



# The **PILGRIM**

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December 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



*O Mary, Mother of Light born in Bethlehem, look mercifully at your poor children. Capture my heart and fill it with the same Heavenly Bliss of this Magnificent time of life and grace. Have pity upon me in the dangers of this world, and bless all your children with a holy desire to be within your most Immaculate Heart.*

*Mary, your motherhood is in Eternal jubilation. You are the exalted Queen and Spouse of the Holy Spirit. Teach me the gift of contemplation of the Mysteries of the Rosary, and especially that moment of the coming of the Christ Child who would save us. He truly was born to die, but we are to come to His Cross with Him. Did you know then, Mary, the sorrows you would encounter?*

*Thank you, my mother. Thank you for all your soothing words your consoling moments, your arms of assurance. Thank you for the confidence you give me, and for your loving tenderness. Prepare my soul to come to Heaven where your Son prepares a dwelling place for me with you. I love you. AMEN*

(Kathleen)

## MERRY CHRISTMAS and HAPPY NEW YEAR!

We have finalized the *December* plans for the volunteers at the **PFMC**. 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. On *Monday* and

The *November* MESSAGE, from *GOSPA, Our Lady, Queen of Peace*, to an alleged visionary from **Medjugorje, Bosnia-Herzegovina**, is presented beginning on page **12** (centerfold page) with **REFLECTIONS** and **PRESS BULLETIN**.

*Wednesday* the **PFMC** and its displays should be open from **10 AM** until around **4 PM** with **Sylvia** and then **Vince** and **Livia** 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.

We want to make sure that you all enjoy the **Birthday of Jesus Christ** and remember Him in your **Christmas** plans. **God Bless You** and have a very **Blessed and Joyous New Year**.

We definitely need your helping hands to put out **"The PILGRIM"** monthly. We truly need you, and Our Lady will bless you.

## 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**.

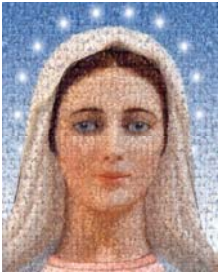
Do you have a friend and you don't know what to give them? Try a registration for the **RETREAT CONFERENCE, 17-19 February 2006**.

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)

**"The PILGRIM"** for *December 2005* is dedicated to **"Our Lady of Bethlehem."** See page **3** for **"IN THIS ISSUE . . ."** or **Table of Contents**.

## 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** at (856) 768-9228 or our web site: <http://www.geocities.com/pilgrimsfaith>.

See the color information sheet sent out in the *November* issue of "**The PILGRIM**" 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.



## NEW BOOKS to ORDER

**"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 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.

**"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.

All these books and many many more are available from the **PFMC** Display and Gift Rooms. We have many books on healing, deliverance, Saints, and prayer. You may come in and browse or order by phone. Please call (856) 768-9228 to order by phone or to verify that we have what you want and will be open at the time you can come to browse the displays or pick up your order.

We accept **MasterCard**, **Visa** and **Discover** donations. All book orders requiring shipping are shipped out using **Priority Mail**.

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

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

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

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

See **Conference Corner** on *page 23* as well as **Bulletin Notices** on *pages 22*. 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 and the article on pages 3 and 4.

### 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 and the article on pages 4 and 5.

### 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 Assisi Parish**, Middletown, CT. A **lilac** information sheet has been prepared and inserted for the first time this month. This retreat is open to non-members of the community. See article on pages 5 and 6.

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

## 2006 RETREAT CONFERENCE and YOUTH TRACK

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

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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 both the **RETREAT CONFERENCE** and **YOUTH TRACK** is enclosed. A color print on white version is available online at: [www.geocities.com/pilgrimsfaith/2006/06RET2.pdf](http://www.geocities.com/pilgrimsfaith/2006/06RET2.pdf).



You must register for the **PFMC RETREAT CONFERENCE or YOUTH TRACK** with the **PFMC** using a **PFMC** registration form from the **green** information packet mentioned earlier or by calling (856) 768-9228. Early registration is recommended. Walk-in registration is limited to room available at the time of walk-in. The **Clarion Hotel Windsor Ballroom** can accommodate up to 800 people.

You may use facsimile (FAX) to send room reservations to the **Clarion Hotel** at (856) 354-7662 or **PFMC RETREAT CONFERENCE or YOUTH TRACK** registrations to the **PFMC** at (856) 768-9428. The use of FAX is recommended after 2/3/06 when mail might not make it to the Registration Team before they move to the **Clarion Hotel** on 16 February 2006.

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**, which will accommodate anyone who just wants to order from the menu. They will also be providing 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 displays of our inventory of books, statues, and religious articles in the **Regency Ballroom**. **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 Youth / Young Adult 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, 17-30 APRIL 2006**

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

All you need to do is fill out and send us 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](http://www.geocities.com/pilgrimsfaith/2006/06HLP04.pdf) with your deposit or full payment donation.

Please sign up now to join **Father Tino, Keith and Kathleen** and currently more than **20** pilgrims 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**. 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**. He is fluent in **English, Italian, and Spanish**.

Our daily prayers will include the **Angelus, Holy Mass, Rosary, and The Divine Mercy Chalet** as well as **The Divine Mercy Novena** through **Divine Mercy Sunday**. Consider starting this excellent novena on **Good Friday**. 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 still offer you air fare, taxes, baggage handling, motor coach transfers, hotels, admissions to controlled sites, where required, all breakfasts and suppers, and the services of an excellent guide. All you need to do is fill out and send us the registration page from the **blue** colored information packet enclosed with this issue of **"The PILGRIM"** or the registration page printed from the Internet online at: [www.geocities.com/pilgrimsfaith/2006/06HLP04.pdf](http://www.geocities.com/pilgrimsfaith/2006/06HLP04.pdf) with your deposit or full payment donation.

Please, look over the planned itinerary in the **blue** colored information packet enclosed, and do send in your deposit or full payment donation 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 or full payment donation, 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 cancellation or change.

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

## **BRIDE of CHRIST COMMUNITY RETREAT, MAY 9 – 11, 2006**

**F**ather Marty Jones, Pastor of **Saint Francis of Assisi Parish, Middletown, CT**, will be at the **Epiphany House** of the **PFMC** to give the first **Bride of Christ Community Retreat** or "bridal party" in this area. See the **ilac** colored information sheet enclosed.

An article appeared in last month's issue of **"The PILGRIM"** giving an explanation of the **Bride of Christ Community** and much of it is repeated here.

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 (koinonia) and service (diakonia) to the parish and the diocese has its special

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mission to prepare each person, and thus the universal Church, as the **Bride of Christ** in joy for 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.

The **Bride of Christ Community** 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**.

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**.

Contact the **PFMC** at **(856) 768-9228** for the **3-day** retreat or “bridal party” **9-11 May 2006** or complete and mail in the reservation form from the **lilac** colored information sheet enclosed in this issue of **“The PILGRIM.”**

(from Father Marty Jones)

## 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,**  
**Christine Altman (11/5/05).**

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

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

## WHY EUCHARISTIC ADORATION?

I’m going to start with the second, or Vatican Council II. One of the many problems tackled by the Vatican Council was how to work for Christian unity, or how to heal the divisions in the church that Jesus established. This included the division between the east and west, the Catholic and the Orthodox that goes back over a thousand years and the more recent division between Catholic, Protestant and other religions that call themselves Christian.

In the Council’s decree on ecumenism, the council tried to get Catholics to see how much we have in common with other Christian churches, to emphasize the beliefs we agree on rather than to concentrate exclusively on our differences in belief and practice. This was a good idea, but I think an unforeseen problem developed. With the effort to see what we believe together, there arose a tendency to water down Catholic beliefs, to dilute Catholic dogmas, to overlook differences, to pretend that they were not there in order to look friendly, more acceptable to non-Catholic Christians. The result, as many of us know was lukewarm Catholics. Catholics were saying things like: “it doesn’t make any difference what you believe as long as you’re sincere” or “as long as it makes you feel good”. Some Catholics, seduced by self-declared theologians began to hold that there are no absolute truths. There’s no right or wrong, black or white. Everything is gray. It can be anything you want it to be. Incidentally, when I refer to Catholics, I am not restricting it to just laity. With such an approach, that of “no-restrictions, no-obligation invitation”, we should have expected to see a great flow of other Christians into the Catholic Church.

We did not see any such flow, but we did see a tremendous flow of Catholics *out* of the ranks of truly believing and practicing Catholics. We saw the tragic drop in Sunday Mass attendance, from over 75% to less than 25%. Something went drastically wrong.

It’s still good for us Catholics to know what beliefs we hold to in common with other Christians, but now, it has become more urgent that we Catholics know how we are *different*; to recognize the treasures of faith that we have; treasures rejected or abandoned by other Christians. Today, we will concentrate on the principal Catholic belief that makes us Catholics different – different from the great majority of other Christians. That, of course, is our belief in the Real Presence of Christ in the Holy Eucharist.

We Catholics are different because we take Jesus Christ at His word. We believe that Jesus gave us His own body and blood in the special sacrament we call the Holy Eucharist. We Catholics actually believe that Jesus is really present in this sacrament! For us Catholics, the Holy Eucharist is not just a symbol. It is not just a memory. It is not just a promise. It is really Jesus Christ. The Holy Eucharist is not some 'thing'. It is some 'one'. It is Jesus, our Lord and our God. This is what we mean by the Catholic doctrine of the Real Presence of Christ in the Eucharist. This is why we call the Holy Eucharist "the Blessed Sacrament".

All the sacraments are blessed! All the sacraments give us the grace of Jesus but this sacrament gives us Jesus himself. This is what we Catholics believe.

Why do we believe this? Not because some theologians say so, not even because the Church says so. We believe this for only one reason, because Jesus Christ says so, and we believe Him.

Many who try to follow Jesus do not believe this, as we Catholics do. This fact should not surprise us any. Jesus had the same problem with some of His own disciples. When Jesus first told His own followers that He would give His body and blood as food and drink as spiritual nourishment for the soul, many of His followers – His disciples – would not accept that. They could not believe Him, so they left Him. Jesus did not try to call them back. He didn't say, "Now, wait a minute! You misunderstood me! I was only talking symbolically". No! He let them go. If they could not believe Him, they could not be His disciples. It was that simple.

Then Jesus asked His apostles if they wanted to leave Him too. He was ready to let His apostles go also. We know that Peter, speaking for the group said, "Lord, to whom should we go? We know that you only, have the words of eternal life".

The apostles took Jesus at His word, and we do too.

This sacrament of the Holy Eucharist comes to us through the sacrifice of the Holy Eucharist, the sacrifice of the Mass. This is evident because the Mass is the renewal of Jesus' death on the cross. In this sacrifice He gave up His human life, His physical body and blood, for our salvation. It was at the Last Supper that Jesus instituted the sacrament and sacrifice.

It was the night before He died. Jesus knew that He soon had to leave His friends. Friends He loved so much. He wanted to leave them something to

remember Him by, but He did much better than that, He left Himself.

At the Last Supper, Jesus was looking ahead to the next day when He would die on the cross. This is why He said, "This is my body, which will be given up for you. This is my blood, which will be shed for you". Then He commanded "Do this in memory of me". We fulfill that command every day. As Jesus at the Last Supper was looking ahead to Calvary, so we in the sacrifice of the Mass, look back to Calvary.

This is why Saint Paul could say: "When we eat this bread and drink this cup, we proclaim the death of the Lord". It's the same sacrifice on the cross and in the Mass – the same sacrifice.

Jesus chose this very special way to remain here with us. It was not just an empty promise when Jesus said, "I will be with you all days, even to the end of the world". He meant that! Jesus remains here with us today in the Mass as our Savior, in Holy Communion, as our spiritual food and in our tabernacle as our friend. Jesus died on the cross to give us this sacrament of His presence among us. This is the sacrament of Jesus' love for us.

I like the way Blessed Mother Teresa put it. She said, "When we look at the cross, we know how much Jesus loved us. When we look at the tabernacle, we know how much Jesus loves us now".

Some Catholics think, that we can share in the Eucharist and gain grace from the Eucharist only in the Mass by receiving Holy Communion. This idea limits the power and the love of Jesus too much. Certainly participation in the sacrifice of the Mass

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and receiving Holy Communion *is the most powerful source of grace for us*, but it is not the only source of Eucharistic grace. After the sacrifice is completed, the sacrament continues on. Jesus, in His sacramental body and blood remains here with us as our friend, just as He promised. This is why Eucharistic Adoration is so important.

This is why we should visit our friend, Jesus, in the Blessed Sacrament, to return His love for us and to draw spiritual strength and nourishment and encouragement from that love.

Unfortunately, there are many in the Church today who do not see the need or the value of Eucharistic Adoration. Some even oppose it, claiming that adoration of Our Lord in the Holy Eucharist is out of date in today's modern church

That's why it is so important for us today to realize that Eucharistic Adoration is very much *in accord* with the teachings of the Church, and especially of Vatican II.

One of the main points of Vatican II was to emphasize the importance of the Eucharistic liturgy in the worship of God and in the development of our own personal spiritual life. The Vatican council strongly advised us that the sacrifice of the Holy Eucharist, the Mass, should be the principal expression of our faith, and that all other devotions should spring from the Mass and leads us back to the Mass. Eucharistic Adoration does exactly that.

All experience shows that private prayer and adoration of our Lord in the Eucharist *causes* more frequent and more intense participation in the Mass.

Despite this teaching of Vatican II, about the Holy Eucharist, almost immediately after the Council, we began to see a steady tragic decline in respect for the Holy Eucharist. In some cases, the Mass seemed to be transformed from the worship of God to the entertainment of the people, then, to the worship of each other.

Reverence for the Blessed Sacrament diminished. Genuflections expressing our faith in the Real Presence of Jesus almost disappeared. Prayerful silence in our churches gave way to socializing.

For many, the church became a social hall instead of a sacred place for prayer and worship. The sacrifice of the Mass was often used as a vehicle for political statements. Eucharistic devotions were ridiculed as "old church", and almost disappeared from the Catholic scene. Today we have a generation or two of

young Catholics who have never even seen benediction of the Blessed Sacrament. Any document of Vatican II or any statement of the Church directed none of this decline. It's contrary to the faith and practice of the Church. This is why Pope John Paul has led the counterattack to restore the Holy Eucharist to its rightful place in the worship and spiritual life of the Church. Every year of his pontificate, Pope John Paul has written a pastoral letter about the Holy Eucharist to all the bishops and priests of the church. In these letters, the Holy Father demanded a stop to the abuses being committed against the Blessed Sacrament. He pleaded for a return to the reverence and traditions of the past, especially for the adoration of our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament. The Holy Father reinforced his words with action. In 1991, Pope John Paul began perpetual adoration of the Eucharist in Saint Peter Basilica in Rome. In 1991, the Holy Father approved the canonical establishment of the lay association for perpetual Eucharistic adoration to promote adoration in every Catholic parish throughout the world. This is the lay association that I work for. Shortly after the Air Force retired me, this lay group recruited me and for the past twelve years they have been sending me to parishes all over our country to promote Eucharistic Adoration.



Listen to what the Holy Father says. Pope John Paul says this: "The Church and the world have a great need of Eucharistic worship". Jesus *waits* for us in this sacrament of love. Let us be generous with our time in going to meet Him in adoration. Notice how the Holy Father is asking you to be generous with your time. He is not asking for your money but something much more precious – your time.

A few years ago at the International Eucharistic Congress in Spain, the Holy Father in his remarks at the opening of the Congress said – first, he thanked all the parishes and people who had promoted adoration of the Eucharist in preparation for the International Eucharistic Congress. Then he prayed that such perpetual exposition and adoration of the Eucharist would be established in every Catholic Church throughout the world.

There is no question or doubt about where Pope John Paul stands with regard to adoration of the Holy Eucharist.

During these past twelve years I've been in parishes all over our country and beyond preaching on



Eucharistic Adoration, often helping parishes start a program or helping them give a boost to a program already established. I've learned a lot. I've learned, particularly, of the great benefits from the people who participate in Eucharistic Adoration. They tell me what it's done for themselves and their families.

I've learned from pastors, too, about the growth of spirit and spiritual life in their parishes. They've told me about the increase in attendance at Mass on Sundays and weekdays, stronger marriages and happier families, and about the increase in vocations to the priesthood and religious life. One pastor told me that since his parish began perpetual Eucharistic adoration, his Sunday and weekday Mass attendance has doubled and the Sunday collection has tripled!

Of course I've also heard some objections to Eucharistic adoration. Some complain that Eucharistic adoration is too private, too personal and even too quiet. This complaint seems to be based on the idea that our worship of God must always, always be a community exercise. It must always involve a lot of people, with much activity and maybe even lots of noise. Prayer does not always have to be that way. Jesus himself showed us that. Look at the examples in the life of Jesus. Throughout His life as a good, practicing Jew, Jesus faithfully participated in the public worship of God by attending the services in the temple at Jerusalem, or in the local synagogues. Just as we assist at Sunday Mass, we are following the good example of Jesus, but Jesus also frequently went off by himself to pray – in the desert, up on the mountains, to be alone with his Father, to communicate with his Father privately to pray quietly, to worship, to thank, to ask for help and strength, especially before major events and decisions in His life. Jesus prayed in private for forty days in the desert before beginning His public ministry. Again, before he chose the twelve apostles, from among his disciples, Jesus spent the whole night in private prayer. The night before he died, Jesus prayed alone to his Father asking for the strength to bear the suffering that He knew that was coming to Him the next day. We should follow this example of Jesus also.

Another problem we often hear is the lack of time, especially with so much work to do for God and His people. Some ask, "Can we really justify the luxury of spending time in private prayer? Wouldn't it be better to spend that time, say, visiting the sick?" To answer that question, let me turn again to Blessed Mother Teresa. You can see I'm a great fan of Blessed

Mother Teresa, but then who isn't? The whole world knows that Blessed Mother Teresa's sisters devote their lives to seeking out and caring for the most helpless and abandoned of the poor, the sick and the homeless. Most of the world knows and admires the work of Mother Teresa's sisters, but I doubt that many know about the prayer life of their community. Each day, before they go out into the streets to find the sick and the dying, Blessed Mother Teresa's sisters spend two to three hours in prayer, assisting at Mass and in adoration of the Blessed Sacrament. Once a well-meaning critic asked Blessed Mother Teresa how she could justify her sisters' spending so much time in private prayer instead of using that time to serve the sick and the poor. Blessed Mother Teresa replied, "If my sisters did not spend so much time in prayer, they could not serve the sick and the poor at all". Their prayer before the Holy Eucharist is the source of the strength and all that is needed to carry out their extremely difficult apostolate.

The love of God must be expressed and strengthened so that love of neighbor might flow from it.

One time when Blessed Mother Teresa was visiting in our country, a group of American women asked her what they could do to help her in her work. Blessed Mother Teresa replied, "The greatest help they could give her would be to spend one hour each week in silent adoration before the Blessed Sacrament". That is good advice for us too.

Sometimes those who object to Eucharistic adoration complain that adoration is too much "Jesus and I". They charge that adoration intends to be selfish, turning our thoughts and attention *inward* instead of reaching out to others. Again, an obvious response is to look at Blessed Mother Teresa's sisters and just to mention the time they spend in private prayer and adoration. I doubt that anyone can match their concern for their neighbor, especially for the most desperate of the abandoned. Who would dare to call their work selfish? Any pastor who has Eucharistic Adoration in his parish will testify that the regular adorers are among the most active members of his parish. From my own experience, preaching in many parishes, I know that active adorers are very often, also the most active pro-lifers in the parish. If we could get adoration going in every Catholic parish, perhaps we could at least get Catholics out of the business of killing babies.

In 1996, Pope John Paul wrote a letter commemorating the 400th anniversary of the Forty Hours devotion. He wrote this: "Closeness to the

Eucharistic Christ in silence and contemplation does not distance us from our contemporaries but on the contrary, it makes us open to human joy and distress, broadening our hearts on a global scale. Anyone who prays to the Eucharistic Savior draws the whole world with him and raises it to God". Obviously, there is nothing selfish about Eucharistic Adoration.

Some of the mistakes about Adoration and all other personal devotions and private prayer, I think, are rooted in a misreading and misunderstanding of Vatican II.

One of the main thrusts of Vatican II was its emphasis on the social nature of man, and consequently of the church. Man is a social being. He lives in a community – the family, parish, city, nation, and world. The church, too, is social. In the "Constitution of the Church in the Modern World", Vatican II declared that the role of the church is not to oppose the world, not to conquer the world but to work with the world to improve it. Carrying this social concept into the realm of worship, Vatican II issued the Constitution on the Liturgy, emphasizing the social and community nature of the worship of God.

This document with the subsequent decrees implementing it directed the changes, which were probably the most visible results of Vatican II, had the greatest impact on the everyday Catholic. These changes were all aimed at a greater understanding and participation in the liturgy by the faithful. Community participation has always been the ideal but it was not easily accomplished. Despite the difficulties in the early days after Vatican II, I think we can say that now, the social nature of the worship of God and community participation in the liturgy is generally acceptable.

With participation in the liturgy and the emphasis on the Mass as community worship, a new problem has arisen, an unfortunate side effect. Some Catholics now have the idea that there is no longer any need for personal, private prayer. Even at non-liturgical devotions such as the Rosary, Stations of the Cross, Novenas, and Benediction, that all these are now obsolete. Some even go so far as to say that such devotions are *discouraged* and even *forbidden* by Vatican II and that's utter nonsense.

There is nothing in Vatican II that supports any of these ideas. In fact, the Council said just the opposite. In the Constitution on the Liturgy, the Council says: "The spiritual life is not limited solely to participation in the liturgy. The Christian is indeed called to pray with his brethren but he must also pray to the Father

in private". Long before Vatican II, we had the words and example of Jesus himself attesting to this need. Jesus constantly exhorted his followers to pray. As I mentioned earlier, He often went off by Himself in the desert or up on the mountain to pray. We always have a need for personal communication with God. No matter how much community prayer we have, no matter how good the participation is, we all still need personal communication with God, which can be achieved only through personal prayer. Personal prayer is needed for its own sake as well as for the sake of liturgical community worship. Community worship *depends* on personal prayer. Trying to build community prayer without personal prayer is like trying to build a brick church without the individual bricks. Proper participation of liturgical worship (community prayer) can be achieved only by a soul prepared and energized by personal devotion and private prayer. Those who habitually criticize the past and old ways often charge that Catholics at Mass concentrated on externals. But too often today, participation in the sacrifice of the Mass is just that, concentration on externals – music, banners, symbols, and novelties with no apparent realization of the great mystery and sacrifice being re-enacted at the altar. That realization only comes with personal prayer and meditation.

External worship, no matter how beautiful, is hollow, if not animated by internal worship. That's why community prayer *needs and depends* on personal prayer.

Personal prayer is needed for its own sake, also. It is true that man is a social being. He must live and worship as a member of the community, but first, as an individual. There are certain activities of his life that man must do himself, for himself. I think there is an apt analogy between the physical life of man and his spiritual life, between the needs of his body and the needs of his soul. The human body needs food, air and rest to remain alive. Each human being, to maintain normal human life has to supply these needs himself. No one can eat, breathe or sleep for you. You've got to do it yourself! Without the proper physical nourishment of food, air and rest, no man or woman can carry on physical activity and growth. The undernourished individual cannot fulfill his role in the community as a social being.

The same thing applies to the spiritual life. The soul needs the spiritual food of the Eucharist, the spiritual rest of meditation and the spiritual air of prayer. Without this proper spiritual nourishment the human

soul cannot mature and flourish spiritually as an individual and consequently cannot fulfill his role in worshipping God as a member of the community. The individual can go through the motions of public prayers, singing, standing and kneeling, but it is only external worship. Missing is internal worship which results only from personal communication with God. Just as air is essential to physical life, so prayer is essential to spiritual life. When you stop breathing, you are dead physically. When you stop praying, you are dead spiritually.

Some of you might be wondering why I'm making such a big issue of this, why I think it is so important to be talking on this subject now. After all, the doctrine of the Real Presence of Christ in the Eucharist has been the heart of our Catholic faith, devotion and worship from the very beginning of Christianity. But, we all know also, the current symptoms in the church tell us it's time again to do some serious thinking about this farewell gift that Jesus gave to us. We're all familiar with the surveys conducted a few years ago that seem to lead to the conclusion that only about twenty-seven percent, I think it was, twenty-seven percent of Catholics believe in the Real Presence as the Church teaches it.

Personally, I think that the observers interpreted the result of that survey a little bit wrong. I don't think that it was only twenty-seven percent *believed*; it might have been only twenty-seven percent *knew* the teaching of the Church. That's our big problem, a case of simple lack of knowledge. Most of these Catholics just do not know what they believe, or what they as, Catholics should believe. They simply have not been taught the Catholic faith. Look at the condition of Catholic education for the past thirty-five years. Fortunately the Catholic bishops have finally realized that it is a disaster. Most a few years ago, the Archbishop who headed the commission on education publicly declared that the Catholic religious education is a shambles and had been that way for at least thirty years. The result is two or three generations of young Catholics who know virtually *nothing* about their faith. They do not know what they believe or why they believe. The older generations have heard very little to reinforce what they have learned in their youth. Obviously, we have a lot of re-educating to do.

One final area must be considered. Spending time with Jesus in adoration should not strike us as unusual. It is really a very natural human activity. When two people love each other, they want to spend time together to visit, to get to know each other better.

You cannot love someone you do not know. Adoration of our Lord in the Eucharist is your chance to know Jesus better.

One of the best aspects of Eucharistic adoration is this: how you spend your time with Jesus is entirely up to you. There is no one preaching to you, reading to you, telling you when to stand, sit, kneel, sing this or whatever. You are on your own. In most adoration chapels there are books available, some holy hour books, to help you get started if you need them. Most of us do at times but you're basically on your own. You spend your time with Jesus any way you want. You can pray your Rosary, you can read your Bible, or you can do some other spiritual reading. But I always say: remember, you are there to visit with your friend, Jesus. Talk with Him; tell Him your problems, your needs or your concerns. Tell Him about your joys, too. Chances are He doesn't hear about those very often! Sometimes I think all Jesus hears from a lot of us is the complaints and the "gimmies". Lord, gimme this and Lord gimme that. But most important, is to stop and listen, let Jesus do some of the talking. He's been waiting for a chance to visit with you, but your life is so busy with work, family and school, your line is always busy. Jesus can't get through to you. It's time to give yourself a break. Take a little time out for a private visit with your best friend, Jesus. The whole purpose of our human existence is to live forever with the Blessed Trinity in heaven, to enjoy forever, the victory of Jesus over sin and death. We get a foretaste of that eternal happiness and peace when we visit and adore Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament.

This is why thousands of people from all across our country will testify that one hour each week with Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament is the most peaceful, the most satisfying hour of their whole week.

So finally we go back to our subject entitled: "Why Eucharistic Adoration"? Why should you spend time visiting with Jesus in the Eucharist, simply because Jesus himself, your best friend, invites you. He said it so warmly, "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened. Come to me and I will refresh you". Who could refuse such an invitation from your *very best friend*?

[http://www.therealpresence.org/eucharst/pea/whyador\\_e.htm](http://www.therealpresence.org/eucharst/pea/whyador_e.htm) Father Robert Goedert, O.P.

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## **MESSAGE of 11/25/2005 via Maria Pavlovic Lunetti**

*Dear children! Also today I call you to pray, pray, pray until prayer becomes life for you. Little children, at this time, in a special way, I pray before God to give you the gift of faith. Only in faith will you discover the joy of the gift of life that God has given you. Your heart will be joyful thinking of eternity. I am with you and love you with a tender love. 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 11/25/2005**

### **I PRAY before GOD to GIVE YOU the GIFT of FAITH**

During 24 years and 5 months of apparitions in the parish **Medjugorje**, the love of **Gospa** remained unchanged, as much as her maternal messages, messages with which she wants to attract us - as with cords of love - towards the heart of Jesus, so that we can live and not barely subsist. Today, she says: *pray, pray, pray*. Today also, she calls to what is most difficult for contemporary man, and it is prayer. There is no other way to arrive to God; there is no more comfortable or easier way, than the way of prayer. She is not only calling to prayer, but she is praying in front of God for us, she is asking God to grant us the gift of faith. In faith, Mary pronounced the words of her abandonment to God: **"Be it done to me according to your word"** and **"Behold the handmaid of the Lord"**. These short words contain the whole life of Mary. In these words, she said everything, and has completely given herself to God.

Faith is a gracious gift of God, gift that we can and must ask from God. God gives us what we ask. Mary is praying with all those who pray. As a Mother, she is praying for us all, she is asking from God the invaluable gift of faith. She knows well that, without faith, we live in darkness and ignorance. Without faith, life is impossible. When we live without faith and trust, we are under the influence of fear, and we feel threatened and insecure. Fear kills life much more than work. The reason for which worries kill more people than work is in the fact that people worry more than they work. Against fear, only faith is successful. Faith means to rely on God who remains invisible for us, God whom we nevertheless

experience as our fundamental support. Faith is a support that we cannot see. Faith is the sure ground on which you can stand; faith is the light that you light in the darkness of your heart. Faith means to open the door to confidence, to open the windows to love, to accept smile, joy, light and health.

Faith is like a jump in a parachute from the plane. If you jump from the plane, you see only the ground, and yourself inevitably precipitating towards the ground, on which you will be pulverized. It is a jump into nothingness, into destruction, into death. But, after this dreadful experience, another incredible experience comes: if you draw the grip of the parachute, above you a cord opens, which holds you attached to a tissue. You left the safety of the plane, you were precipitated towards death which awaits you down there, on the firm ground, and what stopped you, it is the solidity of a piece of tissue - the parachute. This small piece of silk preserved you from death; it gave you the force to leave the safety of the plane.

This is faith. When you start to entrust yourself to somebody, you have the impression to jump into emptiness. The fear seizes you, and you have the impression that you are going towards nothingness. But it is enough to light in oneself the certainty that all will go well, and fear is cut.

We do not put our faith in a tissue, nor in a cord, but in a Mother who walked the same ways that we walk, who lived the same anguishes, apprehensions and sufferings, which we live. This is why she is our certainty, and she is promising never to deceive us, she could never deceive us.

In faith and trust in God open up for us spaces of light, of truth, of certainty that God is showing us. In faith and trust, we realize that all in life was given to us, and that nothing belongs to us: neither life, nor people, nor this earth. We are created for eternity. Mary wishes that now, today, we start to live this

eternity. She wishes that we decide for eternity now, so that it may not be too late tomorrow.

**Father Ljubo Kurtovic, Medjugorje, 26.11.2005**

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## **ANOTHER NOVEMBER REFLECTION on the MESSAGE of 11/25/2005**

***“Dear children! Also today I call you to pray, pray, pray until prayer becomes life for you.”*** In this first sentence of Our Lady’s message of November 25, 2005 again we have been called to be devoted prayer warriors of our dear Blessed Mother. Let us take a moment to reflect upon the fact that prayer is our means of communicating with God. During these days in the Church, we have begun another Advent. This beautiful liturgical season celebrated each year before Christmas challenges us to prepare ourselves spiritually for Jesus Christ. Thus, these words of our dear Blessed Mother in the first sentence of Her message of November 25, 2005 seem so appropriate as we experience these busy, hectic days of December. I wonder if we will, ***“pray, pray, pray until prayer becomes life for you?”*** During these days will prayer and the opportunity to pray become a priority for us? On our own, we will never be successful in this endeavor. Also, with only lackadaisical, part-time faith, we will fail in our attempt to spiritually prepare ourselves for Jesus. On the other hand, through Her beautiful words in this message of November 25, 2005, Our Lady can show us the way to Jesus, our loving Savior.

***“Little children, at this time, in a special way, I pray before God to give you the gift of faith. Only in faith will you discover the joy of the gift of life that God has given you.”*** As one reads the next two sentences of Our Lady’s message of November 25, 2005, it can be determined that strong faith is necessary for the believer who wishes to understand the real meaning of his or her existence. Let us look into our inner being, our souls, and ask ourselves what does my belief in Jesus mean to me? Can we answer that our belief in Jesus is the most important reality of my life? These questions are always most relevant for us as we experience the trials of living in a very secularized world. This is definitely true at this time of year as we try to prepare to celebrate Jesus’ birth in Bethlehem, while often being overwhelmed by the glitter, glamour, and commercialization of Christmas that is pushed upon us each December. For a person

who is seriously attempting to live out one’s faith with much devotion, these realities can cause serious dilemmas in one’s life.

As we conclude the month of November, in our year of 2005, may we be filled with hope. Our Lady is praying for us before God, ***“to give you the gift of faith.”*** This is definitely a profound blessing for us. As we embrace this motherly blessing of Our Lady, let us do our part to strengthen our faith. May we be willing to accept in our lives the humility of Jesus and Mary. This is always the first step that must be taken by each individual believer if he or she wishes to strengthen his or her faith.

Take a few moments and read the first two chapters of the Gospel of Luke. The story of the Annunciation and the Visitation can always help us to be inspired to become humble. May we reflect upon the words of Mary as she responded to Gabriel when asked to be the mother of God’s son, ***“I am the handmaid of the Lord be it done to me according to your word.”*** (Luke 1:38) At that point, Mary did not dwell upon her own importance, but went to visit Elizabeth to acknowledge the fact that this old woman was now with child. When Mary entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth, ***“the infant leaped in her womb, and Elizabeth filled with the Holy Spirit, cried out in a loud voice and said, most blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. And how does this happen to me that the Mother of my Lord should come to me. For at the moment the sound of your greeting reached my ear, the infant in my womb leaped for joy. Blessed are you who believed that what was spoken to you by the Lord would be fulfilled.”*** (Luke 1:41-45) The faith of Mary and Elizabeth is extraordinary. Their acknowledgement of God working His plan of salvation within their lives can help us to become more devoted to the faith. In this process, we can begin to change, and move away from that malaise of unbelief that often overcomes us.

As we continue to contemplate these beautiful words of our dear Blessed Mother in this message of November 25, 2005, let us allow Her to lead us to the

Sacred Heart of Jesus. May we truly become one with the birth, life, passion, death, and resurrection of our dear Lord. In this way, the love of Jesus will mean everything to us; and that love of our dear Lord will become the essence of who we are. Then, we will not be afraid of carrying Jesus' cross while offering ourselves to the Eternal Father for our own purification and the salvation of all souls. As one arrives at this level of faith, one can realize that, **"only in faith will you discover the joy of the gift of life that God has given you."**

**"Your heart will be joyful thinking of eternity. I am with you and love you with a tender love."** In these two sentences of Her message of November 25, 2005, we are called by Our Lady to contemplate within our lives the reality of eternal life while realizing that she is encouraging us with a mother's love to come to Jesus with all of our strength. As we live each day may we acquire the willingness of heart to be faithful to Jesus. Let us reject sin, selfishness, and that indifferent attitude that seems to envelope us too often. God's way is the only way, and when we acknowledge this, we will begin to find peace.

May we be forever grateful to God for His presence, and for the gift of Our Lady as our spiritual Mother. During this Advent offer many prayers to the Eternal Father in thanksgiving for all of His gifts. In this way, we can develop that profound relationship that will truly connect us with the Father, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit. Then Christmas can begin to become for us the spiritual reality that it is supposed to be.

I hope you are well. Give my best to all of your families. Have a wonderful Christmas and be filled with the love, peace, and humility of "little Jesus." May the blessing of 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](mailto:HEdwardChalmers@aol.com), 30 November, 2005)

## **PRESS BULLETIN 216, 11/26/2005**

### **A CALLING CARD**

*Recently, I received the calling card of an Irish pilgrim. Of course, as it should be, on the calling card*

*was written the information on the person and the contacts. This calling card however had literally its "other side of the medal": I was agreeably surprised to see printed on the back a message given by Our Lady. It seemed to me that, precisely on the back, I could find more information on this person than on the face, where his name was, his telephone number, his e-mail address... This message on the back goes more in-depth. On the face, we read information, and on the back the identity, the choice, the aspiration of the person.*

*This Irish pilgrim, well employed in Dublin, wants thus to spread the message of God among people, and to say what is important for him. He does not hesitate to give these calling cards to all those that he meets. In an environment of hide-and-seek games, in which very often we keep silent about our Christian identity, this is an example of how to be coherent. Jesus never accepted to play with several options. He said to us that we could not serve God and the mammon. He often made reproaches to the scribes and the Pharisees.*

*A great theological and psycho sociological question is why the Christians flee a public demonstration of their faith? Why do they think that they will have less success if they hide their fidelity to Christ? It goes so far that some of them eliminate Christian symbols from their offices, from their cars, from their neck. Although it is said to us, and repeated high and strong, that faith is a private business, it is also a public affair of universal range. To suppress something, which characterizes us in an essential way, means to disavow the One in whom we believe, and into whose hands, especially in distress and pain, we place our trust.*

*Jesus says clearly that he will disavow, in front of his Father and in the Kingdom of heaven towards which we aspire, those who disavow Him on earth. Therefore, the message printed on the calling card reminds us that it is necessary to express publicly and confess discreetly our faith, and to invite others to conversion. In fundamental questions, we should not step back. Jesus did not step back in front of those who wanted Him to deny that He was to One who was supposed to come. He remained coherent at the price of the cross and of death.*

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**Father Mario Knezovic**



## COMMUNIONS and PRIESTS

During the month of *October*, **150,000** received Holy Communion and **3442** priests from this country and abroad signed the register for celebrating Holy Mass in Medjugorje.

## FOUR BISHOPS in MEDJUGORJE

On Friday, November 4, four bishops came to the Shrine of the Queen of Peace in Medjugorje. Monsignor Thomas Msusa, actual bishop of the diocese of Zomba, his retired predecessor Monsignor Allan Chamgwera, and Monsignor Remi Joseph Gustave Saint-Marie, bishop of Dedza, came from Malawi. Monsignor Joseph Faber MacDonald, bishop of the diocese Saint John in New Brunswick, came from Canada.



All four bishops have a positive opinion about Medjugorje, and they are glad to be in this worldly renowned Our Lady's shrine. At the presbytery, they met the pastor, Doctor Father Ivan Sesar, and other Franciscans from Medjugorje. They especially underlined the importance of Medjugorje as the largest confessional of the world.

## SECRETARY GENERAL for the MISSIONS



Father Vincenzo Brocanelli, Secretary general for the Missions of the OFM Franciscans, and Father Sime Samac, Definitor general of the Franciscan Order, visited Medjugorje on Saturday, October 22, 2005, at the occasion of the World Mission Day. They concelebrated the Evening Mass, which was presided by Doctor Father Ivan Sesar, pastor of Medjugorje. Father Vincenzo Brocanelli gave the homily in which he spoke about the importance of the mission and about love for those who are most in need.

## SEMINARS in "DOMUS PACIS"

Six "Prayer, Fasting and Silence" seminars took place in "Domus Pacis" led by Father Ljubo Kurtovic, for pilgrims from Poland, Slovakia, Germany, Lithuania, France and Austria.

The Franciscan sisters led two seminars for girls. Four seminars were organized for members of Franciscan Youth Fraternity, for the Franciscan Third order and for young people from Montenegro.

## THE ELEVENTH INTERNATIONAL SEMINAR for PRIESTS

The eleventh international seminar for priests will take place in Medjugorje from July 3 to 8, 2006. The theme of the seminar is: "Spirituality of the priests". ("Let us pray, little children,... so that the Church may resurrect in love" - message of March 25, 1999.)

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

## THE SOLEMNITY of the HOLY MOTHER of GOD



received the Author of life."

On New Year's Day, the octave day of Christmas, the Church celebrates the Solemnity of the Holy Mother of God. The divine and virginal motherhood of the Blessed Virgin Mary is a singular salvific event: for Our Lady it was the foretaste and cause of her extraordinary glory; for us it is a source of grace and salvation because

"through her we have received the Author of life." The solemnity of the 1 January, an eminently Marian feast, presents an excellent opportunity for liturgical piety to encounter popular piety: the first celebrates this event in a manner proper to it; the second, when duly catechised, lends joy and happiness to the various expressions of praise offered to Our Lady on the birth of her divine Son, to deepen our understanding of many prayers, beginning with that which says: "Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us, sinners".

In the West, 1 January is an inaugural day marking the beginning of the civil year. The faithful are also involved in the celebrations for the beginning of the

new year and exchange “new year” greetings. However, they should try to lend a Christian understanding to this custom making of these greetings an expression of popular piety. The faithful, naturally, realize that the “new year” is placed under the patronage of the Lord, and in exchanging new year greetings they implicitly and explicitly place the New Year under the Lord’s dominion, since to him belongs all time (cf. Ap 1, 8; 22,13).

A connection between this consciousness and the popular custom of singing the *Veni Creator Spiritus* can easily be made so that on 1 January the faithful can pray that the Spirit may direct their thoughts and actions, and those of the community during the course of the year.

New year greetings also include an expression of hope for a peaceful New Year. This has profound biblical, Christological and incarnational origins. The “quality of peace” has always been invoked throughout history by all men, and especially during violent and destructive times of war.

The Holy See shares the profound aspirations of man for peace. Since 1967, 1 January has been designated “world day for peace”.

Popular piety has not been oblivious to this initiative of the Holy See. In the light of the new born Prince of Peace, it reserves this day for intense prayer for peace, education towards peace and those value inextricably linked with it, such as liberty, fraternal solidarity, the dignity of the human person, respect for nature, the right to work, the sacredness of human life, and the denunciation of injustices which trouble the conscience of man and threaten peace.

<http://wf-f.org/SolemnityMary.html> #115-117  
**Catechism of the Catholic Church**

## IS MARY, REALLY the MOTHER of GOD?

Of course! This is quite simply explained. The main puzzle is why any Christian should object to the title of Mother of God. All Christians believe that Jesus is the Son of God, and also IS God, being the 2nd Person of the Trinity, along with the Father and the Holy Spirit. Jesus is also the son of Mary. Now many Protestants are quite prepared to say “Mary, Mother of Jesus,” but balk at saying “Mary, Mother of God.” Why?

There is probably an element of cultural conditioning here. Giving Mary such a title like Mother of God seems too grand to many protestants. For centuries most protestants have tried to ignore Mary, and have avoided all talk and discussion of her - except perhaps to condemn Catholic “excesses”. But this is a serious matter. To call Mary the “Mother of Jesus” and yet refuse to call her “Mother of God” is to diminish Jesus as well as Mary, for **it is a denial that Jesus is truly or fully God.**

It was this sort of thinking that led to the formal definition of the title Mother of God at the Council of Ephesus in 431AD. Patriarch Nestorius had preached that Mary was not Mother of God, being only the mother of Jesus’s physical body, which was then indwelt by God the Word. This was condemned as Heresy, since the Gospels tell us that the Word did not unite with man, but was made man. **The Word became flesh and dwelt among us.” (John 1.14).** This is a crucial difference. Jesus was not two persons: the Son of God, and the Son of Mary, but one person, the Son of God and Mary. If this were not so, his death could not have saved us.

### THE NATURE OF JESUS

1. To be our Saviour, Jesus needed to be both fully God, and fully man, descended from Adam. He could not be a counterfeit, or someone who just looked human..
2. God the Word has existed as spirit from the beginning of time.
3. At the Incarnation, through the action of the Holy Spirit, God the Word took flesh and **full humanity** from the Virgin Mary. Both His Human Nature and His human body came from Mary, These united with His Divine Nature in Jesus.
4. This produced **one person** with one consciousness, both fully God and fully man, who is **truly both Son of God and Son of Mary.**
5. The Virgin Mary is therefore the Mother of ALL of the PERSON of Jesus Christ, and is therefore truly Mother of God the Son.

Nestorius did not recant, and founded his own church - which is no longer with us. In effect, in saying that Mary was the Mother of Jesus, but not the Mother of God, he was denying the reality of the incarnation. Attempts to downgrade Mary seem always lead to a downgrading of the full divinity of Jesus.

## **BUT DOESN'T CONCENTRATING ON THE VIRGIN MARY DISTRACT US FROM GOD AND FROM JESUS?**

This is a common complaint of Protestants, but one I really fail to understand. **Does admiring any part of God's creation distract you from God?** When you walk through a forest of tall, ancient trees and you admire their beauty, does it distract you from God? When you look at a sunset or a towering mountain, does that turn you away from God? Of course not. For most people such things draw them **closer** to God.

Similarly when you admire people like St Francis, Mother Theresa, or other Christians who have given up their lives to serve God. Does that make you turn away from God - or is it more likely to make you think of the greatness of the God who inspired such people? So it is also with Mary who is the Mother of God.

**(L'École Notre Dame du Nord/Our Lady of the North School (LNDN) is a registered non-profit organization, faithful to the Magisterium (Rome). LNDN works to serve the North through Christ's love. <http://www.ourladyweb.com/mary.html> )**

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## **EUCHARIST, A 'LENS' through which to MONITOR the CHURCH**

**VATICAN CITY, OCT 2, 2005 (VIS)** - Following this morning's Mass for the opening of the Eleventh Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops, Benedict XVI appeared at the window of his study in order to pray the Angelus with the faithful gathered in Saint Peter's Square below.

"The Catholic doctrine on the Eucharist," he said, "authoritatively defined by the Council of Trent, must be absorbed, experienced and transmitted by the ecclesial community in ways that are ever new and adapted to the times. The Eucharist may also be seen as a 'lens' through which the countenance and the progress of the Church may be continuously monitored."

Going on to note how the closure of the Synod on October 23 coincides with World Mission Day, the Pope emphasized how this coincidence "helps us to contemplate the Eucharistic mystery from a missionary standpoint. In fact, the Eucharist is the driving force at the core of Church's evangelizing activity, rather like the heart is in the human body. Without the celebration of the Eucharist, Christian

communities ... would lose their true character. Only in as much as they are 'Eucharistic' can they transmit to mankind the figure of Christ, and not simply ideas and values, noble and important though they may be."

The Pope concluded by recalling how the Eucharist "has formed eminent missionary apostles," both religious and lay people, active and contemplative. He specifically mentioned Saint Francis Xavier "whom the love of Christ drove to the Far East to announce the Gospel," and Saint Therese of Lisieux, who "lived her ardent apostolic spirit in the cloister, meriting her proclamation, along with Saint Francis Xavier, as patron of the missionary activity of the Church."

**(ANG/EUCHARIST:MISSIONS/... VIS 051003 (300))**

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## **MEANING of the EUCHARIST**

### **English Translation of the Words of *Saint Thomas Aquinas***

Since it was the will of God's only-begotten Son that human beings should share in His Divinity, He assumed our nature in order that by becoming Human He might . . . [share His Divinity]. Moreover, when He took our flesh He dedicated the whole of its substance to our salvation. He offered His Body to God the Father on the altar of the cross as a sacrifice for our reconciliation. He shed His Blood for our ransom and purification, so that we might be redeemed from our wretched state of bondage and cleansed from all sin. But to ensure that the memory of so great a gift would abide with us for ever, He left His Body as food and His Blood as drink for the faithful to consume in the form of bread and wine. O precious and wonderful banquet, that brings us salvation and contains all sweetness! Could anything be of more intrinsic value? Under the old law it was the flesh of calves and goats that was offered, but here Christ Himself, the true God, is set before us as our food. What could be more wonderful than this?

No other Sacrament has greater healing power; through it sins are purged away, virtues are increased, and the soul is enriched with an abundance of every spiritual gift. It is offered in the Church for the living and the dead, so that what was instituted for the salvation of all may benefit all. Yet, in the end, no one can fully express the sweetness of this Sacrament, in which spiritual delight is tasted at its source, and in which we renew the memory of that surpassing love for us, which Christ revealed in His passion. It was to



impress the vastness of this love more firmly upon the hearts of the faithful that our Lord instituted this Sacrament at the Last Supper. As He was on the point of leaving the world to go to the Father, after celebrating the Passover with His disciples, He left it as a perpetual Memorial of His Passion. It was the fulfillment of ancient figures and the greatest of all His miracles, while for those who were to experience the sorrow of His departure, it was destined to be a unique and abiding consolation.

[www.diopitt.org/home\\_vrofeucharist\\_prayersbooklet.pdf](http://www.diopitt.org/home_vrofeucharist_prayersbooklet.pdf) *Saint Thomas Aquinas* [from **Father Joe Byerley**]

## **PRAYER for a VISIT to the BLESSED SACRAMENT**

**M**Y Lord Jesus Christ, who for the love which You bear us, remain night and day in this Sacrament full of compassion and love, awaiting, calling, and welcoming all who come to visit You, I believe that You are present in the Sacrament of the Altar. I adore You from the abyss of my nothingness, and I thank You for all the graces which You have bestowed upon me and in particular for having given me Yourself in this Sacrament, for having given me Your most holy Mother Mary as my Advocate, and for having called me to visit You in this church. I now salute Your most loving Heart; and this for three ends: first, in thanksgiving for this great gift; secondly, to make amends to You for all the outrages which You receive in this Sacrament from all Your enemies; thirdly, I intend by this visit to adore You in all the places on earth in which You are present in this Sacrament and in which You are the least reserved and the most abandoned. My Jesus, I love You with all my heart. I grieve for having hitherto so many times offended Your infinite goodness. I purpose by Your grace never more to offend You for the time to come. And now, miserable and unworthy though I be, I consecrate myself to You without reserve; I give You renounce my entire will, affections, my desires, and all that I possess. Henceforward, dispose of me and of all that I have as You please. All that I ask of You and desire is Your holy love, final perseverance and the perfect accomplishment of Your will. I recommend to You the souls in Purgatory, and especially those who had the greatest devotion to the most Blessed Sacrament, and to the most Blessed Virgin Mary. I also recommend to You all poor sinners. Finally, my dear Savior, I unite all my

affections with the affections of Your most loving Heart, and I offer them, thus united, to Your Eternal Father, and beseech Him in Your name to vouchsafe for Your love, to accept and grant them. Amen.

[http://www.diopitt.org/home\\_vrofeucharist\\_prayersbooklet.pdf](http://www.diopitt.org/home_vrofeucharist_prayersbooklet.pdf) *Saint Alphonsus Liguori (1696-1787)*

## **EXPECTING GOD to ANSWER A SIMPLE PRAYER**

**D**ear Lord, I thank You for this day. I thank You for my being able to see and to hear this morning. I'm blessed, because You are a forgiving God and an understanding God. You have done so much for me and You keep on blessing me. Forgive me this day for everything I have done, said or thought that was not pleasing to you.

I ask now for Your forgiveness. Please keep me safe from all danger and harm. Help me to start this day with a new attitude and plenty of gratitude. Let me make the best of each and every day to clear my mind so that I can hear from You. Please broaden my mind that I can accept all things. Let me not whine and whimper over things I have no control over. And It's! the best response when I'm pushed beyond my limits.

I know that when I can't pray, You listen to my heart. Continue to use me to do Your will. Continue to bless me that I may be a blessing to others. Keep me strong that I may help the weak... Keep me uplifted that I may have words of encouragement for others. I pray for those that are lost and can't find their way. I pray for those that are misjudged and misunderstood. I pray for those who don't know You intimately.

I pray for those that pray this prayer and share it with others. I pray for those that don't believe. But I thank you that I believe. I believe that God changes people and God changes things. I pray for all my sisters and brothers. I pray for each and every family member in their households. I pray for peace, love and joy in their homes that they are out of debt and all their needs are met. I pray that every eye that reads this knows there is no problem, circumstance, or situation greater than God. Every battle is in Your hands for You to fight. I pray that these words be received into the hearts of every eye that sees it. If you prayed this prayer, change the number in the subject box before forwarding the message so people can See how many people have done so. God Bless!!!!!!!!!!!!!! Just repeat

this phrase and see how God moves!! God, I love you and I need you, come into my heart, please.

(LESLIE MAC [gramiemac@yahoo.com](mailto:gramiemac@yahoo.com))

## 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)

## BEWARE of RELIGIOUS FADS, POPE TELLS the YOUNG

Pope Benedict XVI issued a ringing back to basics call to more than one million young Catholics on Sunday at a giant open air mass which marked a triumphant finale to his first foreign visit as pope. Wrapping up a successful four-day visit to his native Germany, the 78 year old pontiff said young people should turn their backs on secularism and faddish new-age religions.

He said there was “a kind of new explosion of religion” that if pushed too far, turned faith into almost a consumer product.”

The huge open-air mass was the culmination of a visit which swung between the spiritual and the political as new recruits to the priesthood in his homeland, and urged German bishops to do more to get new vocations.

Outlining the problems facing the Church in his homeland, he said “secularism and de-Christianization” continued to rise, while the “influence of Catholic ethics and morals were in constant decline.” Yet, he warned them there could be “no false compromises, no watering down of Gospel,” Benedict appears to have turned a corner in his pontificate and embellished his once rather dry appeal to young people with his first foreign trip.

The young crowd gave Benedict a nosy reception under a huge canopy of swirling flags when he arrived aboard his popemobile, waving and blessing the crowd.

Before beginning the mass, he raised a huge cheer when he said: “I would like to have been able to go through the crowd and greet each and every one of you. That was not possible, but I greet you warmly.”

## HEAR the CRY of the POOR, FIGHT against POVERTY

VATICAN CITY, OCT 16, 2005 (VIS) - At midday today, after praying the Angelus, Benedict XVI referred to the World Day for the Eradication of Poverty, which will be celebrated tomorrow. The Day was established by Father Joseph Wresinski, founder of the movement “ATD, Aide a Toute Detresse - Quart Monde.”

“Poverty is plague against which humanity must fight without cease,” said the Pope. “We are called to ever greater solidarity to ensure that no one remains excluded from society.”

The Holy Father gave assurances that his prayers were with “the poor who fight courageously to live with dignity, caring for their families and the needs of their fellows.” He also greeted “everyone who puts themselves at the service of people in need.”

Finally, Benedict XVI called on the leaders of the international community “to hear the cry of the poor and intensify their activities in the fight against poverty.”

Later, Benedict XVI received a delegation from the Institute for the Rights of Man, of Auschwitz, Poland, for the occasion of awarding the John Paul II Prize. The prize was instituted following John Paul II’s visit to Auschwitz-Birkenau in 1979 and aims to defend and spread the papal message of peace and defense of human rights, recognizing people in the modern world who put these values into practice in their daily lives. The prizewinner is chosen by a jury, presided this year by Cardinal Franciszek Macharski,

### 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](http://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.

archbishop emeritus of Krakow, Poland.

The prize has been awarded this year to Bishop Vaclav Maly, auxiliary of Prague, Czech Republic, who was a member of the dissident movement “Charter 77” during the years of the communist regime, and to Stefan Wilkanowicz, president of the ZNAK Foundation of Christian Culture of Krakow.

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(ANG/POVERTY/... VIS 051017 (300))

## **GOD IS NOT an IMPLACABLE SOVEREIGN but a LOVING FATHER**

**VATICAN CITY, OCT 19, 2005 (VIS)** - In the general audience held today, exactly six months since his election to the Chair of Peter, Benedict XVI dedicated his catechesis to Psalm 129, “out of the depths I cry to thee,” which is, he recalled, “one of the best-known and most loved psalms of the Christian tradition.” The audience, held in Saint Peter’s Square, was attended by 40,000 people.

Pointing out how the psalm is known as the “De profundis,” the Pope explained that “it is, in the first place, a song of divine mercy and of reconciliation between the sinner and the Lord. ... It opens with a voice arising from the depths of evil and guilt. ... then continues over three stages dedicated to the subject of sin and forgiveness.”

Benedict XVI commented on the verses: “If thou, O Lord, shouldst mark iniquities, Lord, who could stand? But there is forgiveness with thee, that thou mayest be feared,” saying: “It is significant that fear, an attitude of respect mixed with love, is generated not by punishment but by forgiveness. More than God’s anger, it is His generous and disarming magnanimity that should provoke our holy fear. In fact, God is not an implacable sovereign who condemns the guilty, but a loving Father Whom we must love, not out of fear of punishment, but for His goodness and readiness to forgive.”

In the second part of the psalm “watchfulness and hope blossom in the penitent psalmist’s heart, along with the certainty that God will pronounce a liberating word and cancel out sin.” In the third part, “the personal salvation that the psalmist had originally implored, is extended to the whole community” and “and takes root in the historical faith of the people of the Covenant, ‘redeemed’ by the

Lord, not only from Egyptian oppression, but also ‘from all iniquities’.”

In this way, “from the dark gorge of sin the supplication of the ‘De profundis’ reaches God’s luminous horizon, dominated by ‘mercy and redemption,’ two of the great characteristics of the God of love.”

In concluding remarks, Benedict XVI placed the psalm in the context of Christian tradition, quoting Saint Ambrose who, in his Tractate on Penance, writes: “Never lose hope in divine forgiveness, however great your sin. With God there can always be a change of heart, if you acknowledge your offence.”

At the end of the audience, and after greeting pilgrims in several languages, the Pope blessed a statue of Saint Mariana de Jesus Paredes y Flores (1618 - 1645), the “lily of Quito” and first saint of Ecuador, canonized by Pius XII in 1950. The statue has been placed in a niche on the outside of Saint Peter’s Basilica.

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(AG/PSALM 129/... VIS 051019 (460))

## ***PILGRIMS of FAITH MARIAN CENTER (PFMC)***

**T**he **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 (Kephaz / 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**

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## **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)**

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## **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 someone 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.

There is no "subscription" fee. We do ask for free will donations monthly, quarterly, 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*)**

## **PFMC DISPLAYS and / or PRESENTATIONS**



**K**athleen 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)**

## **BULLETIN NOTICES for *PFMC* AREA EVENTS**

**W**ould 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.

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**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](http://www.geocities.com/pilgrimsfaith/2006/06RET2.pdf).

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**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](http://www.geocities.com/pilgrimsfaith/2006/06HLP04.pdf).

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**9-11 MAY 2006 BRIDE of CHRIST COMMUNITY RETREAT**

Father Marty Jones, Pastor of Saint Francis of Assisi Parish, Middletown, CT will conduct this retreat in the Upper Room at Epiphany House of the PFMC. Lodging is available in nearby hotels. This retreat is open to non-members of the community. Call (856) 768-9228 for an information sheet with registration form or print it from the PFMC web pages at: [www.geocities.com/pilgrimsfaith/2006/06BCR5.pdf](http://www.geocities.com/pilgrimsfaith/2006/06BCR5.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 *25<sup>th</sup> of the month* before the event. The earlier the better so we can make space for it.

**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](mailto:maryconference@sbcglobal.net). Web site: [www.QueenofPeaceMinistries.com](http://www.QueenofPeaceMinistries.com).

(compiled from various sources by Keith Werner)

## ENCLOSED ITEMS

In this *December* issue of "*The PILGRIM*" are the following:

A **green** information packet for the **2006 RETREAT CONFERENCE and Youth Track, 17-19 February 2006** as mentioned on pages 3 and 4.

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** as mentioned on pages 4 and 5.

A **lilac** information sheet for the **Bride of Christ Community Retreat** in the **Upper Room** at **Epiphany House, Tuesday, 9 May 2006, thru Thursday, 11 May 2006**. Lodging in nearby hotels is available. **Retreat Master** will be **Father Marty Jones, Pastor of Saint Francis of Assisi Parish, Middletown, CT**. This retreat is open to non-members of the community. This retreat is discussed on pages 5 and 6.

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 readers that their addresses are still correct and would love to receive a donation from each reader on a regular basis.

**NOTE:** If "*The PILGRIM*" publication process is not supported by the readers we will have to cease its monthly production.

Please send in a donation on as regular a basis as your finances permit. We are subsidizing the publication of "*The PILGRIM*" from other donations.

(Keith Werner and all the other PFMC Volunteers)

## PRAYER for a VISIT to the BLESSED SACRAMENT

My Lord Jesus Christ, who for the love which You bear us, remain night and day in this Sacrament full of compassion and love, awaiting, calling, and welcoming all who come to visit You, I believe that You are present in the Sacrament of the Altar. I adore You from the abyss of my nothingness, and I thank You for all the graces which You have bestowed upon me and in particular for having given me Yourself in this Sacrament, for having given me Your most holy Mother Mary as my Advocate, and for having called me to visit You in this church. I now salute Your most loving Heart; and this for three ends: first, in thanksgiving for this great gift; secondly, to make amends to You for all the outrages which You receive in this Sacrament from all Your enemies; thirdly, I intend by this visit to adore You in all the places on earth in which You are present in this Sacrament and in which You are the least reserved and the most abandoned. My Jesus, I love You with all my heart. I grieve for having hitherto so many times offended Your infinite goodness. I purpose by Your grace never more to offend You for the time to come. And now, miserable and unworthy though I be, I consecrate myself to You without reserve; I give You renounce my entire will, affections, my desires, and all that I possess. Henceforward, dispose of me and of all that I have as You please. All that I ask of You and desire is Your holy love, final perseverance and the perfect accomplishment of Your will. I recommend to You the souls in Purgatory, and especially those who had the greatest devotion to the most Blessed Sacrament, and to the most Blessed Virgin Mary. I also recommend to You all poor sinners. Finally, my dear Savior, I unite all my affections with the affections of Your most loving Heart, and I offer them, thus united, to Your Eternal Father, and beseech Him in Your name to vouchsafe for Your love, to accept and grant them. Amen.

([http://www.diopitt.org/home\\_vrofeucharist\\_prayersbooklet.pdf](http://www.diopitt.org/home_vrofeucharist_prayersbooklet.pdf) Saint Alphonsus Liguori (1696-1787))

## CALENDARS:

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). **May the Lord Jesus Christ bless you on His Birthday and bring you many Blessed Gifts at Christmas!**

In *January*, the Church celebrates the Solemnities of *The Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of God* (1), *Epiphany of the Lord* (8), Feasts of *Baptism of the Lord* (9) and *Conversion of Saint Paul, Apostle* (25), and Memorials of *Saints Basil the Great* (2), *Gregory Nazianzen* (2), *Elizabeth Ann Seton* (4), *John Neumann* (5), *Anthony, Abbot* (17), *Agnes* (21), *Francis de Sales* (24), *Timothy* (26), *Titus* (26), *Thomas Aquinas* (28) and *John Bosco* (31) and Optional Memorials of *Saints Raymond of Penyafort* (7), *Hilary* (13), *Pope Fabian* (20), *Sebastian* (20), *Angela Merici* (27), and *The Most Holy Name of Jesus* (3) as well as *Blessed Andre Bessette* (6). Most Church calendars recognize **Doctor Martin Luther King, Jr** (16). Have a very Joyous New Year!

## AROUND the *PFMC* AREA

Please review the announcements on *pages 1* through *7*, and on *pages 20* through *23* particularly in **Bulletin Notices** 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 *DECEMBER*

VATICAN CITY, DEC 1, 2005 (VIS) - Pope Benedict's general prayer intention for the month of *December* is: "That an ever deeper understanding be spread of the dignity of men and women according to the Creator's plan."

His mission intention is: "That, on earth, search for God and thirst for truth may lead every human being to meet the Lord."

(BXVI-PRAYER INTENTIONS/DECEMBER/...VIS 051201 (70))

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

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

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

