



The PILGRIM

Vol. 12, No. 4 Pilgrims of Faith Marian Center (PFMC)

April 2001

MESSAGE of 3/25/2000

Dear Children! Also today I call you to open yourselves to prayer. Little children, you live in a time in which God gives great graces but you do not know how to make good use of them. You are concerned about everything else, but the least for the soul and spiritual life. Awaken from the tired sleep of your soul and say yes to God with all your strength. Decide for conversion and holiness. I am with you, little children, and I call you to perfection of your soul and of everything you do. Thank you for having responded to my call.

(A copy of a message claimed to be given by the Blessed Virgin Mary to Marija Pavlovic Lunetti on November 25, 2000. The Pilgrims of Faith Marian Center (PFMC) upholds the final decision of the Catholic Church as to the authenticity of this Medjugorje message.)

A PRAYER



Lord, Jesus Christ, the world can never know what you endured in Your sufferings. But we do know that it is through the Sanctuary of Your Cross that Your redeeming blood has been poured upon each of us.

We are free O Lord to know you and to serve you, and in so doing, we are allowed to live a life of adoration. We are free to drink fully of the water of salvation. Your Living Water quenches our thirsty souls, and satisfies us as Your children.

Our will adores You, and we become so aware of Your Divine Presence, even in this dim and dusty world.

Never let us turn away from Your cross, O Lord. Once we have found You, our lives can be spent untiringly in Adoration of You. And, in Eucharist, may we come to receive Your blessing of Benediction.

You are the sunshine, the Heavenly Jerusalem, the grace that comes into our souls. You are the sunshine of grace, the Blessed Sacrament that warms and heals us to peace and trust. AMEN.

(Kathleen prays from the heart for each issue.)

2002 RETREAT CONFERENCE

Many are asking us about being able to book their rooms for the 2002 RETREAT CONFERENCE “I HAVE LOVED YOU WITH AN EVERLASTING LOVE” (Jer 31:3). We are in the process of negotiating contracts now. We hope to publish all the details to book your room and to pre-register for this 2002 RETREAT CONFERENCE in the May issue of “The PILGRIM.”

We have confirmation that Father John Hampsch, CMF, and Father Robert DeGrandis, SSJ, will be our main speakers on Friday, March 8th, Saturday, March 9th, and Sunday, March 10th, 2002. The focus of the weekend talks will be “Gods Healing Power through FAITH and HEALING GIFTS.” The three-day extension, March 11th, 12th, and 13th, will be conducted by Dorothea DeGrandis Sudol and Father Robert DeGrandis. It will focus on “Healing of Memories” through Prayer. We ask for your prayers to start right now for the success of this 2002 RETREAT-CONFERENCE.

The letters and notes coming in from our experiences this year are such a great witness to all of us who work so hard over the year to put the retreat-conferences together. We thank you for your many notes. We love to hear about your experiences of healing. If you can write about them in one or more paragraphs and give us permission to reprint them, we would love to reprint them in “The PILGRIM”. We will not use your name unless you say it is ok.

If you would like to participate in planning for the 2002 RETREAT-CONFERENCE, contact Kathleen.

“The PILGRIM” for April 2001 is dedicated to “Our Lady, Solace of Our Pilgrimage.” See page 3 for Table of Contents/“IN THIS ISSUE . . .”

2001 PILGRIMAGES



Have you ever wanted to go on a pilgrimage, and never treated yourself to a beautiful faith filled experience? This year is your year to spiritually grow through traveling with the Pilgrims of Faith Marian Center. All of our pilgrimages are so blessed with a priest spiritual director, and a PFMC coordinator, who allows the priest to fully be priest while traveling, and yet gives assurance and security to the pilgrims themselves.

Don't deny yourself any more. Call us. We will help you in every way. And once you have said "yes" to travel with us, the joy of anticipation and preparation will surprise you.

All of our pilgrimages this year are very reasonably priced. We have worked very hard to assure you the very most in each itinerary for your money. Remember, we are not a travel agent...All of our work with pilgrimages is ministry for us.

The year 2001 will be an exciting time for PFMC pilgrimages as nearly every month has a new opportunity to see the world through the eyes of Our Lady. All pilgrim groups will leave from Philadelphia or Newark if at all possible.

Pilgrimage travel insurance is available for all PFMC coordinated pilgrimages. We always recommend that pilgrims carry travel insurance.

An English-speaking guide will support every pilgrimage. Land transportation is in comfortable air-conditioned motor coaches. Unless otherwise noted, breakfast and supper is included so pilgrims do not have to worry about finding reasonably priced and nutritious meals.

We hope that you will review the following destinations, dates, brief itineraries, and, especially, our very competitive prices.

We will be using regularly scheduled airlines. The only catch is that you are asked to sign up no later than 45 days ahead. Airlines try to recoup their seats at 60 days. They become very aggressive at 45 days. Seats without names generally have to be returned.

Reservations after 45 days will be taken with full payment and attempts will be made to find seats with the pilgrimage group.

It is very important that pilgrims sign up as soon as the spark of your prayer leads you to go on a specific pilgrimage. Travel or pilgrimage insurance will greatly assist in recovering costs if there is a problem that arises after initial sign-up.

IRELAND – OUR LADY of KNOCK

JUNE 18 (Monday) to **JUNE 27** (Wednesday)

Visit Shannon, Cliffs of Moher, Burren County, Galway, Croagh Patrick, Our Lady of Knock, Dublin, Waterford, Killarney, Limerick and Clonmacnoise.

COST: \$2,175 (Double Occupancy) plus \$70 taxes.

LOURDES, PARIS and NEVERS

JULY 13 (Friday) to **JULY 20** (Friday)



Fly with PFMC Pilgrimage Coordinators Vince and Livia Nocella and Spiritual Directors, Father Jim McDonald from Bishop Eustice High School, Pennsauken, NJ, and Father Laserian Nwoga from Our Lady of Mount Carmel Parish, Berlin, NJ, on Air France to Paris and then to Pau, stay for three nights in Lourdes and then three nights in Paris. In Lourdes, visit the Miraculous Baths with Holy Mass at the Grotto where our Blessed Mother appeared to Bernadette in 1858.



Tour Paris and visit the Shrine of the Miraculous Medal on Rue du Bac. This is where Saint Catherine Laboure lies incorrupt and where she received the Miraculous Medal. Visit the Eiffel Tower, Sacre Coeur (Basilica of the Sacred Heart), Notre Dame, and much more. There will be a day trip from Paris to the Convent of Saint Gildard in Nevers, France, where Saint Bernadette lies incorrupt.

COST: \$1899 (Double Occupancy) plus \$70 taxes. Single Supplement \$299

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

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.

7 NIGHTS MEDJUGORJE, 2 NIGHTS on the ADRIATIC SEA, 1 NIGHT in ROME

AUGUST 8 (Wednesday) to AUGUST 18 (Saturday)



Join PFMC Pilgrimage Coordinator Mike McColgan and Spiritual Director Father Jack Connors from Saint John Parish, Collingswood, NJ, on this wonderful Summer pilgrimage to the Shrine of Our Lady, Queen of Peace. We will fly with Swiss Air into Split, Croatia, and return via Dubrovnik, Croatia.

This pilgrimage is ideal for teachers and families with children in school.

Stay in a very clean and comfortable private home very close to the Church of Saint James. After visiting Cross Mountain, Apparition Hill, and the visionaries, participating in Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, Oasis of Peace, and full rich 7 nights in Medjugorje, you will travel by bus to the sea town of Makarska. Spend two relaxing nights on this hidden Riviera of Europe. Swim all day in the Adriatic Sea.

Free time in Dubrovnik before departure for Rome. Visit the Basilica of Saint Blaise and climb the ancient walls of the City. Shop in specialty shops or sit and enjoy a cup of coffee where sailboats visit.

1 night overnight in Rome – evening free

COST: \$2299 (Double Occupancy) including taxes.

Single supplement \$299

JUST MEDJUGORJE with OVERNIGHT in ROME

NOVEMBER 9 to NOVEMBER 18



Kathleen is the Pilgrimage Coordinator for this pilgrimage. Father Joseph Romanoski, Pastor of Sacred Heart Parish in South Amboy, NJ is the Spiritual Director. This is a pilgrimage for those who want the ultimate in spending quiet time just in Medjugorje. The family home and pilgrim house is one block from Saint James Church. You will have an English speaking guide,

private transfer bus, and a full spiritual experience. Your 7 days will be spent visiting the visionaries, daily Holy Mass, Confessions, climbing Apparition Hill, and climbing Cross Mountain. Because this is the more

IN THIS ISSUE . . .

YOUR HELP IS NEEDED, WEDNESDAY NIGHT SEMINARS on the DEVELOPMENT and HISTORY of CHRIST'S CHURCH, THURSDAY PRAYER GROUP MEETING at EPIPHANY HOUSE, A NIGHT OF PRAYER4
CATHOLIC HOMESCHOOLING CURRICULUM and BOOK FAIR, FATHER DEGRANDIS, S.S.J. - RETREAT in TAMPA FLORIDA, DAY of RETREAT with FATHER JAY BOWDEN -MAY 17, 2001, FIFTEEN SECRET TORTURES of OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST.....5
CATECHISM on SUFFERING.....6
PRECIOUS BLOOD of JESUS8
THE POWER of MARYS PRAYER, THE GROCERY STORE 10
REWARDS of FAITHFULNESS, PLEASE READ THIS NOTICE and RESPOND - STAY on the MAILING LIST .11
MULTIPLY MERIT in SUFFERING, TOO BLESSED to BE STRESSED and TOO ANOINTED to BE DISAPPOINTED, VOCATION DEPARTMENT, VOCATIONS, HOLY MASS TIMES..... 13
NAZARETH HOUSE, HIS MOTHERS MONUMENT, A PRAYER FOR PRIESTS..... 15
ADORATION YIELDS VOCATIONS, ARTICLES on the ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH, U.S. BISHOPS, POWER in the HOLY SPIRIT 16
SISTERS MINOR of MARY IMMACULATE (S.M.M.I.) .17
SUPPORT the POPE in HOUR of BATTLE, CENTER of the BIBLE - NKJV 19
DO YOU REALLY KNOW WHAT the BIBLE MEANS, ARTICLES on FAMILY LIFE, HOW MOTHERS ARE MADE..... 20
UNWANTED CHILD 22
HEART to HEART -A TRUE LETTER to HER NATURAL PARENTS.....23
PILGRIMS of FAITH MARIAN CENTER (PFMC)..... 24
BULLETIN NOTICES for PFMC AREA EVENTS 25
PRESS BULLETIN #160 -3/26/01 26
ON-LINE CALENDAR and ROSARY 27
CALENDARS:, AROUND the PFMC AREA, MARIAN SHRINE or PILGRIMAGE PRESENTATIONS, INTERNET 28

quiet time of the year in Medjugorje, you will find plenty of time to spend in quiet meditation, and enjoy the presence of Our Lady.

We will fly on Alitalia to and from Rome, Italy, and transfer to Croatian Air to and from Split, Croatia. Transfer to Medjugorje, Bosnia-Hercegovina is by guided motor coach. On return you will fly out of Split on November 17 and spend the night in Rome. Supper will be in a local restaurant near the hotel. Free time in the evening will allow you to see Rome by night, and in the early morning.

All taxes, both Croatian and Italian, are included.

COST: \$1499 (Double Occupancy) INCLUSIVE

Kathleen Werner and Pilgrimage Volunteer Staff

YOUR HELP IS NEEDED

In every issue of "The PILGRIM" you will find a donation slip. Your donations help us with our electric bills, the printing of the newsletter, the postage, phone bills, insurance and repairs. It is only through donations that we are able to set up retreats and days of recollection. Your tithing helps so much. Won't you help us monthly? Place your envelope with your bills, and remember us as you can.

The PFMC is a lay Ministry made up of dedicated Roman Catholics. **It is totally dependent upon financial donations. Every person working in the PFMC is a volunteer for Our Lady's work of converting souls to her Son, Jesus.**

The PFMC is permanently approved as an Internal Revenue Service (IRS) Code Section 501(c)(3) non-profit, tax exempt religious association which can accept tax deductible contributions or donations in relation to its organizational functions. These functions include pilgrimages, retreats, days of recollection, presentations, Bible Study, Rosary making, books, and religious articles.

WEDNESDAY NIGHT SEMINARS on the DEVELOPMENT and HISTORY of CHRIST'S CHURCH

Dean Pulcini is leading Wednesday night seminars on "DEFENDING YOUR FAITH" in the Great Room of Epiphany House from 7 PM to 9 PM.

He offers a basic understanding of his Catholic faith in comparison to and contrasted with Protestantism and Eastern Orthodoxy.

These interactive seminars help students to grasp clearly what the Church authentically teaches and aid in dispelling misinformation, misunderstanding, and myths.

Persons of other faiths interested in learning about Catholicism are invited to attend as well.

With a Master's degree in Sacred Theology from Holy Apostles College and Seminary, Cromwell, CT. Dean has plenty of background in Scripture, Morality, and Liturgy for these seminars.

On line, Dean hosts a chat room founded to address questions about the Catholic faith.

Active in music ministry, Dean leads the choral group VOYAGE. He has composed hundreds of pieces of

music, some of them being accepted for publication. He has produced music albums on tape and CD.

Dean is certified as a Psychiatric Social Worker in the State of New Jersey. For nearly 12 years, he has worked in Camden County, NJ, with homeless persons suffering from mental illnesses.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS:

These seminars run from 7 PM to 9 PM on Wednesday nights. Free will offering baskets are out. Suggested offering is \$5 per night. The PFMC display room and library will be open.

If you plan to attend, please call (856) 768-9228. These seminars look at ethics, morality and the obligation of fidelity to Christ.

THURSDAY PRAYER GROUP MEETING at EPIPHANY HOUSE



A prayer group meets in the Epiphany House Great Room from 12:30 PM to 2:30 PM on Thursdays. This prayer group focuses on Marian Prayer. It is Charismatic, and prays for Healing. All are most welcome.

A NIGHT OF PRAYER

JOIN TOGETHER and CONSECRATE YOURSELF to the SACRED HEART of JESUS and the IMMACULATE HEART of MARY

On the First Friday of each month at Our Lady of Good Counsel Church, Moorestown, NJ, there will be Holy Mass for the Sacred Heart of Jesus at 9 PM. This will be followed by Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, a Eucharistic procession and the Rosary, the Chaplet of Divine Mercy, Confession and silent prayer, etc. until midnight.



After Midnight on First Friday and normally on First Saturday, there will be Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament and Holy Mass for the Immaculate Heart of Mary. Celebrant will normally be Father Casimir Milewski. Try to make this beautiful time with Our Lord and

His Blessed Virgin Mother, Mary.

This routine will be continued on the First Friday and First Saturday of each month in coordination with The Blue Army of Our Lady of Fatima.

CATHOLIC HOMESCHOOLING CURRICULUM and BOOK FAIR

Date: Saturday, April 21st, 2001 - 10 AM to 4 PM

Place: Mater Ecclesiae Mission, 261 Cross Keys Road, Berlin, NJ.

Hosted by: "Chaplet" - A Catholic Home School Support Group. Booksellers Curriculum providers and Catholic Colleges represented, as well as interesting speakers.

Cost: \$15 per person at door - Reduced rate for couples. No children under 14 allowed.

Call: Diane Toler at (856) 4299-4893 or contact chaplet2@juno.com

FATHER DeGRANDIS, S.S.J. - RETREAT in TAMPA FLORIDA

Date: April 25, 2001

Place: Tampa Airport Hilton, Tampa, Florida

Call 813-877-6688 for all details and to register.

DAY of RETREAT with FATHER JAY BOWDEN – MAY 17, 2001

Father Jay Bowden, Pastor of Epiphany Parish, Brick, NJ, will hold another day of SILENT RETREAT at the PFMC. It will begin at 10 AM and will end about 4 PM on Thursday, May 17, 2001.



Father has done days of retreat for us and has been active in the PFMC RETREAT CONFERENCES, as well as been a Spiritual Advisor since our first pilgrimage. Father loves Our Lady, and will be leading a pilgrimage to Fatima for us in April.

This day of Silent Retreat and Prayer will give you a chance to step back and enter into silence and reflection during May. Father will offer the Sacrament of Penance / Reconciliation / Confession.

Please join us. The suggested donation or "Love

Offering" for the day is \$10. A soup, bread and beverage lunch will be available. You may bring your own brown bag lunch if you prefer.

Call us at 856-768-9228 to make a reservation, send a reservation note by mail, or fax your reservation to 856-768-9428.

FIFTEEN SECRET TORTURES of OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST

Revealed to the Pious, God-loving Sister Mary Magdalen of the Sancta Clara Order, Franciscan, who lived, died and was beatified in Rome. Jesus fulfilled the wish of the Sister who desired ardently to know something about the secret tortures that He endured the night before His death. This devotion is approved and recommended by His Holiness Clement II (1730-1740)

The Jews considered Me as the most wretched man living on earth, that is why:

- 1.They fastened My feet with a rope and dragged Me over the stepping stones of the staircase, down into a filthy, nauseating cellar.
2. They took off My clothing and stung My body with iron points.
3. They attached a rope around my body and pulled Me along the ground, from end to end.

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Father Joseph Szolack, szolack@camdendiocese.org, Vocations Director, Diocese of Camden, advises all who are discerning vocations.
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OFFICE HELP, ASSEMBLY, LABELS and MAILING: Too many wonderful pilgrims and volunteers to mention them all by name.

4. They hanged Me on a wooden piece with a slipknot until I slipped out and fell down. Overwhelmed by this torture, I wept bloody tears.
5. They tied Me to a post and pierced My body with various arms.
6. They struck Me with stones and burnt me with blazing embers and torches.
7. They pierced Me with awls; sharp spears tore My skin, flesh and arteries out of My body.
8. They tied Me to a post and made Me stand, barefoot, on an incandescent metal sheet.
9. They crowned Me with an iron crown and wrapped My eyes with the dirtiest possible rags..
10. They made Me sit on a chair covered with sharp pointed nails, causing deep wounds in My body.
11. They poured on My wounds liquid lead and resin and, after this torture, they pressed Me on the nailed chair, so the nails went deeper and deeper into My flesh.
12. For shame and affliction, they drove needles into the holes of My uprooted beard. Then they tied My hands behind My back and led Me walking out of prison with strikes and blows.
13. They threw Me upon a cross and attached Me so tightly that I could hardly breathe anymore.
14. They threw at My head as I lay on the earth, and they stepped on Me, hurting my breast.
15. They poured into My mouth the most immodest excretions, as they uttered the most infamous expressions about Me. “

Then Jesus added: “My daughter, I desire that you let everyone know these FIFTEEN SECRET TORTURES, in order that every one of them be honored. Anyone who daily offers Me, with love, one of these sufferings and says with fervor the following prayer, will be rewarded with eternal glory on the Day of Judgment.”

“My Lord and My God, it is my unchangeable will to honor You in these FIFTEEN SECRET TORTURES when You shed Your Precious Blood. As many times as there are grains of sand around the seas, as grains of wheat in the fields, as blades of grass in the meadows, as fruit in the orchards, as leaves on the trees, as flowers in the gardens, as stars in the sky, as angels in Heaven, as creatures on earth, so many thousands of times may Thou be glorified, praised and honored.”

“O most love worthy Lord Jesus Christ -- Your Holiest Heart, Your Precious Blood, Your Divine Sacrifice for mankind, the Holiest Sacrament of the Altar, the Most Holy Virgin Mary, the nine glorious choirs of Angels and the Blessed Phalanx of the Saints, from myself and everyone, now and forever, and in the eternal ages. Amen”

Saint Michael, the Archangel, defend us in battle; be our safeguard against the wickedness and snares of the devil. May God rebuke him we humbly pray; and do you, Prince of the heavenly host, by the power of God cast into hell Satan and all the evil spirits, who wander through the world seeking the ruin of souls. Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, have mercy on us. Amen.

“For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, says the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.” (Isaiah 55, 8-9).

(from Bernadette - internet)

CATECHISM on SUFFERING

Whether we will or not, we must suffer. There are some who suffer like the good thief, and others like the bad thief. They both suffered equally. But one knew how to make his sufferings meritorious, he accepted them in the spirit of reparation, and turning towards Jesus crucified, he received from His mouth these beautiful words: “This day thou shalt be with Me

The other, on the contrary, cried out, uttered imprecations and blasphemies, and expired in the most frightful despair. There are two ways of suffering -- to suffer with love, and to suffer without love. The saints suffered everything with joy, patience, and perseverance, because they loved. As for us, we suffer with anger, vexation, and weariness, because we do not love. If we loved God, we should love crosses, we should wish for them, we should take pleasure in them. . . . We should be happy to be able to suffer for the love of Him who lovingly suffered for us. Of what do we complain?

Alas! The poor infidels, who have not the happiness of knowing God and His infinite loveliness, have the same crosses that we have; but they have not the same consolations. You say it is hard? No, it is easy, it is consoling, it is sweet; it is happiness. Only **we must love while we suffer, and suffer while we love.** On the Way of the Cross, you see, my children, only the

first step is painful. **Our greatest cross is the fear of crosses.** . We have not the courage to carry our cross, and we are very much mistaken; for, whatever we do, the cross holds us tight -- we cannot escape from it. What, then, have we to lose? Why not love our crosses and make use of them to take us to Heaven?

But, on the contrary, most men turn their backs upon crosses, and fly before them. The more they run, the more the cross pursues them, the more it strikes and crushes them with burdens. .. If you were wise, you would go to meet it like Saint Andrew, who said, when he saw the cross prepared for him and raised up into the air, "Hail O good cross! O! admirable cross! O desirable cross! receive me into Thine arms, withdraw me from among men, and restore me to my Master, who redeemed me through thee."

Listen attentively to this, my children: He who goes to meet the cross, goes in the opposite direction to crosses; he meets them, perhaps, but he is pleased to meet them; he loves them; he carries them courageously. They unite him to Our Lord; they purify him; they detach him from this world; they remove all obstacles from his heart; they help him to pass through life, as a bridge helps us to pass over water.

Look at the saints; when they were not persecuted. They persecuted themselves. A good religious complained one day to Our Lord that he was persecuted. He said, "O Lord, what have I done to be treated thus?" Our Lord answered him, "And I, what had I done when I was led to Calvary?"

Then the religious understood; he wept, he asked pardon, and dared not complain any more. Worldly people are miserable when they have crosses, and good Christians are miserable when they have none. The Christian lives in the midst of crosses, as the fish lives in the sea. Look at Saint Catherine; she has two crowns, that of purity and that of martyrdom: How happy she is, that dear little saint, to have chosen to suffer rather than to consent to sin!

There was once a religious who loved suffering so much that he had fastened the rope from a well round his body; this cord had rubbed off the skin, and had by degrees buried itself in the flesh, out of which worms came. His brethren asked that he should be sent out of the community. He went away happy and pleased, to hide himself in a rocky cavern. But the same night the Superior heard Our Lord saying to him: "Thou hast lost the treasure of thy house. " Then they went to fetch back this good saint, and they wanted to see from whence these worms came. The Superior had the

cord taken off, which was done by turning back the flesh. At last he got well.

Very near this, in a neighboring parish, there was a little boy in bed, covered with sores, very ill, and very miserable; I said to him, "My poor little child, you are suffering very much!" He answered me, "No, sir; today I do not feel the pain I had yesterday, and tomorrow I shall not suffer from the pain I have now!" "You would like to get well?" "No; I was naughty before I was ill, and I might be so again. I am very well as I am."

We do not understand that, because we are too earthly. Children in whom the Holy Ghost dwells put us to shame. If the good God sends us crosses, we resist, we complain, we murmur; we are so averse to whatever contradicts us, that we want to be always in a box of cotton: but we ought to be put into a box of thorns. It is by the Cross that we go to Heaven. Illnesses, temptations, troubles, are so many crosses, which take us to Heaven. All this will soon be over. Look at the saints, who have arrived there before us. The good God does not require of us the martyrdom of the body; He requires only the martyrdom of the heart, and of the will.

Our Lord is our model; let us take up our cross, and follow Him. Let us do like the soldiers of Napoleon. They had to cross a bridge under the fire of grapeshot. No one dared to pass it. Napoleon took the colors, marched over first, and they all followed. Let us do the same. Let us follow Our Lord, who has gone before us.

A soldier was telling me one day that during a battle he had marched for half an hour over dead bodies; there was hardly space to tread upon; the ground was all dyed with blood. Thus on the road of life we must walk over crosses and troubles to reach our true country. The cross is the ladder to Heaven. How consoling it is to suffer under the eyes of God, and to be able to say in the evening, at our examination of conscience: "Come, my soul! Thou hast had today two or three hours of resemblance to Jesus Christ. Thou hast been scourged, crowned with thorns, crucified with Him!" Oh what a treasure for the hour of death! How sweet it is to die, when we have lived on the cross! We ought to run after crosses as the miser runs after money.

Nothing but crosses will reassure us at the Day of Judgment. When that day shall come, we shall be happy in our misfortunes, proud of our humiliations, and rich in our sacrifices!

If someone said to you, "I should like to become rich; what must I do?" you would answer him, "You must labor!" Well, in order to get to Heaven, we must suffer. Our Lord shows us the way in the person of Simon the Cyrenian. He calls His friends to carry His Cross after Him. The good God wishes us never to lose sight of the Cross, therefore it is placed everywhere; by the roadside, on the heights, in the public squares -- in order that at the sight of it we may say, "See how God

The Cross embraces the world; it is planted at the Four Corners of the world; there is a share of it for all. Crosses are on the road to Heaven like a fine bridge of stone over a river, by which to pass it. Christians who do not suffer pass this river by a frail bridge, a bridge of wire, always ready to give way under their feet.

He who does not love the Cross may indeed be saved, but with great difficulty: he will be a little star in the firmament. He who shall have suffered and fought for his God will shine like a beautiful sun. Crosses, transformed by the flames of love, are like a bundle of thorns thrown into the fire, and reduced by the fire to ashes. The thorns are hard, but the ashes are soft. Oh, how much sweetness do souls experience that are all for God in suffering! It is like a mixture into which one puts a great deal of oil: the vinegar remains vinegar; but the oil corrects its bitterness, and it can scarcely be perceived.

If you put fine grapes into the winepress, there will come out a delicious juice: our soul, in the winepress of the Cross, gives out a juice that nourishes and strengthens it. When we have no crosses, we are arid: if we bear them with resignation, we feel a joy, a happiness, a sweetness! . . . it is the beginning of Heaven. The good God, the Blessed Virgin, the angels, and the saints, surround us; they are by our side, and see us.

The passage to the other life of the good Christian, tried by affliction, is like that of a person being carried on a bed of roses. Thorns give out a perfume, and the Cross breathes forth sweetness. But we must squeeze the thorns in our hands, and press the Cross to our heart, that they may give out the juice they contain.

The Cross gave peace to the world; and it must bring peace to our hearts. All our miseries come from not loving it. The fear of crosses increases them. A cross carried simply, and without those returns of self-love which exaggerate troubles, is no longer a cross. Peaceable suffering is no longer suffering. We complain of suffering! We should have much more

reason to complain of not suffering, since nothing makes us more like Our Lord than carrying His Cross.

Oh, what a beautiful union of the soul with Our Lord Jesus Christ by the love and the virtue of His Cross! I do not understand how a Christian can dislike the Cross, and fly from it! Does he not at the same time fly from Him who has deigned to be fastened to it, and to die for us? Contradictions bring us to the foot of the Cross, and the Cross to the gate of Heaven. That we may get there, we must be trodden upon; we must be set at naught, despised, crushed.

There are no happy people in this world but those who enjoy calmness of mind in the midst of the troubles of life: they taste the joys of the children of God.

All pains are sweet when we suffer in union with Our Lord. To suffer! What does it signify? It is only a moment. If we could go and pass a week in Heaven, we should understand the value of this moment of suffering. We should find no cross heavy enough, no trial bitter enough.

The Cross is the gift that God makes to His friends. How beautiful it is to offer ourselves every morning in sacrifice to the good God, and to accept everything in expiation of our sins! We must ask for the love of crosses; then they become sweet. I tried it for four or five years. I was well calumniated, well contradicted, well knocked about.

Oh, I had crosses indeed! I had almost more than I could carry! Then I took to asking for love of crosses, and I was happy. I said to myself, truly there is no happiness but in this! We must never think from whence crosses come: they come from God. It is always God who gives us this way of proving our love to Him.

(Saint John Vianney)

PRECIOUS BLOOD of JESUS

Some years ago, a man suffering from severe hemorrhages was rushed to the hospital. He was losing blood rapidly and in danger of death. A blood transfusion was necessary, but there was no one to give the blood. After a moment's hesitation, the doctor himself volunteered.

"I will give him some of my blood," he said. The nurse thought it would be too much of a strain for the doctor, but he assured her:

"Don't worry, it will do me no harm. Even if it should, what of it? It is a person's life for which I am taking

the risk. I can spare some of my blood to save this man. Besides, I have known him before. But...we must hurry. Every minute counts.”

The physician mounted the carriage by the patient’s bed and placed his right arm near the sick man’s left arm. The arms were connected by a tube, and in a short time a flow of healthy blood was carried to the patient, who gradually regained color and strength. His pulse became regular and his breathing more certain.

The doctor smiled, but not for long. Scarcely had the needles and tubes been removed when he (the doctor) began to weaken. The color left his face. He lost consciousness; nothing could revive him. A priest was called to absolve and anoint him.

When the patient realized that the doctor had sacrificed his own life for him, he exclaimed:

“What? The doctor died for me? Why, just a few weeks ago I insulted him. I never apologized. How can I ever repay him?”

“You cannot fully repay him,” he was told, “but you can partly repay him, if you try to live the good life that he lived.”

No doubt that patient lived the remainder of his life worthy of the doctor who died for him. Now the question for us is this: **Are we living our lives worthy of the One Who died for us?**

Two thousand years ago, there was a Blood transfusion in which you and I were involved. Two thousand years ago there was a Blood transfusion on Mount Calvary. **Jesus Christ shed every Drop of His Blood to save us from eternal damnation.** SIN had drained our very lifeblood. Our souls were devoid of sanctifying grace, and no longer enjoyed the indwelling of the Holy Ghost. Though our souls still retained natural life, supernatural life--namely the life of grace--was gone. Our souls were spiritually dead. Then from Heaven came the Divine Physician, Jesus Christ, the Son of God, Who Himself was God. He volunteered to give His Blood, every Drop of it, to save us.

Seven times Christ’s Sacred Blood flowed: at His Circumcision, during the Agony in the Garden of Gethsemane, during the Scourging at the Pillar, when He was crowned with thorns, as He carried His Cross, during the Crucifixion, and finally as the lance of Longinus pierced His Sacred Side. **Seven times Jesus, our Divine Doctor, gave His Blood that we might live.**

This Blood transfusion of Christ is renewed in the Holy Sacrifice of every Mass. In the sublime Sacrifice of the Mass, Jesus renews the Sacrifice of His Life for us on Mount Calvary. And in ever Holy Communion we receive, Christ floods our hearts and veins with His Sacred Blood, and our souls with sanctifying grace, giving us new spiritual life and strength. Our souls have become anemic from sin. We need new blood--an increase of grace--often and constantly. The place to get it is at the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass and in Holy Communion. (Ed. note: Father took this essay from a writing many years old.* We are aware that, sadly, today the Mass and Sacraments are unavailable to many of our readers. If you are in that group, make many spiritual Communion, pray your Rosary, and do **guard against Sunday’s becoming “just another day** You will be rewarded.)

Through the Shedding of Christ’s Precious Blood we have been redeemed. The Shedding of His Precious Blood means **sacrifice**, and **sacrifice means love**. What better way could we reciprocate this love of Christ for us and show our appreciation and gratitude than by assisting at Mass more frequently and, while at Mass, trying to realize that Jesus Christ is again shedding His Blood for us, just as on Mount Calvary? What better way could we honor that Priceless Lifestream than by receiving It often and thoughtfully in Holy Communion?

The man saved by the doctor, in the story above related, was told to show his gratitude by leading a good life like that of the doctor. In a similar way, we can and must repay our Divine Redeemer as far as we are able, by leading the life He would want us to lead--the life He led while here on earth.

Devotion to the Precious Blood has special significance during these times of Godlessness, irreligion and strife. In times past, great quantities of blood have been shed in senseless warfare. All that blood, of whatever nation, was bought with the Precious Blood of Christ. And day by day, there is threat of more bloodshed.

Some years ago, the Blessed Virgin Mary appeared to three little children at Fatima and told them a terrible war would come about if people did not stop sinning, pray more, and make more sacrifices. A small percentage of the people responded to her request. But the vast majority paid no attention to her warning. The terrible war came about, as she had foretold. (Ed. note: W.W.II) That warning applies today. If people would pray more and make more sacrifices, war

would surely be averted; if they fail to do so, war, with all its horrors, seems inevitable.

If we pray much and make many sacrifices, then we can rest assured that we have done our part, regardless of what may happen. But if we fail to do this, we can consider ourselves culpable, and **in some measure responsible for any catastrophe** that may come about. (Ed. note: God will not accept the excuse “I don’t have time to pray.” If you are too busy for HIM, you are TOO BUSY. Period.)

Remember Our Lord’s own words: “Unless ye do penance, ye shall all likewise perish.” (Saint Luke 13:3) And bear in mind that Almighty God is not to be trifled with. **He** has been very good to us. **He** has created us, and has given us all we have. **He** has placed peace and happiness within our easy reach. But we must do our part, our duty. And what is our duty? Our duty, as Catholics, is to keep the Ten Commandments of God and the Six Precepts of the Church. We should assist frequently and devoutly at the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, and make frequent use of the wonderful and powerful Sacraments that Christ instituted for our benefit. (Ed. note: If a True Mass is not available where you live, your **greatest sacrifice** may be the effort you must make--repeat: **MUST MAKE**--to prevent any Sunday or Holyday from becoming “just another day in the week.” Your second greatest may be your effort to **MAKE CERTAIN** your children are instructed in their priceless Catholic Faith.)

Think what a different world this would be if all men of all nations were to kneel together at the Communion Rail to receive the Bread of Life, and to drink together the Precious Blood that saved them! There would be Christ-like fellowship and good will. Designs for war, conquest and revenge would disappear; crime would soon be unknown; this would be a better and happier place to live; and our reward in Heaven would be much greater.

In the moral sense, many of us are sick; some are spiritually dead. We need a Blood transfusion. Our Divine Physician Himself has told us the remedy: “Unless ye eat the Flesh of the Son of Man and drink His Blood, ye shall not have life.” (Saint John 6:54)

During the Mass, during every Mass you attend, when the priest raises the Sacred Host at the Consecration, look up at the Host and say: “My Lord and My God” while looking at the Sacred Host. When the priest raises the Chalice at the Consecration, look up at the Chalice containing the Precious Blood of Christ, and

ask Him to pour it over your heart so that you may become more pleasing in His sight and may love Him more tenderly. Ask Jesus to give you new spiritual life by means of the life-giving Steam from His Heart.

The sinfulness and evil of this world, and of your heart and mine, can be healed only through the Bountiful, Healing, Precious Blood of Jesus Christ which comes to us through the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass and in Holy Communion.

(Rev. Arthur Tonne, O.F.M. OCCASIONAL TALKS)

THE POWER of MARY’S PRAYER

The Blessed Virgin is called powerful and even all-powerful. Because She, more than any other, more than all the angels and saints, has this great prevailing gift of prayer.

No one has access to the Almighty in the same way as His Mother. Her Son will never refuse anything She asks of Him, and this is the source of Her power.

As long as Mary defends the Church, no Power on earth of the evil spirits, or great Monarchs or human strength, or popular violence will be able to harm her; for human life is short but Mary reigns in heaven, eternally Queen.

Cardinal John Henry Newman

THE GROCERY STORE

walked into the grocery store not particularly interested in buying groceries. I wasn’t hungry. The pain of losing my husband of 37 years was still too raw. And this grocery store held so many sweet memories. Rudy often came with me and almost every time he’d pretend to go off and look for something special. I knew what he was up to. I’d always spot him walking down the aisle with the three yellow roses in his hands. Rudy knew I loved yellow roses.

With a heart filled with grief, I only wanted to buy my few items and leave, but even grocery shopping was different since Rudy had passed on. Shopping for one took time, a little more thought than it had for two.

Standing by the meat, I searched for the perfect small steak and remembered how Rudy had loved his steak. Suddenly a woman came beside me. She was blond, slim and lovely in a soft green pantsuit. I watched as she picked up a large pack of T-bones, dropped them in her basket hesitated, and then put them back. She

turned to go and once again reached for the pack of steaks. She saw me watching her and she smiled. "My husband loves T-bones, but honestly, at these prices, I don't know."

I swallowed the emotion down my throat and met her pale blue eyes. "My husband passed away eight days ago," I told her. Glancing at the package in her hands, I fought to control the tremble in my voice.

"Buy him the steaks. And cherish every moment you have together." She shook her head and I saw the emotion in her eyes as she placed the package in her basket and wheeled away.

I turned and pushed my cart across the length of the store to the dairy products. There I stood, trying to decide which size milk I should buy. A quart, I finally decided and moved on to the ice cream section near the front of the store. If nothing else, I could always fix myself an ice cream cone. I placed the ice cream in my cart and looked down the aisle toward the front. I saw first the green suit, then recognized the pretty lady coming towards me.

In her arms she carried a package. On her face was the brightest smile I had ever seen. I would swear a soft halo encircled her blond hair as she kept walking toward me, her eyes holding mine. As she came closer, I saw what she held and tears began misting in my eyes. "These are for you," she said and placed three beautiful long stemmed yellow roses in my arms. "When you go through the line, they will know these are paid for." She leaned over and placed a gentle kiss on my cheek, then smiled again. I wanted to tell her what she'd done, what the roses meant, but still unable to speak, I watched as she walked away as tears clouded my vision. I looked down at the beautiful roses nestled in the green tissue wrapping and found it almost unreal. How did she know?

Suddenly the answer seemed so clear. I wasn't alone. "Oh, Rudy, you haven't forgotten me, have you?" I whispered, with tears in my eyes. He was still with me, and she was his angel. Everyday be thankful for what you have and who you are.

The Kingdom of Heaven is at hand, as it is in Heaven so shall it be (in our hearts) upon the Earth. For what is in our hearts guides our lives and as we live within this heaven of The Lord's Peace in our hearts then what we carry in Christ may be of true service to our fellow man. We must walk with the angels and work like angels.

(Internet – e mail from Bernadette)

REWARDS of FAITHFULNESS

Faithfulness does not come without struggle and sacrifice. When I cast a quick glance over my life and over my vocation, I see examples of faithfulness here and there, marking the years.

My father died four years ago, just seven months shy of his 40th wedding anniversary. Faithfulness to that commitment required much sacrifice on the part of both my parents. My mother worked nights, for years, in a hospital caring for the sick and dying – a time when people need people most.

As a young man, my father was in the Marine Corps. Two years of fidelity to his country, to a commitment, which carried him to Korea for many long months, living a nightmare we call war. In his final year of life, as he battled again, this time against cancer, my mother determined and dauntless in her commitment to him, gave him, at home, all the care and attention he needed – being available day and night until that day in March when he died.

Faithfulness to a person, to a commitment, is a precious and beautiful virtue anytime, anyplace. It is so easy, sometimes too easy, to surrender to the struggle and then go on to pursue one's own satisfaction and temporary pleasure or whim. Whether it be in a marriage or a religious vocation – the struggles, the sacrifices, the temptations to give up are never far away. At times the way becomes ever steeper. My novice mistress, a continual example of faithfulness, used to tell us that the Lord will always ask more of us.

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One of my dearest superiors died a month prior to my father's death, after 60 years of religious life. One cannot know all the difficulties that plague a person from within, but so often are seen those challenges and crosses that are external: concerns, decisions, people, pain separation, slander, injustice, illness. One can find plenty of opportunities to give in under such pressures. To be relieved of the struggle is one's only desire. One's emotions cry out for relief. However, the heart, if it is faithful, wants to remain loyal. Sometimes it is only in the will where one realizes he cannot surrender – he feels the demand to remain faithful.

The greatest way to teach this to others is to give witness to it. No book, article or speech can instill such integrity. Faithfulness proves itself in perseverance. In the day after day of doing what duty requires, be it in the religious state, priesthood, married life or a dedicated single life, one is carrying out obligations in which one believes. He gives of himself as no other can, contributing in ways that are peculiar to him. He is not just another priest or husband; she is not just any other sister or wife or worker. Each has given his own time, talent, character, personality into his commitments. He becomes part of it, and it becomes a part of him. It all means something to him and can and should become something precious.

Faithfulness is not simply dropped into one's lap. The struggles and sacrifices require that one's heart and will work together to ensure that the pursuit of ease and pleasure don't replace the self-giving found in faithfulness. If it should occur, one then questions: To whom am I faithful, to what am I faithful? One is then left simply doing things, accomplishing, gaining for mere material reasons and temporary, selfish purposes. There is nothing deep or lasting about that.

One can sit on the shore and have the sea at his feet, but each wave recedes as swiftly as it comes, and not one can be claimed or possessed by any man. In his desire to collect, to possess, faithfulness allows him this chance. Faithfulness has roots. It is his if he wants it seriously enough. It is something he can obtain and, at least in part, take credit.

One knows deep down that it is better to be loyal than not, to be steadfast in the pursuit of good and right than to turn back. However, it is the struggle that tempts one to surrender, especially when to be faithful is not popular or given a recompense.

The other brother in the parable of the Prodigal Son

found it difficult not to be rewarded for his faithfulness to his father. We don't know the reason for his loyalty, but the story shows that fidelity does not always guarantee that one will be duly appreciated or repaid, at least not immediately. However, eventually one does wisely learn that being faithful does give one the satisfaction of peace with himself. There is a comfort in this steadfastness that hinges on heroism. One can be at ease and serene.

As in the case of Peter and Judas, the former was faithful – after a struggle – and could go on with his commitment, with his life, reassured and hopeful. The latter found his own infidelity unbearable and so escaped from facing himself and his failure in self-destruction. How serious are we in our commitment to God, to loved ones, vows, beliefs, work and ourselves?

Once one has taken on certain responsibilities, they become part of that person. What later comes along in the line of those duties might, at times, seem overwhelmingly difficult. Perhaps they are grave situations, or simply the monotony of living daily routine. Either way, one could be misled by thoughts of shirking the entire challenge. It is a temptation that comes to each one at sometime in life. If one doesn't succumb to worldly compromises – that is, to reducing one's service to only pleasing others, or for personal gratification, or for the applause of those around us – then there is growth. And it is then that there is an inner strength that comes through a life of faithfulness to commitment.

Yet another rich example of faithfulness I've seen is from a superior who often encourages, giving prime time to prayer – an essential point for persevering and deepening one's commitment.

In silent, solitary moments, people and situations that previously showed a faithful spirit visit the memory and the heart, sometimes quite vividly. The people may be obscure, ordinary individuals; the situations may be great or insignificant tasks tended to day after day, year after year – whatever way one views them, those people are our quiet heroes. Their labors and sacrifices are trimmed in a hidden heroism – a result of a faithful spirit. No martyr, no saint, for that matter, was without faith.

One may look upon this age as one severely lacking in faithfulness – in the home, the workplace, the Church. But look away from those images that blind one's hope and love: the violence, the war, the desertion in the family, the Church, the country. See the waste of

precious life in the womb, on the streets, on the battlefield. Take notice of the abuse of freedom, intelligence and love – life in general. Now look more closely, more deeply. Look at the faces and into the hearts of the baby, the father, the mother, the priest, the Religious, the doctor, the soldier. Look into the eyes of all those faithful ones we've known. That faithfulness survives amidst the violence and the waste. It rises above them.

A winter sky might be dark and cold, but there are stars that dot the blackness, until the stars, here and there, are what one sees, not the darkness. The stars are what catch the eye so vividly, not the black sky. Struggle and sacrifice are not meant to quench the fire coming from faithfulness; rather, they are meant to increase its intensity and purity.

(with permission **The Catholic Answer – Vol.14/Number 4 September/October 2000**)

MULTIPLY MERIT in SUFFERING

My blessed and sweet Mother, offer this cross to Jesus, thy Divine Son, in union with His Passion and thy Dolors, to expiate my sins, to ransom sinners, and for Thy own intentions. O clement, O loving, O sweet Virgin-Mother Mary.

TOO BLESSED TO BE STRESSED and TOO ANOINTED TO BE DISAPPOINTED

I refuse to be discouraged, to be sad or to cry.

I refuse to be downhearted and here's the reason why:

I have a God who is almighty; who is sovereign and supreme; I have a God who loves me, and I am on His team.

He is all wise and powerful; Jesus is His Name;

Though everything else is changeable, My God remains the same.

I refuse to be defeated. My eyes are on my God.

He has promised to be with me, as through this life I trod.

I am looking past my circumstances, to heaven's throne above. My prayers have reached the heart of God. I am resting in His love.

I give thanks to Him in everything. My eyes are on His face. The battle is His; The victory is mine; He will help win the race.

YOU ARE BLESSED SO BLESS SOMEONE ELSE!

(Bernadette – from Internet)

VOCATION DEPARTMENT

VOCATIONS

My food is to do the Will of the One Who sent Me, and to complete His work” (John 6:34).

Our Holy Father, Pope John Paul II, always celebrates the Feast of the Presentation of the Infant Jesus in the Temple with a special focus on the Religious Life. During this Jubilee Year, a year of special graces, LET US JOIN Our Holy Father in praying that Our Lord will send more laborers to His harvest.

The Infant Jesus' Presentation in the Temple can be compared to a young man or woman responding to God's call to enter His service. There is a totality in this offering, a complete gift of oneself to God. Our Lady took Jesus to the Temple and carried the Messiah across the Threshold of the Temple. She will also carry into the Temple those souls who wish to dedicate their lives to Jesus, that they may be sacrificed as a living holocaust to the Eternal Father.

Pope John Paul II, in a homily on the Presentation in 1995, said that this Feast contains a mystery of pain and joy. So too, the Religious Life is one of joy and pain. The joy is a joy that no man can take away, for it is firmly rooted in the Lord: the joy of Divine Intimacy. Those who live the Religious Life begin to do now what all shall do in Heaven...praise, contemplate, adore, and thank God! But there is an intense pain involved in this Vocation as well – for the

HOLY MASS TIMES

If you ever think you will miss Holy Mass because you don't know the times of Holy Mass in the area that you are located, call 1-800-MASS-TIMES or 1-800-627-7846.

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

Religious is still a pilgrim on this earth. While the soul yearns for total union, it suffers because of its separation from the Beloved. That union will only be attained when at last we reach our Heavenly Reward and hear those blessed words: "Well done, good and faithful servant, enter into the joy of the Lord."

A Vocation to the Religious Life is purely a gift from God. Jesus assured us of this when He said: "You did not choose Me, no, I chose you; and I commissioned you to go out and bear fruit" (John 15:16). This special call from God cannot be explained, only accepted. God's choice to give to a soul a Vocation to the Religious Life is an outpouring of His Merciful Love. Often, though, this gracious gift is not accepted. God has not ceased to give Vocations, but today few souls listen to the still, small Voice which beckons them to the Religious Life. There is a great need of courage for those who feel called by God to be consecrated to Him. They need to bravely return love for Love.

A religious calling is a summons to rise above the things of the world and prove by the example of one's life that man was made for more than the perishable goods of earth. The Vows of Poverty, Chastity, and Obedience are a powerful witness that God can accomplish what man cannot. If these Vows are faithfully observed, the reward of everlasting life is promised. Religious who are steadfast in keeping the Vows will give the world a glimpse of Jesus, for more and more they will begin to resemble Him in their virtues. The Vows are intimately united; yet, each one has a treasure of its own, with particular virtues in its storehouse.

Let us look first at the Vow of Poverty. This Vow purifies the faculty of the Intellect, while producing in the soul an increase of Faith. If the Religious perseveres in practicing the Vow of Poverty, she can be sure to grow in the virtues of detachment, patience, humility, and long-suffering. This Vow reaches down into the depths of the garden of the soul and pulls out the weeds of particular vices, like stinginess or a lack of generosity in the service of God, lack of charity, and possessiveness. When one lives the Vow of Poverty, one finds a beautiful freedom of spirit that breeds joy and contentment, even in the most demanding situations.

Next is the Vow of Chastity. This Vow purifies the faculty of the Memory, while producing in the soul an increase of Hope. The Vow of Chastity causes the flowers of a childlike trust in God, simple joy, compassion for others, and mercy with oneself and

one's neighbors to blossom in the soul. There is much more to the Vow of Chastity than merely privation of an earthly spouse and children. This Vow calls the soul to run unhampered in the way of God. God elevates the soul in order to radiate His unselfish love to the world. When the Religious truly loves and lives the Vow of Chastity, she becomes a shining example of self-control, fidelity, unselfish dedication to God, and zeal for souls. The soul that is bound by the Vows of Chastity is free to love everyone with the love of Jesus.

Finally, the summit of the Vows is Obedience. This Vow purifies the faculty of the Will, while producing the growth of Love. The fruits of courage, meekness, humility, peace, and final perseverance are produced in the souls of those who have an obedient heart. This is the most freeing of all the Vows, though to the unperceiving eye it appears to be terribly binding. The voice of the Superior is the Voice of God for the Religious. There is never a question as to what the Will of God is in the lives of those who have taken the Vow of Obedience. By living the Rule, listening to the voice of the Superior and doing what it commands, the Religious can rest assured that the Will of God is being accomplished. Souls who love obedience are truly blessed, because they see the Presence of God in the present moment. By doing this, they imitate Jesus in every action as they are always open to the Holy Spirit.

These three Vows not only empty the soul of worldly ambitions and thoughts, but they also fill the soul with a valiant desire to be holy, no matter what this might cost. The Vow of Poverty empties the soul of possessions, but fills the soul with God, its sole Possession. The Vow of Chastity empties the soul of an exclusive love for any earthly thing, yet it fills the soul with the one thing necessary... the love of Jesus Christ. The Vow of Obedience empties the soul of self will, but fills it with the courage that arises from an intimate union with Christ in prayer and submission to His Will.

Family, pray for more Vocations to the Religious Life. We are living in serious days that call for extraordinary holiness. Let us pray for saintly Religious who will live the Vows with fidelity and zeal. Pray for your Priests and Religious, that they may always be shining lights in the world, giving hope and courage to all who see them! As Pope John Paul II said on the Feast of the Presentation: "The light of the Gospel, so dear in today's liturgy, shines in the Temple of Jerusalem over the newborn Redeemer. May this light always

accompany you, dear brothers and sisters, so that in your vocation “the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed, and thus the Kingdom of God may be extended to every corner of the earth!” I love you, Family.

(Feb. 2000 #167 Mother M. Angelica)

NAZARETH HOUSE



A place of discernment and formation for men aspiring to priesthood in the Roman Catholic Church, Nazareth House is located on the campus of Camden Catholic High School in Cherry Hill. The Diocese of Camden has begun a new formation program to help young men investigate whether God is calling them to priestly formation.

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

FOR MORE INFORMATION or APPLICATION MATERIALS, CONTACT:

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631 Market Street, Camden, NJ 08102
(856) 756-7900 ext. 5266.
or visit: <http://www.beapriest.org>

HIS MOTHER’S MONUMENT

A priest, one evening, made his weary way
Into a graveyard where his mother lay’
And scarcely had he reached the humble mound
than tears stole out to bless the hallowed ground.
Beside the humble grave the priest then knelt
To tell the sorrow that his heart then felt.
Full many a messenger of sorrow went
To make excuse that yet no monument
Stood guardian over his mother’s sacred head,
to honor her who lay among the dead.

And then a voice came sweetly from the tomb;
‘My monument was built in my womb;
My greatest laurels, greatest praise were won
The hour that thou became my priestly son.
Behold the mothers that beside me lie,
whose monuments point proudly to the sky;
Of all these honored mothers, every one
Would change her tombstone for a priestly son.
Go, then, my son, and never more lament
That over my grave there stands no monument;
Return thou to the desert sands of sin,
And win the lost sheep to the fold again;
For all the souls in heaven whom thou hast sent
Forever proclaim thee as my monument.”

-Paul Durbin

A PRAYER for PRIESTS – KEEP THEM I PRAY THEE

Dearest Lord,
Keep them, for they are Thine
Thy priests whose lives burn out
Before Thy consecrated shrine.
Keep them for they are
In the world
Though from the world apart,
When earthly pleasures tempt, allure-
Shelter them in Thy heart.
Keep them, and comfort
Them in hours
of loneliness and pain,
When all their life of sacrifice for souls
Seems but in vain,
Keep them, and remember,
O Lord,
They have no one but Thee.
Yet they have only human hearts,
With human frailty.
Keep them as spotless as the Host,
That daily they caress.
Their every thought and word and deed,
Deign dearest Lord, to bless.

(Anonymous - Bernadette 1/13/01)

ADORATION YIELDS VOCATIONS

The testimony of church leaders like Pope John Paul II and Mother Teresa, tell us that God especially rewards Eucharistic adoration with vocations for religious life, consequently adoration of Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament should be a cornerstone in the prayer life of trustees and members of the foundation. "Jesus in the Holy Eucharist can only come to us through our priests and God will give us priests through our love for the Holy Eucharist." Adoration of Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament is our secret weapon.

So we gather around the Cross of Christ, together with our Holy Mother, whose womb was the first tabernacle. She became the Mother of the Holy Eucharist, Mother of priests, Mother of all consecrated souls and Mother of the Church, we ask Her to pray with us that the Lord will send laborers for His harvest.

www.crossofchrist.com

ARTICLES on the ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

U.S. BISHOPS

Be of good cheer: The U.S. bishops did several positive things during their biennial meeting in November. They approved, by a 223-31 vote, guidelines to bring Catholic universities in line with Church teaching. The vote sent the guidelines on to the Vatican for final approval. (The Vatican rejected an earlier version of the rules in 1996 as not strong enough.) The guidelines, based on Pope John Paul II's 1990 letter *Ex Corde Ecclesiae*, require theologians to receive a mandate from the local bishop to teach at Catholic colleges. They also state that university presidents should be practicing Catholics and that a majority of faculty and board members, where possible, should also be Catholic.

The bishops also debated an upcoming document on church architecture, noting in particular the effect of the design and decoration of church buildings on the beliefs of individual Catholics. Bishop **Sean O'Mally** of Fall River, Massachusetts, said, "You hear comments: "This place does not look like a church," referring to the trend as the "sub-urbanization of the heavenly Jerusalem." **Among the recommendations**

The PILGRIM

of many bishops was that the tabernacle must be central and visible to all and that images of the Virgin Mary and saints should be brought again into the main body of churches.

The bishops also did well on the practical level, voting to streamline their episcopal conference. The **National Conference of Catholic Bishops**, which deals with Church matters, will be combined with the **U.S. Catholic Conference**, which deals civil matters, forming one body to be called the **U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops**.

(Osservatore Romano – Rome, Italy)

POWER in the HOLY SPIRIT

The Holy Spirit is called the "Church's soul"...in the sense that He sheds divine light on all thought within the Church, and "guides to all truth," according to...Christ in the upper room.

"When the spirit of truth comes, He will guide you to all truth. He will not speak on His own, but will speak on His own, but will speak only what He hears...what He will announce to you. He will have from Me" (Jn.16: 13,15).

Therefore, it is by the Holy Spirit's light that the Church comes to the announcement of the revealed truth, and a deepening of faith on all levels of the Body of Christ is at work: among the apostles, among their successors in the ministry, and regarding the "sense of faith" of all believers...

The Holy Spirit is also the source of all dynamism in the Church, whether we are referring to the witness she must give to Christ before the world, or to the spread of the gospel message. In Luke's Gospel, when the risen Christ tells the apostles about the coming of the Holy Spirit, He stresses precisely this aspect: "I send down upon you the promise of My Father. Remain here in the city until you are clothed with power from on high" (*Lk21 4:49*)

The link between the Holy spirit and power is still clearer in the parallel account in the Acts of the Apostles where Jesus says: "You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes down upon you and you will be My witnesses..." (*Acts 1:8*).

In both the Gospel and in Acts, the Greek word for power is dynamism. This refers to the supernatural energy which, on a person's part, requires prayer most of all. This is a further teaching of the Second Vatican

Council, according to which the Holy Spirit” dwells in the Church and in the hearts of the faithful, as in a temple. In then, He prays on their behalf and bears witness to the fact that they are adopted sons.” (*Lumen Gentium*, #4)

In the same text, the Council cites Saint Paul (Gal 4:6, Rom 8:15,-16,26) ...”The Spirit aids us in our weakness, for we do not know how to pray as we ought; but the Spirit Himself makes intercession for us with groanings that cannot be expressed in speech” (Rom 8:26).

To conclude all that we have said thus far, let us reread another brief conciliar text that says that the Holy Spirit uninterruptedly renews the Church and “leads it to perfect union with her Spouse. The Spirit and the Bride both say to Jesus, the Lord, ‘Come!’” (Rev 22:7)

This text echoes Saint Irenaeus who communicates to us the certainty of the faith of the earliest Fathers. It is the same certainty announced by Saint Paul when he said that believers have been freed from slavery to the letter “to serve in the new spirit” (Rom 7:6).

The whole Church is under this new spirit and discovers in the Holy Spirit the source of her continued renewal and her unity. This is due to the fact that the power of the Spirit, who is life-giving and unifying Love, is stronger than all human weakness and sins

**(Pope John Paul II, Rome, General Audience,
November 28, 1990)**

SISTERS MINOR of MARY IMMACULATE (S.M.M.I.)

“Out of the mouths of infants and nurslings you have brought forth praise” (Mt. 21:16).

Sister Therese Marie Kovacs, S.M.M.I., had gone to the local grocery store to replenish her congregation’s food supply. But that day her primary mission as a consecrated religious was to bear witness to a little Protestant girl.

“Look, Mommy! there goes the Church!” exclaimed the little girl, as Sister Therese Marie passed by in her order’s distinctive light blue habit, with miraculous medal, rosary, and white Franciscan cord. Sister Therese Marie, a member of the sisters Minor of Mary Immaculate (S.M.M.I.), took the opportunity to visit with the girl and her mother and give them a

miraculous medal.

“Sister, I don’t know where she got that idea,” the surprised mother said. “We’re not even Catholics.”

Like Saint Maximilian Kolbe, a Franciscan priest who envisioned and inspired their founding, the Sisters Minor of Mary Immaculate strive to proclaim their Catholic Faith at all times, and there religious dress plays a crucial part.

“The habit is a visible witness for the world,” says Sister Therese Marie, who oversees the congregation’s recruitment and formation of vocations in the United States. “It tells the person that you are totally committed to Christ and the church. Even if they’re not Christian, they know you’re connected to Christ and the Church.”

FULFILLING KOLBE’S PRAYER

Mother Marie Elisabetta Patrizi, S.M.M.I. founded the Sisters Minor in 1983 in the Diocese of Roam, inspired by a man known of this total commitment to Christ, His Blessed Mother, and His Church--Saint Maximilian Kolbe--a man whom Pope John Paul II has called “the patron saint of our difficult century.”

In 1917, then-Father Kolbe founded the Militia of the Immaculata (MI), a global movement open to all Catholics that works for the evangelization and sanctification of all peoples through the mediation of Mary.

In his writings, the Polish saint martyred by the Nazis envisioned a religious institute for women like the Sisters Minor, which would be affiliated with and further the work of the MI.

As Father Kolbe had hoped, the Sisters Minor begun by Mother Maria Elisabetta are totally consecrated to God through the Immaculata. Their desire is to serve as Mary’s instruments to build the kingdom of God, sanctifying the world by bringing people closer to Jesus through a consecrated relationship with His Blessed Mother.

“Holiness is perfect conformity to the will of God: Every day, everything,” says Sister Therese Marie. “To attain heaven and carry on the work of the merciful Christ, we need to be following the perfect discipleship of our Blessed Mother. We have to be instruments in her hands.”

“If you want to follow and serve God and dedicate your whole existence to Jesus, look at Mary,” says Mother Patrizi, echoing the words of Saint Francis of

Assisi.

Then a laywoman, Patrizi attended Kolbe's canonization in 1982 and asked Father James McCurry, O.F.M Conv., a prominent Mariologist and promoter of Kolbe's spirituality, to pray for an unspecified special intention.

Two years later, after celebrating Mass for a group of pilgrims in Krakow, Poland, Father McCurry discovered the special intention for which he had been praying daily.

"In the sacristy, I heard someone in English calling out my name, a women's voice," says Father McCurry, who has done Marian programs for the Eternal Word Television Network (EWTN) and is the creator of the Kolbe archives at Saint Hyacinth College and Seminary in Granby, Massachusetts. "Lo and behold, it was Mother Marie Elisabetta, not dressed as a sister, not as a laywoman. Say said, "This is the special intention you've been praying for."

That intention has borne great fruit. The Sisters Minor have become an official congregation with almost 70 members in five countries, including the Philippines, Poland, Italy, and Turkey, where the sisters oversee the place in Ephesus believed to be the blessed Mother's home, which draw many pilgrims and tourists. The Sisters Minor have an active contemplative life, combining six hours of daily prayer--including daily Eucharist adoration--with apostolic work that includes teaching catechism classes, giving retreats, advancing the faith through the media, and visiting the sick.

Stamford, Connecticut is the home of the American headquarters of the Sisters Minor, and the congregation also has houses in Massachusetts, North Dakota, and New Jersey.

"We feel it's very important for us to be in America," said Mother Patrizi. "We feel that the values of prayer, the value of the way of religious life, the value of Catholicism are needed."

"God is pleased, as is Mary, and Saint Maximilian is proud to call them his daughters," says Father McCurry, who celebrated the congregation's first US Mass upon their North American foundation in 1989. "Their growth is no accident. It's an act of divine

TOTAL CONSECRATION to JESUS through MARY

Jesus' gift to the world was His consecrated Sonship to the Father, says Father McCurry, and "through Him, with Him, and in Him" He calls all to be consecrated sons and daughters of His Father (cf. 2 Pet. 1:4; Rom. 8:14-17). Mary became our spiritual mother on Calvary, and since then she has had the task of uniting her earthly children with her firstborn Child. Marian consecration, as promoted by Saint Maximilian, enables the faithful to live their baptismal vows by giving themselves to Jesus through Mary.

"The goal of the new evangelization (of Pope John Paul II) is simply consecration," says Father McCurry, who has served as the national director of the MI. "That we have to be consecrated to Mary, and through her to Jesus, and through Him to the Father. There is no new congregation in the Church today that better testifies to this mystery of consecration than the Sisters Minor of Mary Immaculate."

The blessed Mother played a crucial role Mother Maria Elisabetta's own vocation. Her parents separated when she was six, a tragedy that provoked young Patrizi to consecrate herself totally to Mary, asking her "to be my mother." Her lifelong suffering from auto-immune disease, in which excessive amounts of antibodies wage war on her own body, has also drawn Mother Maria Elisabetta closer to Mary's Son.

"We do not go out of our way and choose suffering," says Mother Maria Elisabetta, "but when God sends it or allows it, we want to read the message and we choose it" for the benefit of souls. "The world thinks (suffering) is a hatred on the part of God," says Mother. "Instead, it's the complete opposite. He is choosing you to be a close partner in the most important work: the salvific work of His Son."

ANSWERING the CALL to HOLINESS

In 1963, Mother Maria Elisabetta said that God was calling her to become a woman religious, but she worked as a laywoman until the early 1980's, working at The Center for the Study of the Holy Shroud in Rome and doing translation work for the Missionary Sister of Charity. During that time, Mother Teresa looked deeply into Patrizi's eyes and asked her to join her religious order.

While complimenting Mother Teresa and her congregation's accomplishments, Patrizi explained

that her vocation was not in serving “the poorest of the poor” but in evangelizing to prevent that condition.

“If we helped people find the truth, which for me in Jesus Christ, and live that way, your problem would be greatly solved,” Patrizi told Mother Teresa, reflecting Kolbe’s concern for fighting error in the church and world.

The congregation’s “preventive” work includes its rapidly growing “Family of Mary Immaculate,” a movement which has grown from two to 30 families in its first year. A good number of fervent young families in their 20’s and 30’s have joined the movement and, like the Sisters Minor, they lived out total consecration to Jesus through Mary.

“They have a great hunger for--real thirst--for truth, solidity, and stable teaching and fellowship,” says Sister Therese Marie, “and they’re happy that they can come to a group like our.”

Such fidelity to Christ, His Mother, and His Church has and continues to attract many women to the Sisters Minor, who hope to expand their apostolic efforts in the third millennium.

“To me, the Holy Father is Christ on earth,” said Sister Marie Dolores Ballotta, a New Jersey native, explaining why she joined the Sisters Minor. “In giving my life of God, I wanted to be in a community that was going to have god speaking to me. And if you don’t have the Holy Father, you don’t have the

by Thomas J. Nash

SUPPORT the POPE in HOUR of BATTLE

Bishop Hnilica in a letter to Marian groups dated 29 June 1999, writes among other things: “...This is the Marian era desired by God, and the Blessed Virgin is mobilizing her offspring to bring true peace to the world, and to reconcile man with God. This plan, however, is part of the life plan called *Totus Tuus* experienced by the Saints and adopted by the Holy Father.

We must recall that if Peter and Our Lady are so closely connected, then Satan’s hatred for Mary Immaculate is not disconnected from his hatred for the Pope. Today the devil fights against these two biblical figures and these have to win. Paul VI, on his way back from Fatima, wrote *Signum Magnum*.

Volume 12, Number 4 -April 2001

The “Great Sign”, the Woman clothed in the sun, is the same Woman which must crush the serpent’s head. I think Our Lady today has the same mission that Abraham had for Sodom and Gomorrah. If Abraham had found 10 righteous people the two cities would still exist. John Paul II exclaimed when he returned from Fatima in 1982: “How many righteous people would be necessary today?” Well, we don’t know this, but Our Lady does, and she will not leave us alone until she has found them all.

We can see especially today how this battle has become bloody. The Holy Father is a target for slander; he is persecuted and misunderstood even by those who should be up front to support him.

Hence, at the threshold of the Jubilee Year; I am here to make this special call to you, readers and friends. Just as the Church of Jerusalem supported Saint Peter when he was in prison, I am now asking you to be united in prayer to ask Our Lady to protect and support the Vicar of Christ in this time of tribulation and trial. John Paul II is the only voice which opposes the prince and princes of darkness in the world; the only one to bear a message which goes upstream and is in line with the Gospel.

Just as Moses prayed with outstretched arms and obtained a victory for the Israelites, so our petitions will obtain the grace needed to support the Church and her Pastor in the battle against God’s enemy.”

CENTER of the BIBLE - NKJV

What is the shortest chapter in the Bible - NKJV? (Answer - Psalms 117)

What is the longest chapter in the Bible- NKJV? (Answer - Psalms 119)

Which chapter is in the center of the Bible – NKJV? (Answer - Psalms 118)

NKJV Fact: There are 594 chapters before Psalms 118.

NKJV Fact: There are 594 chapters after Psalms 118.

Add these numbers up and you get 1188.

What is the center verse in the Bible - NKJV? (Answer - Psalms 118:8) “It is better to trust in the LORD than to put confidence in man.”

Does this verse say something significant about God's perfect will for our lives? The next time someone says they would like to find God's perfect will for their lives

and that they want to be in the center of His will, just send them to the center of His Word!

Now isn't that odd how this worked out (or was God in the center of it)? When there is nothing left but God, that is when you find out God is all you need.

(anonymous)

DO YOU REALLY KNOW WHAT the BIBLE MEANS

A father was approached by his small son, who told him proudly. "I know what the Bible means!"

His father smiled and replied... "What do you mean, you "know" what the Bible means?" The son replied,

"Okay," said his father. "So, Son, what does the Bible

"That's easy, Daddy...It stands for "Basic Instructions Before Leaving Earth."

Leave it to a child to figure it out.....

(unknown)

ARTICLES on FAMILY LIFE

HOW MOTHERS ARE MADE

There is a popular song which tell show boys and girls are made. "Girls," it is said, " are made of sugar and spice and everything nice. Boys are made of snips and snails and puppy dogs' tails."

But what are mothers made? To answer that question we shall go a long way back, because it takes a long time to make a mother. In the cosmic preparation for motherhood three steps are necessary:

1. *Interiority of generation.* In the physical order, a flame lights a flame, a torch lights a torch. In lower forms of life, such as the amoeba, there is a fission, or splitting, as the young life breaks off from the parent cell. Motherhood is still a long way off, for there could never be a mother without an intimate close, and vital relationship between the body of the mother and the body of the young offspring.

It took centuries to prepare for this interior act of generation. Some land crabs come down from the mountains to sea, push their eggs into the water, and then abandon them. No real motherhood here, for the

young never see their mothers, nor do the mothers care for the young. This universe of ours is full of orphans; the young that are begotten are completely forgotten. Almost all fruit is orphaned, inasmuch as it lies an independent existence from the tree. Butterflies are thoughtful to some extent, inasmuch as eggs are often hatched under a leaf, where they are least exposed. Maybe nature is kind to certain butterflies, for how shocked mothers would be to see a fuzzy-wuzzy, ugly caterpillar--the kind that only a mother could love. Hens are much kinder to the young--so kind that the Lord used them as an example of his concern men:

How often have I been ready to gather they children together,

As a hen gathers her chickens under her wings:

And thou didst refuse it!

No boy, who ever gathered eggs from the barnyard or crib, as I did when I was a boy, will ever forget the wrath of a cackling, setting hen. You begin to know what an "old hen" is, when you go about gathering eggs. After all, you can't blame then hen; she can never find anything where she "lays" it.

As we see nature unfold, there is an increasing unity of mother and offspring until finally many mothers carry the young with them. Despite all this cosmic evolution, however, there could never be a human mother until love came into the world. Then alone would there be true Interiority of generation. This would happen not as a result of seasonal urges and sex impulses alone, as it does in the animal order. In addition so sex, which is common to the animals, there must also be love, in order that there be no ravishing or stealing away of the worth of the person.

If a mother is to be made, then what is begotten must come from a free act of will, in which a woman freely submits to the love of a man. Such surrender would not be a passive one, like the earth to the seed, but rather an active one, in which two humans who are freely united in souls freely unite in body. One might almost say that the generation begins in the mind and in the soul with love and completes itself in the body.

All love tends to an incarnation, even God's. Generation, then, is not a push from below but a gift from above; it is a reflection of the Eternal Generation in the Bosom of the Father, Who in the agelessness of Eternity says, "Thou are My Son. This day I have begotten Thee." The roots of it are hidden in Heaven, for in the great Hebraic tradition we read a line

wherein God speaks and says, "Shall I Who give generations to other, Myself be barren?"

The offspring now is seen as an incarnation of the mutual love of a husband and a wife. When a mother carries the young life within her through a free act of love, she has a different kind of love from what any man has for a neighbor.

Most of us love a nonself, or something extrinsic and apart from our inner life; but a mother's love during the time she is a flesh-and-blood ciborium is not for a non-self but for one that is her very self, a perfect example of charity and love which hardly perceives a separation. Motherhood then becomes a kind of priesthood. She brings God to man by preparing the flesh in which the soul will be implanted; she brings man to God in offering the child back again to the Creator.

II. *Care of the young.* Mothers in the animal kingdom care only for a body; mothers in the spiritual kingdom must care also for a soul, a mind, and a heart. The soul comes from God and must go back again to Him. God sets the target, the parents are the bow, and their vocation is to shoot the arrow straight. When a child is given to his parents a crown is made for that child in Heaven, and woe to the parents who raise a child without consciousness of the eternal crown!

It does not take long in the animal order to generate and develop the brain of a monkey, because the monkey brain does not have very much to do. but it takes along time to develop the mind of a child, to inculcate ideal, virtues of purity, honesty, patriotism, and piety. Animals can quickly leave their parents, because they have no eternal destiny.

But humanity is under a compulsory educational act, and to fulfill this, there must be domesticity. The home is the schoolhouse for affection wherein a mother completes the work that was begun when the child was born. Motherhood then turns into mother craft, as biology hands the work over to ethics. the canoe can quickly haunch out on the waters when it is made, but the big ship has to wait for engines because it has a better port. A tiny ball of unconsciousness needs much mother care to become all that God destined it to be. Maybe that is why mothers are against war; they realize better than anyone else how long it takes to make a man.

III. *Greater attention to individuals of the species.* A mother must love each offspring as if it were the only one in all the world. This means recognizing that

human beings are not just individuals, but persons. In the animal al order there are individuals; in the human order there are persons. The difference between an individual and a person is that: individuals are replaceable, and person are not. For example, you go to buy oranges in a store and say, "No, this one is bad. Give me another." But you cannot say that about children. A child is a person--unique, incommunicable, irreplaceable--that is why there is so much sorrow in a mother when one is lost. It is a person and an immortal soul that has departed.

This, incidentally, is why every mother gives a name to the child which implies dignity, uniqueness, and apartness. There is no greater refutation of Communism "I the world than a mother." Because Communism denies the value of person, it affirms that we are like grapes, who have no other destiny than to have our life ground out of us for the sake of the collective wine of the state. Every mother arises to protest and proclaim, "This child of mine is a person and may not be submerged in any totality of a class or a state or a race; he is unique; he has a name; he is my son!"

That is how mothers are made. Nature had to prepare for them through millions of years by begetting a love that would freely desire children, a love that would educate them, and a love that would sacrifice for them because of their sovereign worth as persons endowed with immortal souls. Such love could not come from the beast, for that kind of love is a gift of God.

Motherhood is too noble to be without an ideal, God, Who became Man, preexists His Own Mother, as an artist preexists his own painting. On one occasion, Whistler was complimented for the beautiful painting of his mother. His answer was, "You know how it is. One tries t make ones Mother as nice as one can." There is no reason to feel that Christ would do otherwise, for as God, He preexisted His Own Mother. That every mother might understand that the interior generation if born of love, She, the Ideal Mother, conceived because she cooperated with the Love of God. One day, out from the great White Throne, of Light, there came an Angel of Light who descended over the plains of Israel: passing by the daughters of great kings of the East, the Angel came to a women who was kneeling in prayer and said, Hail, full of grace." These were not words; they were the Word, and "The Word was made Flesh, and dwelt amongst us." And she, the Mother, was overshadowed by the Spirit of Love and bore within herself the Guest Who was really the Host of the

World. This was the greatest love that the world ever knew--the Love that came down into a Woman and ended in and incarnation.

This Mother gave further example to all mothers by caring both for the Body and the soul of Her Son. She cared for His Body, for she wrapped Him in swaddling clothes and laid Him in a Manger. She cared for His soul and His Mind, for He was subject to her. What a lesson for children to learn! This Child, Who was subject to His Mother, was also the Creator of the world. Every mother, when she picks up the young life that has been born to her, looks up to the heavens to thank God for the gift which made the world young again. But here was a Mother, a Madonna, who did not look up. She looked down to heaven, for this was Heaven in her arms.

Finally, she gave the example of the worth of personality to all mothers, for, like every mother, she gave her Child a name. Since this Child was unique, it was fitting that he be given a name that would describe His Mission. This Child came not to save people from insecurity, or to make them rich and powerful, but to save them from their sins. Hence He was given the name of Jesus, which means Savior. It was an irreplaceable name, before which the heavens and the earth trembled, and before which our knees bow.

If any one of us could have made our own mother, we would have made her the most beautiful woman in the world. As God pre-existed His Own Mother somewhat in the way that an artist preexists his work, we can understand why she should be the Madonna of the World. Then, when He took on human flesh and became a Babe, we can understand why He climbed up her body as an ivory tower, to kiss upon her lips a Mystic Rose.

The mother is both the physical preserver of life and the moral provider of truth; she is nature's constant challenge to death, the bearer of cosmic plenitude, the herald of eternal realities, God's great cooperator.

(by Most Rev. Fulton Sheen, D.D.)

UNWANTED CHILD

Is there a more repulsive notion than the term "unwanted child"?

I don't think so. I've often wondered what our children and future generations will think of us--a society with lavish material resources, yet "poor in

spirit" when it comes to making room for a fetus (Latin for "little one").

This hit home for me the day my black-skinned, Asian-born son, without prompting, announced, "I'm sure glad I wasn't born in America, or they might have

Born in the throes of poverty and cruel devastation, he was airlifted out of Vietnam after witnessing the demise of family members, which left its own emotional scars. Yet, he sincerely believed he was safer conceived in a war zone than inconveniently created in the richest, most "civilized" country in the free world.

I realized then the subtle erosion that legalized abortion would cause, not only with my adopted son, but every American child exposed to the abortion lie. Abortion, sanctioned by the state, cheapens and threatens all human life.

In that sense, Mother Teresa views the US as poor because, as she says, "America is afraid of babies... defenseless little babies." With the most liberal abortion law in the entire world--it's legal, for any reason through all nine months of pregnancy in the United States--it is hard to argue with Mother Teresa.

The devastating results of the Supreme Court edict of January 22, 1973, which in effect institutionalized "legal" abortion, are obvious:

More than 1.6 million babies each year--one every fifteen seconds--are killed by surgical abortion along, with many million more killed by abortifacient (abortion-producing) contraceptives.

Millions of mothers--and other--who acquiesced to an abortion decision suffer emotionally and spiritually as a result.

An entire generation of children--yours and mine--are growing up with legal abortion and the notion that "termination" is the solution for "unwanted children", as a subtle and subliminal message about America's disrespect for human life.

Think of it-- "unwanted children" in a land known for its power, wealth, and scientific breakthroughs, including fetology, ultrasound technology, and the ability to heal a child in the womb through "fetal

And the irony?

More than two million couples are on waiting lists to adopt.

In decades past, America was that nation eager to offer hope to the hopeless and life to the burdened. No child was so disease-ridden, so handicapped or troublesome, that Americans didn't seek to overcome whatever hurdle existed to offer a future of promise. No one was so inconvenient, imperfect, or unplanned that he or she deserved to die.

In our efforts to overcome obstacles, vaccines were discovered for diseases that appeared all but incurable. Technology was invented that helped young and old overcome physical afflictions.

Not so today, Nowadays, the solution is to destroy the diseased instead of the disease.

What a dismal, utilitarian legacy to pass on to our children, i.e., "You were wanted, dear. Abortions only for those 'unwanted' kids."

And what must our children think as they view our diligence at saving the whales and seals, enshrining the environment and offering animal rights, but not saving preborn babies?

As Christians we must not be discouraged or tire in our zeal. Our children and others in our communities and nations are watching. As Catholics faithful to the truth, we know that our prayers and witness are the most powerful weapons we have.

In his recent encyclical *Evangelium Vitae* (The Gospel of Life), Pope John Paul II calls upon all Catholics to "create a culture of life".

He tells us that "to defend and promote life, to show reverence and love for it, is a task which God entrusts to every man, calling him as His living image to share in His own lordship over the world."

But the "Gospel of Life," the Holy Father adds, "is not for believers alone, it is for everyone." In other words, the issue of life and its defense and promotion are not concerns of Christians alone.

"Although faith provides special light and strength," the pontiff says, "this question arises in every human conscience which seeks the truth and which cares about the future of humanity."

In other words, with Truth and God's grace, Christians must lead the way. In fact, the Holy Father reminds us that it is our mission and responsibility to do so.

A society lacks solid foundations, John Paul warns, when, on the one hand, "it asserts values such as the dignity of the person or justice and peace, but then, on the other hand, radically acts to the contrary by

allowing or tolerating a variety of ways in which human life is devalued and violated, especially where it is weak or marginalized."

As a Catholic mother who abhors the notions of offering to young people negative solutions--such as abortions and euthanasia--to solve social problems, I want my children to embrace the concept of building a "culture of life." But more importantly, my words against violence, or my fundamental core belief in fostering a respect for other persons and property--pretty vital in this household of mixed races and colors--have a hollow, empty ring if I qualify it to *only* mean the perfect, planned, and the "wanted."

What can we do as individuals?

We can begin with our most powerful weapon: *prayer*.

Next, we can be a witness to our children, neighbors, friends, and others regarding our pro-life commitment.

We can earmark our charitable giving to organizations that other in the secular world *will never give a dime to* --pro-life!

We can *adopt in daily prayer* those mothers and babies threatened by legalized abortion.

And prayers *do* work! As a volunteer crisis-pregnancy counselor, every once in a while I will talk to someone who, in the course of asking for help, will confide, "I don't know what made me call."

I do. Someone was praying.

We may not change the law, but we can change hearts--one by one--and we can work to remind a forgotten or misled nation that, as we say in adoption circles, "there is no such thing as an 'unwanted child,' but some that are merely misplaced."

by Mary Ann Kuharski

HEART to HEART – A TRUE LETTER to HER NATURAL PARENTS

Many years ago I was adopted. I have never physically seen my natural mother nor do I know her name. At this time in my life, I am not physically searching for her. I have two adoptive parents whom I love and treasure. I want our lives to continue as is.

My purpose for writing and seeking out my biological

mother this way is to give her a written message of love and a personal “thank you” for giving me the gift of life. Please read on as I invite you to journey with me in giving this message and pass it on to others. One day, my biological mother will be able to read this letter and know that I love her deeply. Keep in mind that the court records for my adoption are sealed.

“Mom, I thank you for the gift of life. Mom, I know, from my adoptive mother, you were a single parent. You must have felt very afraid, lonely, and scared at that time when you found out that you were pregnant. You were probably wondering where you were going to get the money from to support me. I’m grateful you chose adoption. You are my hero, because you persevered through all of the struggles, the criticism, judgment from others, to have me. I am loved. Mom, you realized that those little cells which today are referred by many as “blood clots and blobs” was the transforming, the forming me – just like a caterpillar in a cocoon to become a butterfly (just like Jesus in the tomb). I was just a smaller version of what I was to become later and am now.”

Mom for all those who read this letter: I want people to know about your strength. You are my unsung hero who cooperated with the Will of God, the Creator of all life. I also speak on behalf of all the unborn children to which I never gave thought to before. I, through your example of giving life, realize that the sacrifice of human life in any form goes beyond religion, race, creed, politics....but deeply effects/affects all people. I could have been a statistic as well as any person reading this letter. But mom, your gift has given me a voice to speak, the freedoms that all human beings have a right to and desire (no matter how small in stature or size), especially that of love....to love and to be loved.”

“Mom through your gift of life and unconditional love, I can now be a voice for all of the unborn children, those in the womb, whose voice is silent. Through your example of love, mom, my hope is that others will come to know and thank their mothers for the gift of life. Especially, I cherish our Blessed Mother, who in her “YES” to God, gave mankind salvation through the death of her Son, Jesus. We can now enter Heaven because Jesus paid the ultimate price to save our souls. Again I emphasize mom that I could have been a statistic as anyone reading this letter.”

Mom my desire is not to bring attention nor cause argument upon any religion, race, organization, for human sacrifice goes beyond all this and causes unknown and unforeseen repercussions. So, I shall

The PILGRIM

keep secret my name, religion race...for that is not important. The message behind all this is love. Love God first and then neighbor. Follow God’s Law of Love: the Ten Commandments. Mom, you have done this by giving me the gift of life.” Mom, I love you. You have made my adoptive parents very happy. They could not have children because of physical problems.

My three children also thank you. For my three children would not be here today if you had not given me the gift of life. I love my adoptive parents here on earth and in Heaven. May we all unite as one voice with our Creator, the author of Life and Love, to end all human sacrifice through abortion. Love, Joy

(A true letter from J.M. sent to the PFMC.)

PILGRIMS of FAITH MARIAN CENTER (PFMC)

We are not a store. We operate like a church pamphlet or bookrack where you make selections and offer a donation based on value posted or received. See the four-page order form enclosed in past issues or loaded on the Internet Web Site, <http://www.geocities.com/pilgrimsfaith>, for a partial listing of items that can be obtained from the PFMC through donations. If you wish to order, please fill out your order request, make out a check or complete the information for use of a credit card and mail to PFMC, 61 Cooper Road, Voorhees, NJ 08043-4896.

If you do not have an order form, call us at 856-768-9228 with a FAX number or mailing address and we will send you an order form. If you know what you want and we carry it, you can order over the telephone using your credit card. We take DISCOVER (NOVUS), MASTER CARD (Cirrus) or VISA (PLUS) Charge Cards.

We want to keep the PFMC open from 10 AM to 5 PM daily. In order to do this we need a solid list of volunteers we can count on to meet these scheduled times. We need regular daily or weekly help and help once a month – whatever you can give. We will give you a good orientation, and make use of the gifts that God has given you.

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

Thank you and God bless you,

Kathleen and the Volunteer Staff

PLEASE DON'T WRITE ORDERS ON DONATION SLIPS

When ordering books, tapes or oil, we kindly ask you to NOT place them on the donation slips, but rather use the order forms enclosed inside "The PILGRIM" or write us a separate note.

The donation slips are noted and are then placed in a prayer basket in the Upper Room where we pray daily. They are then taken on pilgrimage with Kathleen or a volunteer coordinator, and are left in a religious place for further prayer. We often do not see the order on the slip as they do not go to our order section, and your order may get lost or not noticed.

COMPLETE ADDRESS — USE RETURN ADDRESS LABEL or STAMP!!!



Please complete your address on any order forms or with any letter order. We need to see your address clearly printed with the ZIP+4 that is supposed to speed the mail delivery.

We appreciate the communication once a year so that we can correct our mailing labels.

Consider ORDERING and SPONSORING "The PILGRIM" for your favorite religious or priest.

Please be considerate of those you ask us to add to the mailing list and speak to them about your intentions.

PHONES – PLEASE BE PATIENT, ALLOW 8-9 RINGS for a MESSAGE MACHINE



The PFMC phone system at Epiphany House has been set up so that all previously used numbers ring through Epiphany House. When no one is at Epiphany House (856) 768-9228 and (856) 753-9252 ring over to new phone lines at 129 Deerfield Avenue. When the ring through is active because no one is picking up before 4 rings at Epiphany House, some extra rings will be heard before the answering machine picks up and allows you to leave a message.

Please be patient and wait at least 8 or 9 rings.

BLESSED OIL

Bottles of oil blessed at Holy Mass in Saint James, Medjugorje and then carried to Vicka's house to be present in the room during an alleged apparition are available from the PFMC. Oil from Medjugorje is a **sacramental** and should be handled as such. It is NOT the same as the oils blessed by the Bishop for official church ceremonies or during administration of the sacraments by a priest. People being blessed should not be misled into thinking that blessing by the laity in any way replaces blessing by a priest, whose Holy Hands are consecrated by the Bishop in the sacrament of Holy Orders.

We request a \$5 donation per small bottle. This covers \$3 for the bottle, packaging and special handling plus \$2 mailing or postage expense.

BULLETIN NOTICES for *PFMC* AREA EVENTS

Would you be so kind as to copy or cut out one or more of following BULLETIN NOTICES and take them to your Pastor and / or Parish Bulletin Coordinator?

Please copy or cut out any one or more of the following BULLETIN NOTICES. Ask your parish to publish these notices to support the events for which you have an interest. It does wonders when a parishioner asks for a bulletin notice as compared to the thousands of requests that come in from outside the parish. Thanks for your assistance, we really need and appreciate it.

7 PM to 9 PM WEDNESDAY NIGHT SEMINARS on the HISTORY and DEVELOPMENT of CHRIST'S DIVINELY ESTABLISHED CHURCH

Dean Pulcini will be teaching a course called "DEFENDING YOUR FAITH" which will offer a basic Orthodox understanding of the Catholic faith in comparison to and contrasted with Protestantism and Eastern Orthodoxy.

The Wednesday evening programs from 7 PM to 9 PM will be held in the Great Room at Epiphany House of the Pilgrims of Faith Marian Center (PFMC).

Call 856-768-9228 for information or directions.

PRAYER GROUP

Meets in the Great Room at Epiphany House of the PFMC every Thursday from 12:30 PM to 2:30 PM. All are invited.

Call 856-768-9228 for information or directions.

Thanks again for your efforts with BULLETIN ANNOUNCEMENTS on behalf of PFMC AREA EVENTS.

Kathleen as well as all the PFMC Volunteer Staff

PRESS BULLETIN #160 – 3/26/01

THE FIRST DAY OF THE WEEK

“Easter is not a day like all other days. This is the day that we have not chosen ourselves, such as, May 1st. This is the day that the Lord has made... God has acted – this is why we celebrate Easter.

On the first day of the week – according to the Gospels – the Risen Christ meets his witnesses. This is the origin of Christian Sunday.” (F. Kamphaus)

Cyril Turowsky, a Russian preacher from the 12th century, wrote about Easter and about its significance, called the day of Easter “the day of the intronisation of Sunday”. “From today onwards, Sunday is no more an ordinary day. More than that, Sunday has been sanctified by the Resurrection. Now, Sunday is the most exalted of all days, because on that day Christ is risen from the dead.” These words make us understand why Russian Christians have given to Sunday the name of “Voskersenie” (Resurrection).

Easter this year and the entire Easter season are new occasions for us to recognize the holiness of the Day of the Lord, which is the direct consequence of what has happened. “But at daybreak on the first day of the week the women went to the tomb...” (Lk 24,1)

During this Easter season, I wish for all of you to experience the same encounter the women in the Gospel experienced: the faith and the joy of the Resurrected Christ. And – do not forget Sunday, because of its significance and its content!

Fr Ivan Landeka

NUMBER of COMMUNIONS and NUMBER of CONCELEBRANTS

In the month of February 20,000 communions were distributed and 635 priests concelebrated the Mass in Medjugorje.

RENOVATION of the CONFESSIONALS

From the very beginning of the apparitions, both pilgrims and parishioners felt a deep need in their hearts for the Sacrament of Confession. Many priests were hearing confessions outside, in the open air. As a temporary solution, in 1989, 20 confessionals were constructed on the East Side of the church. Thousands of faithful found peace in God and peace with themselves there. That is why Medjugorje has been called “the confessional of the world”. These confessionals were in need of renovation, which was accomplished this winter.

We invoke the blessing of God to all priests and all faithful who will give and receive the sacrament of forgiveness in the new confessionals. We wish for them to find there a place of “...peace with God and peace between man and God...” (Our Lady’s message from the 26th of June 1981), especially in this time of Lent, when many choose Medjugorje as a place for their reconciliation with God.

THE ANNUAL APPARITION to MIRJANA SOLDO on MARCH 18, 2001.

The visionary Mirjana Dragicevic-Soldo had daily apparitions from June 24th 1981 to December 25th 1982. During the last daily apparition, Our Lady gave her the 10th and last secret, and told that she would appear to her once a year, the 18th of March. It has this way during these 19 years.

Several thousand pilgrims gathered to pray the Rosary, which started at 9 AM in the Cenacolo Community. The apparition lasted 5 minutes from 9:45 to 9:50 AM. Our Lady blessed everyone and gave a message. She was resolute and clear in Her words.

“Dear children! Today I call you to love and mercy. Give love to each other as your Father gives it to you. Be merciful (pause) - with the heart. Do good works, not permitting them to wait for you too long. Every mercy that comes from the heart brings you closer to my Son.”

TIPS and INFORMATION for PILGRIMS

Dear pilgrim!

In the name of all priests serving in this parish, I am pleased to welcome you to Medjugorje.

Thank you for your desire and readiness to visit this place of grace and prayer. May the Almighty God, through the intercession of our Heavenly Mother, Queen of Peace, reward you for all the efforts you undertake to come here!

As I would like your stay in Medjugorje to be as pleasant and helpful as possible, I am giving you some recommendations, and I ask you sincerely to read them carefully and to abide by them:

Holy Mass is celebrated only in the parish church. It is possible to celebrate Mass in the Adoration chapel, with the prior permission of the pastor. According to an official diocesan directive, it is forbidden to celebrate Holy Mass in pensions, in private homes you are staying in, on the hills and in any community or chapel located in the parish of Medjugorje. For any explanation or information, please contact the Information Office in the sanctuary.

Prayer meetings within the parish can be organized only with the permission of the pastor.

Only priests working for the parish have the permission to meet pilgrim groups and give conferences in the church area. All others have to obtain the permission of the pastor.

No one has the permission to “pray over” any person either in or around the church area.

If you are a priest, you are invited to concelebrate at the evening Mass (bringing what is necessary: alb, stole, celebret...), and - if you have the permission to hear confessions - to be at the disposal of pilgrims for confessions in your language, or in the language you speak.

Leaders of pilgrim groups must arrange their meetings with priests of the parish or with visionaries through the Parish Information Office.

Each pilgrim group should employ a parish-trained and qualified guide during their stay in Medjugorje. The service of a parish-trained guide should be requested at the Information Office.

Pilgrimage group-leaders should announce the arrival of their group and the number of participants by phone/fax + 387 36 651 988 or by e-mail: informacije@medjugorje.hr

You are asked not to make any other arrangements during the evening prayer program in the church.

The area around the church, on Apparition Hill and Cross-Mountain, are places of prayer. I ask you to please respect them as such, to behave in harmony with their significance and to dress appropriately, as to not disturb prayer and meditation. I ask you also to preserve the cleanliness of these places.

No candles are to be lit on Apparition Hill or on Cross Mountain. They may be lit only at the place provided on the West Side of the church, near the Wooden Cross. Votive offerings, religious articles photos – nothing should be left on Apparition Hill or on Cross Mountain.

Smoking is not allowed in and around the church.

Conscious of the presence of God, and in order to protect the atmosphere of prayer and meditation, it is not allowed to take photos during Mass and during Adoration.

It is forbidden to solicit any money, apart from the offerings during Holy Mass. If you notice anybody trying to do this, please contact the Information Office of the Sanctuary.

Mass intentions, pledges or donations for the maintenance of the Sanctuary of the Queen of Peace are to be given to the Parish Office. Thank you!

With God's blessing,

Dr. Fr. Ivan Sesar, Pastor

**Published by: Information Center MIR - Shrine of the Queen of Peace), 88266 Medjugorje. Director: fra Miljenko Stojic. Information Office: 00387-36-651-988
E-mail: medjugorje-mir@medjugorje.hr
Internet: <http://www.medjugorje.hr/ulazakenstipe.htm>**

ON-LINE CALENDAR and ROSARY

How often have you wanted to find a copy of last Sunday's readings or today's liturgy?

While surfing the Internet or Web we found a lot of neat stuff from the following index.

<http://www.easterbrooks.com/personal/calendar/index.html>

This included an on-line Rosary:

<http://www.easterbrooks.com/personal/calendar/rosary.html>

CALENDARS:

In *April*, the Church celebrates the Solemnities of **PASSION (PALM) SUNDAY (8)**, and **EASTER SUNDAY (15)**, the Feast of *Saint Mark, Evangelist (25)*, the Memorials of *Saints Anselm (21), Adalbert (23), George, Martyr (23), Fidelis of Sigmaringen (24), Peter Chanel (28), Louis de Monfort (28), and Pius V, Pope (30)*. The **EASTER TRIDUUM** is **Holy Thursday (11)**, **Good Friday (13)** and **Holy Saturday (14)**.

The **FEAST of DIVINE MERCY** requested by Jesus in his Apparitions to *Saint Faustina Kawalska* on the **SECOND SUNDAY of EASTER (22)**. The **DIVINE MERCY NOVENA** starts on **Good Friday (4/13/2001)**.

In *May*, the Church celebrates the Solemnities of **ASCENSION of the LORD (24)** the Feasts of *Saints Philip and James (3), Matthias, Apostle (14)*, and the **VISITATION (31)** and the Memorials of *Saints Joseph the Worker (1), Athanasius (2), Nereus (12), Achilles (12), Pancras (12), Isidore the Farmer (15), Pope John I (18), Bede the Venerable (25), Pope Gregory VII (25), Mary Magdalene de Pazzi (25), and Philip Neri (26)*. The Church calendar recognizes **Mother's Day (13)** and **Memorial Day (observed) (28)**.

MARIAN SHRINE or PILGRIMAGE PRESENTATIONS



Keith and Kathleen are always willing to schedule presentations to prayer group, Altar Rosary Society, Legion of Mary or other parish group meetings. The experiences and continuation of ministry for Our Lady in this time of graces and manifestation of Our Lord's Mercy are shared through videotape, witness and/or slide presentations followed by a question and answer session.

There is no charge. Free will offerings are accepted.

This is especially true for books, tapes, and religious articles, when they are made available in displays at the presentation sites just like they are at the PFMC which operates like a church book rack. Donate at or above the suggested value on each article.

INTERNET

Surf for the PFMC presence on the Internet at:

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

If you wish to see pictures of the twins or related Werner family information, visit:

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



AROUND the PFMC AREA

Try to participate in daily Holy Mass or make a visit to the Blessed Sacrament during your travels to and from work or on errands.

For information, call the PFMC at (856) 768-9228. You may FAX your questions to (856)-768-9428.

The PILGRIM

Page 28

Volume 12, Number 4 -April 2001

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Keith and Kathleen Werner, Co-Directors

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(856) 768-9228 FAX: (856) 768-9428

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PLEASE DON'T THROW THIS AWAY!!

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

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

