith in the Eucharist for both Catholics and Orthodox, and of the teaching of this faith, beginning with the family. He went on to mention the work of priests and the role of the liturgy therein, pointing out that in Eastern churches the “visible signs of sanctity” with the presence of the tabernacle are perhaps more perceptible than in Western churches.

At the end of the press conference a journalist asked why, given the problem of a shortage of priests in some regions of the world, the solution of priestly ordination of married men was still being put in doubt. Cardinal Toppo replied by saying that “the real problem is a crisis of faith, the lack of priests is a symptom of that crisis.” On the same subject, Cardinal Sandoval listed some of the reasons for the shortage of priests: “a lack of faith, secularization, and the closing of the window onto infinity.” For his part, the Ukrainian Bishop Mudry indicated that, despite the fact that Eastern Catholic Churches admit married priests, this does not solve the problem because “they also have to dedicate time to their families ... and it is difficult for them to move to another area to continue their mission, if their bishop so requests.”

On the subject of admitting divorced people to Eucharistic communion, Cardinal Arinze indicated how the Church “shows compassion to these people who are suffering, and although they cannot partake of communion - because their position does not reflect the image of unity between Christ and the Church (bridegroom and bride) - they continue to be members of the Church.”

With reference to a call made by some of the Synod Fathers over these days for greater homogeneity of inculturation, Cardinal Toppo stressed how this “is essential, and is the expression of a people’s faith.” Cardinal Sandoval added: “what is important is that hymns, dance, color, etc., help to encourage interior life, to unite oneself with the Lord, and that the ceremony does not become merely a show for entertainment.”

(SE/PRESS CONFERENCE/... VIS 051013 (800))

REMAIN UNITED to GOD, LIVE OFF the POWER of the EUCHARIST

VATICAN CITY, OCT 2, 2005 (VIS) - In the Vatican Basilica at 9.30 a.m., the Holy Father presided at a Eucharistic concelebration for the opening of the Eleventh Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops, which is meeting to consider the theme: “The Eucharist: Source and Summit of the Life and Mission of the Church.” Concelebrating with the Pope were 55 cardinals, 7 patriarchs, 59 archbishops, 123 bishops and 81 priests.

In his homily, the Pope commented on the reading from Isaiah and from today’s Gospel, which both use the image of the vine. “God waits for us. ... In this very moment when we are celebrating the Eucharist, when we are inaugurating the Synod on the Eucharist, He comes to meet us. ... Will this find a reply? Or does it happen with us as with the vineyard, about which God says in Isaiah: ‘He expected it to yield fine grapes; wild grapes were all it yielded’? Is our Christian life often not perhaps rather vinegar than wine? Is it self-pity, conflict, indifference?”

Benedict XVI went on: “The good grapes which God was expecting - says the prophet - should have consisted in justice and uprightness. Instead, wild grapes bring violence, bloodshed and oppression, which make people groan under the yoke of injustice. In the Gospel the image changes: the vine produces good grapes, but the tenants keep them for themselves. They are not willing to give them to the owner. ... We men to whom creation was, so to say, entrusted to

manage, usurp it. We alone want to be the landlords. We want to own the world and our own lives in an unlimited way. God is our stumbling block. Either we simply make Him a devout expression or we deny Him everything, He is banished from public life, thus losing all meaning.

“Tolerance, which admits God... in private, but denies Him in the public domain, the reality of the world and of our lives, is not tolerance but hypocrisy. Yet, wherever man makes himself the only master of the world and of himself, justice cannot exist. There, the only arbiter is power and interest.”

The Holy Father went on to point out how in today’s readings “the judgement proclaimed by our Lord Jesus refers above all to the destruction of Jerusalem in the year 70. But the threat of judgement also concerns us, the Church in Europe, Europe and the West in general. With this Gospel, the Lord is also crying out to us the words which in the Apocalypse He addressed to the Church of Ephesus: ‘If you will not repent, I shall come to you and take your lampstand from its place.’ Light can also be taken away from us. ... Lord, help us to convert! Give us all the grace of true renewal! Do not allow your light in our midst to go out!”

“However, at this point we ask ourselves ... is the last word a threat? No! The promise is there, and it is the last, the essential, word. ... ‘I am the vine, you are the branches. Whoever remains in me, with me in him, bears fruit in plenty.’ With these words of the Lord, John shows us the last, and true outcome of the story of God’s vineyard. God never fails. In the end He wins, love wins.”

“Thus, in the end, these parables lead to the mystery of the Eucharist, where the Lord gives us the bread of life and the wine of His love, and invites us to the feast of eternal love. ... If we remain united to Him, then we will also bear fruit; then we will no longer produce the vinegar of self-sufficiency, of discontentment with God and His creation, but the good wine of joy in God and of love towards our neighbor.”

Benedict XVI concluded by invoking the Lord’s grace so that, during the Synod, “not only will we say beautiful things about the Eucharist, but above all we live off its strength.”

(SE/VINE:EUCCHARIST/... VIS 051003 (690))

FIRST GENERAL CONGREGATION - AN EDITED REVIEW on the EUCHARIST

VATICAN CITY, OCT 3, 2005 (VIS) - This morning in the Synod Hall, the first General Congregation of the Eleventh Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops was held. The meeting was presided by the Pope, and 241 Synod Fathers were present.

The Holy Father concluded his greetings by encouraging the participants in the Synod to be “instruments of Christ,” and to “enter into the thoughts and feelings of the Lord.”

For his part, Cardinal Francis Arinze, president delegate on duty, also pronounced some brief words at the beginning of this morning’s session. “We come,” he said, “to reflect on a topic that touches the heartbeat of the life of the Church. In fact, in the Most Holy Eucharist, as Vatican Council II says, ‘is contained the entire spiritual wealth of the Church, namely Christ Himself, our Easter.’ The Eucharist ‘stands at the center of the Church’s life’.”

Cardinal Angelo Scola, patriarch of Venice, Italy: “In the final analysis, the decrease in Eucharistic wonder depends on the limitations and the sins of the individual. Often however, this finds fertile terrain in the fact that the Christian community celebrating the Eucharist is distant from reality. It lives on an abstract plane and no longer addresses the real man, his feelings, his work, his rest, his need for unity, truth, goodness, beauty. ... The Synodal Assembly will need to look into this state of affairs carefully and suggest some possible remedies.”

“The Eucharistic celebration makes the Church. ... It is an act of worship called to express the unique Paschal event in an exceptional way. ... This Sacrament was given for the communion of men in Christ. ... Outside of this Eucharistic and sacramental communion the Church is not complete.”

“The Bishop does not preside the Eucharist merely for juridical reasons, because he is the ‘head’ of the local church, but rather out of faithfulness to the Lord’s own commandment, Who entrusted the memorial of His Easter to Peter and the Apostles. ... Communion with the bishop is the condition that legitimizes the Eucharistic celebration in favor of the people of God.”

“A second confirmation of how the Eucharistic celebration actually makes the Church, lies in the radical differences between Christian, pagan and even Jewish places of worship. While the pagan temple and Jewish synagogue are characterized by the presence

of the divinity, and because of this presence considered sacred and sacralized, the 'place' of Christian worship consists, in a certain sense, in the very act of celebrating the mystery."

"One must underline the substantial communion of faith between the Catholic Church and the Orthodox Church on the theme of the Eucharist and the priesthood, communion that is destined to grow through greater and deeper reciprocal understanding of the Eucharistic celebration and divine liturgy. We should also welcome positively the new climate on the Eucharist in those ecclesial communities that came into being at the time of the Reformation. In different degrees and with few exceptions, even these communities always underline the importance of the Eucharist as the key element in dialogue and in ecumenical practice. ... Can 'inter-communion' of the faithful belonging to different Churches and ecclesial communities constitute an adequate instrument to favor the path towards Christian unity? The answer depends upon careful consideration of the nature of the Eucharistic action in all of its fullness as 'mysterium fidei'."

"In the historical evolution going from the Last Supper of Jesus Christ to the Eucharist, off which the Church still lives today, the essential and permanent nucleus of ritual comes from the close bond between the liturgy of the Word and the liturgy of the Eucharist."

"Eucharistic action's characteristic nature of being a gift - which implies the communication of the freedom of the 'Deus Trinitas' in Jesus Christ to the freedom of men - requires that its gratuitous nature never be misunderstood. Even if its absence provokes great suffering, this does not mean that the faithful or the people of God have any right to the Eucharist. ... For the same reason, the gift of the Eucharist can never be idolatrously 'possessed' by man; it makes no allowance for a quasi-Gnostic pretension to domination."

"The problem of the lack of priests must be faced with courage. ... This state of things has given rise to a considerable increase of 'Sunday assemblies awaiting a priest'. ... Local Churches are never deprived of the Eucharist. For this reason it is good pastoral practice to encourage as much participation as possible in the Eucharist in one of the communities of the diocese, even where this requires a certain degree of sacrifice. ... Wherever a certain amount of mobility is not possible, the appropriateness of these Assemblies will be seen in their capacity to accentuate in the people the ardent desire for the Eucharist."

"In order to make up for the lack of priests, some, guided by the principle of 'salus animarum suprema lex,' advance the request for the ordination of married faithful of proven faith and virtue, so-called 'viri probati.' The request is often accompanied by the positive recognition of the validity of the age-old discipline of priestly celibacy. However, this law should not, they affirm, prevent the Church from being supplied with an adequate number of ordained ministers, when the scarcity of candidates to celibate priesthood is assuming extremely grave proportions. It is superfluous to reiterate, in this context, the profound theological motives which have led the Latin Church to unite the conferring of ministerial priesthood to the charism of celibacy. Rather, the following question presents itself: are such a choice and such practice pastorally valid, even in extreme cases such as those mentioned above? It seems reasonable to answer positively. Being intimately tied to the Eucharist, ordained priesthood participates in its nature of a gift and cannot be the object of a right. ... It has become very difficult to ascertain the ideal number of priests in the Church, because the Church is not a 'business' to be equipped with a designated quota of team managers. ... Therefore, the proposals made in this Synodal Assembly to identify the criteria for an adequate distribution of clergy in the world, will be very useful. In this area, the journey still seems very long."

"The radical difference between the One who gives Himself and the one who receives the gift ... opens the faithful to the consciousness of the 'mysterium tremendum' of the Eucharist. One cannot approach it without perceiving one's own unworthiness and preparing oneself by asking for the forgiveness of one's sins. ... For this reason, adequate Eucharistic catechesis can never be separated from the idea of a penitential journey. It is in the attitude of confession that the venerable practice of the Eucharistic fast has its roots. It would be useful to dedicate some reflection to this subject in this assembly."

"No one can ignore the widespread tendency of divorced and remarried people to take part in Eucharistic communion, despite what the teaching of the Church indicates. ... Those divorced and remarried people need to be supported by the whole Christian community in the knowledge that they are not excluded from ecclesial communion. Their participation in the Eucharistic celebration permits, in all cases, that spiritual communion which, if correctly lived, mirrors the sacrifice of Jesus Christ Himself. ... During the present Assembly we must further delve into and pay great attention to complex and diverse cases, the objective methods for verifying the hypothesis of nullity of canonical marriage."

“The conscious, active and fruitful participation of the People of God - above all on Sundays - actually coincides with adequate celebration of the holy mysteries. ... It is a question of obeying the Eucharistic rite in its extraordinary completeness, recognizing its canonical and constitutive strength because it has assured, and not by mere chance, the existence of the Holy Church of God for two thousand years.”

“The consideration of the Eucharistic rite as a sacramental action that is, by itself, capable of presenting the Eucharist as source and summit of the life and mission of the Church, would not be complete if one did not show its transforming strength in the personal and community life of the faithful.”

“The Eucharistic celebration represents the Paschal Event which, of itself, creates the conditions for communicating it to all human cultures. ... In order to express the intercultural dimension of the Eucharist ... the use of the Latin language is valuable.”

“If the Eucharist is the gift of the sacramental encounter between humanity and the God of Jesus Christ who makes us ‘truly free’, then such an event has by its very nature a fundamental anthropological dimension.”

“The community dimension of Eucharistic action allows Christians not to forget that the creation-cosmos is a common and universal good and that commitment thereto extends not only to the demands of the present, but also to those of the future.”

“To gather every Sunday, anywhere on earth, to have part of the same Body and the same Blood of Christ imposes the duty of a tenacious battle against all forms of marginalization and economic, social and political injustice to which our brothers and sisters - especially women and children - are submitted.”

“The marvels of divine grace are enclosed in the holy species of the bread and the wine transubstantiated into the Body and Blood of Christ. ... The Church celebrates these mysteries, is nourished by this heavenly food and adores Him, recognizing in the sacramental Jesus the Way to the Truth and to Life.”

(SE/FIRST CONGREGATION/... VIS 051003 (2180))

PAPAL CATECHESIS for CHILDREN WHO RECEIVED FIRST COMMUNION

VATICAN CITY, OCT 15, 2005 (VIS) - This afternoon 150,000 people, including 100,000 children from Italy and other parts of the world who took First

Communion this year, crowded into Saint Peter’s Square for a meeting of prayer and catechesis with the Holy Father. The theme of the event was: “The bread of heaven.”

The children, accompanied by relatives and catechists, filled Saint Peter’s Square and part of Via della Conciliazione. Prior to the arrival of the Pope, they were entertained by a musical show in which a number of the youngsters participated.

The culminating moment came with the Holy Father’s off-the-cuff replies to questions on the Eucharist raised by some of the children sitting near him.

In responding to the first question, the Pope recalled the day of his own First Communion: “It was a Sunday in March 1936, 69 years ago,” he said, “the sun was shining, the church was beautiful, and there was music playing. ... But my most precious memory is that of having understood that Jesus had entered my heart, He visited me, and with Jesus, God Himself was with me. This is a gift of love that is truly worth more than all the rest of life. ... That day I made the promise: ‘Lord, I always want to be with You, but above all I want You to be with me.’”

A little girl asked the Pope why it is necessary to confess before receiving Communion, if our sins are always the same. Smiling at her question, Benedict XVI answered: “It is true that our sins are always the same. Yet do we not clean our house, our room, at least once a week, though the dirt is always the same? If we do not, we run the risk of the dirt accumulating, though we may not see it. The same is true of our souls. If we never confess, our souls are overlooked. I may be pleased with myself, yet I do not understand that I have to improve constantly in order to progress. Confession helps us to have a more open conscience and thus to mature in a spiritual and human way.”

To another question concerning Jesus’ invisible presence in the Eucharist, he replied: “We cannot see Him, yet there are many things we cannot see but that exist and are essential. For example, we cannot see our own reason and intelligence ... yet they exist for we can speak and think. We cannot see electricity, but we feel its effects, such as light. We cannot see the most profound things, but we can see and feel their effects.”

Another little girl asked him what to do if her parents did not go to Sunday Mass. He suggested she speak with them “with great love and respect” saying, “dear mummy, dear daddy, did you know there is something very important for us all, for you too? Meeting Jesus.”

The meeting ended with the adoration and solemn blessing of the Eucharist. The Holy Father explained

to the children that to adore “is to recognize that Jesus is the Lord, the center of our lives. To pray is to say: Jesus, I am Yours, I never want to lose this friendship, this communion with You. ... The absence of God, is a harmful deficiency, He is the light and the guide of our lives, of which we have need.”

(AC/FIRST COMMUNION/... VIS 051017 (580))

ANGELUS, BENEDICT XVI RECALLS JOHN PAUL II

VATICAN CITY, OCT 16, 2005 (VIS) - Homage to John Paul II on the anniversary of his election as Pope and a summary of his pontificate were the central themes of Benedict XVI’s remarks to pilgrims gathered in Saint Peter’s Square for the praying of the Angelus.

“On a day like today, 27 years ago,” the Pope said, “the Lord called Cardinal Karol Wojtyla, archbishop of Krakow, to succeed John Paul I, who died just over a month after being elected.”

“John Paul II, ‘who came from a far country,’ was recognized as a moral authority even by many non-Christians and non-believers, as was clear from the many moving expressions of affection on the occasion of his illness and of profound condolence after his death. At his tomb in the Vatican Grottoes, the pilgrimage of the faithful continues uninterrupted, and this too constitutes an eloquent sign of how much the beloved John Paul II entered into people’s hearts.”

“We could define John Paul II as a Pope completely consecrated to Christ through Mary, as was clear from his motto, ‘Totus tuus.’ He was elected in the heart of the month of the Rosary and the Rosary he often held in his hands became one of the symbols of his pontificate.”

Benedict XVI went on: “The Rosary does not run counter to meditation on the Word of God and to liturgical prayer, rather it represents their natural and ideal complement, especially as a form of preparation and thanksgiving for Eucharistic celebration. Christ, encountered in the Gospel and the Sacrament, is also contemplated with Mary in the various monuments of His life, thanks to the Joyful, Luminous, Sorrowful and Glorious Mysteries.”

“Contemplative and missionary: this was the beloved John Paul II. He achieved this thanks to his intimate bond with God, daily nourished by the Eucharist and by prolonged periods of prayer.

“At the moment of the Angelus, which was so dear to him,” the Holy Father concluded, “it is a pleasure and a duty to remember him on this anniversary, renewing

our thanks to God for having given the Church and the world such a worthy successor of the Apostle Peter. May the Virgin help us treasure his precious heritage.”

(ANG/JOHN PAUL II/... VIS 051017 (380))

PRAYER and the HOLY SPIRIT

Our Lady speaks of prayer and the Holy Spirit to Ivan’s prayer group!

“Dear Children, tonight your Mother calls you to pray as much as you can during these days for this is a time of grace. Abandon yourselves to the Holy Spirit that he may renew you. Prayer renews your body, soul, and heart. Do not let your body be weak, for the Spirit is always willing.”

(Visionary Prayer Group May 5, 1989).

Prayer of Invocation to the Holy Spirit

Eternal Father, in the name of Jesus Christ, and through the intercession of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, send upon me the Holy Spirit.

Come, Holy Spirit, into my heart and sanctify it.
Come, Father of the poor, and bring me relief.
Come, Author of all good, and console me.
Come, Light of our minds, and enlighten me.
Come, consoler of souls and comfort me.
Come, sweet guest of our hearts, and never depart from me.
Come, true repose of my life, and restore me.

Pause. Then three Glory Bes.

Holy Spirit, Eternal Love, Fountain of heavenly light,
Come, inflame our hearts.

Eternal Father, in the name of Jesus Christ, and through the intercession of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, send to me your Holy Spirit.

Come, Holy Spirit, and grant me the gift of wisdom.
Come, Holy Spirit, and grant me the gift of understanding.
Come, Holy Spirit, and grant me the gift of counsel.
Come, Holy Spirit, and grant me the gift of fortitude.
Come, Holy Spirit, and grant me the gift of knowledge.
Come, Holy Spirit, and grant me the gift of piety.
Come, Holy Spirit, and grant me the gift of fear of the Lord.

Pause. Then three Glory Bes.

Holy Spirit, Eternal love, Fountain of heavenly light,
Come, inflame our hearts.

Our Lady said: "Why have you stopped saying the prayer to the Holy Spirit? Remember that I have asked you to pray always and at all times that the Holy Spirit may descend upon you. Begin again to pray for this."

(Locution Jelena and Mirijana Jan 2, 1984)

God bless us all,

Patty, AR, USA

(Patty Cowan, pcowan@firstarkansas.com)

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 / Cephas or Petros depending on original or translation) of Simon bar Jonah and led by his apostolic successor **Pope Benedict XVI**.

The **PFMC** was established in the home of **Keith and Kathleen Werner** based on pilgrimages to **Medjugorje, Bosnia-Herzegovina**, 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 the last page.

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.

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). Call (856) 768-9228 for an information packet with reservation / registration forms or print it from: www.geocities.com/pilgrimsfaith/2006/06RET2.pdf.

17-30 APRIL 2006 PILGRIMAGE to the HOLY LANDS of ISRAEL and JORDAN

The Double Occupancy Package Price is \$2499 and Single Supplement is \$500. Father John Tino, Saint Joan of Arc, Jackson Heights, NY is Spiritual Director. Call (856) 768-9228 for an information brochure with registration form or print it from: www.geocities.com/pilgrimsfaith/2006/06HLP04.pdf.

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.

November 19, 20, 2005 - Northern California Marian Conference, Double Tree Hotel, Modesto, California. "Dear children, Renew the Church" Speakers: Visionary Marija Pavlovic Lunetti, Char Vance, Wayne Weible, Monsignor Francis Friedl, Father Joe Noonan, and Father Mike Patullo, Father Bill McCarthy, Bill Peters, with Father Ted Shipp as MC. For more information call: 209-835-5480; Fax: 209-833-3432 or write: **Fiat Voluntas Tua, 1443 Parker Avenue, Tracy, CA 95376**

March 3, 4, 2006 - Marian Conference, Saint Domitillas Hanley Hall, Hillside, Illinois. "Moving forward after the year of the Eucharist" Speakers: Char Vance, Ferdinand Roccanti, Susan Tassone, Colleen Willard and others to be announced. For more information call: 630-279-8424.

May 26, 27, 28, 2006 - National Conference on Medjugorje Joyce Center, Notre Dame, Indiana. Speakers: To be announced. For more information

contact: **Frances Sain, Queen of Peace Ministries, P.O. Box 761, Notre Dame, IN 46556** Phone: 574-288-8777; Fax: 574-288-8795; e-mail: maryconference@sbcglobal.net. Web site: www.QueenofPeaceMinistries.com.

(compiled from various sources by Keith Werner)

LOCAL MINISTRY EVENTS

4 December 2005, Noon to 4:30 PM, HELP WAKE UP AMERICA DINNER, Ramada Inn, Essington, PA. Special Guest: **Christopher West**. Cost is \$30 per person. Contact (610) 527-2906.

8 December 2005, 9 AM – 5 PM: SPIRIT POWER – ONE DAY RETREAT "Going Into Your Heart" at Malvern Retreat House, Saint Joseph in the Hills, David Haggerty, MSW, LCSW, with Marty Rotella, Evangelist and International Recording Artist. Cost is \$35 per person and includes lunch. Call (610) 644-0400 for more information.

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)

CALENDARS:

In *November*, the Church celebrates the Solemnity of **CHRIST the KING (20)**, Feasts of the **Dedication of Saint John Lateran Basilica in Rome (9)** and **Saint Andrew the Apostle (30)**, Memorials of **Saints Pope Leo the Great (10)**, **Martin of Tours (11)**, **Josaphat (12)**, **Elizabeth of Hungary (17)**, **Cecilia (22)**, **Andrew Dung-Lac and Companions (24)** and the **Presentation of Mary (21)**, and the Optional Memorials of **Saints Albert the Great (15)**, **Margaret of Scotland (16)**, **Gertrude (16)**, **Rose Philippine Duchesne (18)**, **Pope Clement I (23)**, **Columban (23)**, as well as **Blessed Miguel Agustin Pro (23)**, and the **Dedication of the Basilicas of Apostles Peter and Paul in Rome (18)**. Church calendars recognize **Election Day (8)**, **Veterans Day (11)**, and **Thanksgiving Day (24)**. Advent begins on *Sunday, 11/27/05* because **Christmas** is on *Sunday*.

In *December*, the Church celebrates the Solemnities of **IMMACULATE CONCEPTION (8)** and **CHRISTMAS (25)**, Feasts of **Our Lady of Guadalupe (12)**, **Saint Stephen, First Martyr (26)**, **Saint John, Apostle and Evangelist (27)**, **Holy Innocents (28)**, and **Holy Family of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph (30)**, Memorials of **Saints Francis Xavier (3)**, **Ambrose (7)**, **Lucy (13)**, **John of the Cross (14)** and Optional Memorials of **Saints Nicholas (6)**, **Juan Diego (9)**, **Peter Canisius (21)**, **John of Kanty (23)**, **Thomas Becket (29)** and **Pope Sylvester I (31)**.

AROUND the **PFMC** AREA

Please review the announcements on *pages 1* through *7*, and on *pages 34* and *35* 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 **NOVEMBER**

VATICAN CITY, OCT 31, 2005 (VIS) - Benedict XVI's general prayer intention for the month of November is: "That married people may imitate the example of conjugal holiness shown by so many couples in the ordinary conditions of life."

His mission intention is: "That pastors of mission territories may recognize with constant care their duty to foster the permanent formation of their own priests."

(BXVI-PRAYER INTENTIONS/NOVEMBER/... VIS
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(856) 768-9228 FAX: (856) 768-9428

**PRIORITY DATED
RELIGIOUS MATERIAL**

**Mailed early AM,
Tuesday, 11/8/2005**

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PLEASE DO NOT THROW THIS AWAY!!!!

If you do not desire to read "**The *PILGRIM*,**" please give it to a Marian prayer group or return it to sender. If 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!***"

