



The PILGRIM

Vol. 15, No. 4

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April 2004

The PILGRIM is a periodical from the **Pilgrims of Faith Marian Center (PFMC)**. The **PFMC** is a ministry of lay Catholic evangelization and healing through the intercession of the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

A PRAYER



O My Father, we want to give you our all. Our hearts only return to you what is already yours. We wish to ask for spiritual vision. We ask you to illumine all our innermost areas where love is not perfected. We ask you to heal and purify this love so that our hearts may know You fully.

Give us the gift of purity and intimate and deep friendship with You, my God. Free us from our human affections. Oh how tempted we are in moments of loneliness and feeling abandoned. But, you find nothing of this, as you embrace all of your children with a pure supernatural love. Jesus you are the guardian of all who practice purity of heart, mind and body. Guard our hearts to make them more pure and transparent, so that some day we will become worthy to gaze upon your Face.

We ask these things through the Immaculate Heart of Your Mother Mary.

AMEN

(Kathleen prays from the heart for each issue.)

THE HOLY SPIRIT WAS INDEED ALIVE and TOUCHED HEARTS during 12-17 MARCH 2004 EVENTS

We truly believed that God called the remnant of the remnant to the **2004 Retreat Conference (RC)**, **3-Day Extension (3DX)**, and **Youth Track (YT)** events in the **Hilton Hotel, Cherry Hill, NJ**, from **12-17 March 2004**. **Father Bill Halbing** gave a great start to the **RC** with his **Friday** presentations on the sheep amongst the wolves. **Babsie Bleasdell** and **Father Andrew Apostoli, CFR**, followed this on **Saturday** and **Sunday** with their very powerful evangelization from the lay and priestly point of view.

The **March MESSAGE**, from **GOSPA, Our Lady, Queen of Peace**, to an alleged visionary from **Medjugorje, Bosnia-Hercegovina**, is presented beginning on page 12 (centerfold page) with the **3/26/04 PRESS BULLETIN**.

Sister Claire Marie brought the messages of **Mary** into our hearts on **Saturday night** as well as on **Monday** and **Tuesday**. **Father John Hampsch, CMF**, was again a special teacher on the charisms of the **Holy Spirit** on **Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday**. **Father Michael Semana** and the **People of Praise Prayer Community Gospel Choir** really lifted us up at the **Saturday night** concert.

Please mark your calendars and start preparing now to be with us from **Friday, 18 February 2005** through **Wednesday, 23 February 2005**.

The principal speaker on **Friday** and **Saturday** will be **Father Bill Halbing**. More information on other speakers and the theme will be forthcoming.

IVAN DRAGICEVIC VISITED BERLIN, NEW JERSEY 3/23/04

Kathleen and **Keith Werner** as well as the all-volunteer team from the **PFMC** hosted **Ivan** at the **Epiphany House** for a private reception prior to his presentation. We thank all involved and all those who came to hear and meet **Ivan**. We are especially grateful to **Ray Mooney** as well as **Fred and Darlene Milas** who gave so willing of their time to be with and interpret for **Ivan** over a span of three long days.

Father John Tino from **Saint Joan of Arc, Jackson Heights, NY**, celebrated a beautiful Holy Mass and gave a great homily. We really appreciate his support of the **PFMC** and its healing ministry. We thank all the priests who concelebrated Holy Mass. The **Franciscan Friars of the Renewal (CFR)**, part of the community founded by **Father Benedict Groeschel, CFR**, were a welcome assist with the Holy Mass. We thank **Carl and Marti Granieri** for their leadership of **Hearts Afire**, <http://www.heartsafire4god.com>, **Somers Point NJ**, for the great music, the praise, the song, and the praying of the **Holy Rosary**.

"The PILGRIM" for **April 2004** is dedicated to **"Mary, Mother of Purity."** See page 3 for an **"IN THIS ISSUE . . ."** or **Table of Contents** listing.

We think that **Ivan** really reached out to the young people in a special way. We have heard from parents who struggled to get their young adults to come with them but could not shut them up on the way home.

Being present with **Ivan** for his quiet time during and then his witness on the night's apparition of the **GOSPA, Our Blessed Virgin Mother, Mary, Queen of Peace** was an immense honor for all present. His schedule for talks can be found at: <http://www.medjugorje.org/ivanse.htm>

We are sorry that so many who called after the events were totally booked felt so disappointed that they could not be present for these events. We have asked **Ivan** to put us on his list for future visits. We have even asked him to give us extra days for churches in other area dioceses such as **Wilmington**. He prefers to talk in a church after Holy Mass.

Pray that the new **Bishop of Camden, Most Reverend Joseph Anthony Galante**, will be open to **Ivan's** visits to the **Camden Diocese** and that all the area bishops will be open to having **Medjugorje** visionaries speak in churches within their dioceses.

If you or your friends want more information on **Medjugorje** or the messages of **Mary** through alleged visionaries or locutionists, please make contact with us at the address on the last page.

As shown on the last page, we are more than willing to visit local churches, prayer groups, ministries, etc. to provide displays of books, pamphlets, religious articles, etc. as well as presentations on any of the Marian shrines that we have visited or researched. Those we have visited include **Fatima, Guadalupe** (both in **Spain** and **Mexico**), **LaSalette, Lourdes, Pontmain, and Rue du Bac (Miraculous Medal Chapel in Paris, France)**. We also have been privileged to make three pilgrimages to the Holy Land and one to a portion of the footsteps of **Saint Paul**. This latter pilgrimage included stops to see the remains of the early churches in what is now **Greece** and **Turkey**. We have visited many shrines and holy places in **France** and **Italy** including most of the sites of Eucharistic Miracles like **Bolsano, Cascia, and Lanciano** in **Italy**.

DIVINE MERCY NOVENA

Remember the Divine Mercy Novena begins on **Good Friday, 9 April 2004**, and goes through **Divine Mercy**

The volunteer Board of Directors and Staff of the PFMC recognize and accept that the final authority regarding the alleged apparitions, locutions and related messages at, and to the recipients from, Medjugorje, Bosnia-Herzegovina, as well as all other private revelations, rests with the Holy See, to whose judgment we willingly submit. We give total allegiance to our One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church and its Magisterium, particularly Our Holy Father, Pope John Paul II. See page 5 for additional PFMC information. While those presenters who work with the PFMC are selected for their personal qualifications and commitment to the Church, their comments and presentations are those of individual Catholics and no endorsement by ecclesiastical authority is to be presumed.

Sunday, 18 April 2004. See insert in this issue.

Queen of Heaven Church, 700 Marlton Pike West, Cherry Hill, NJ will be holding a **Divine Mercy Sunday** celebration starting at **2 PM**. It will include Eucharistic Adoration, Holy Rosary, and Divine Mercy Chaplet (sung) and will end with Holy Mass.

MOST REVEREND JOSEPH A. GALANTE APPOINTED SEVENTH BISHOP of CAMDEN

The Vatican announced shortly after 6:00 AM Eastern Time today (3/23/2004) that the Holy Father has appointed Most Reverend Joseph Anthony



Galante as seventh bishop of the Diocese of Camden. He will be installed Friday, April 30, 2004 at Saint Agnes Church in Blackwood, NJ.

Bishop Galante succeeds Bishop Nicholas DiMarzio who was installed as Bishop of the Diocese of Brooklyn on October 3, 2003. Monsignor

Thomas J. Morgan, pastor of Saint Thomas More, Cherry Hill, and Vicar General/Moderator of the Curia for the diocese, served as Apostolic Administrator during the interim until the appointment of Bishop Galante today.

"Words are inadequate to express my joy and thanks to our Holy Father Pope John Paul II for appointing me Bishop of Camden," Bishop Galante said at a morning press conference at the Camden Diocesan Center. "When I became a bishop I chose as my motto *Have the mind of Jesus*. This remains my goal and my desire for myself as well as for all of us. I eagerly look forward to coming to know and to collaborate with the laity, religious, and clergy of the diocese."

Bishop Galante, 65, has served since 2000 as Coadjutor Bishop of the Diocese of Dallas. From 1994-1999 he was Bishop of the Diocese of Beaumont, TX. He was named Titular Bishop of Equilium and Auxiliary of San Antonio in 1992.

A Philadelphia native, Bishop Galante was ordained a priest May 16, 1964 for the Archdiocese of Philadelphia. While in Philadelphia, he served in

three parishes and held various Archdiocesan positions, including Vicar for Religious, Defender of the Bond (Tribunal), and Professor of Canon Law (Saint Charles Borromeo and Mary Immaculate Seminaries). From 1968 to 1972 he served in the Diocese of Brownsville, Texas in various capacities, including Vicar for Religious. From 1987 to 1992 he was Undersecretary for the Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life in Rome.

He holds a Doctorate in Canon Law (1968, Lateran University, Rome) and a Master of Arts in Spiritual Theology (1991, University of Saint Thomas, Angelicum, Rome).

Bishop Galante serves on the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops' Committee on Communications, Committee on Canon Law, Ad Hoc Committee on Sexual Abuse and the Ad Hoc Committee on Economic Concerns of the Holy See. Previously, Bishop Galante was Chair of the U.S. bishops' Committee on Communications and Chair of the U.S. bishops' Religious Life Committee, as well as a member of the Pontifical Council for Pastoral Care of the Sick, Dying and Mourning and the Holy Father's appointment of Bishop Joseph Galante

(3/23/2004 with permission from Andrew J. Walton, Director of Communications, (856) 756-7900 ext. 5282 <http://www.camdendiocese.org/pdf/Press%20Release-Appointment%20Post%20Conference.pdf>)

STATEMENT of MOST REVEREND JOSEPH A. GALANTE

Words are inadequate to express my joy and thanks to our Holy Father Pope John Paul II for appointing me Bishop of Camden.

This is truly a return home for me. I was born, raised, and educated in the Delaware Valley- albeit on the other side of the river. I was a priest of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia and although I left this area in 1987, I have maintained a home at the shore since 1983. For me South Jersey is home.

The bishops who have gone before me have shepherded this Church with great wisdom and foresight, and love for the people entrusted to them. A special word of thanks must be offered to those Camden Bishops I have personally known: Bishops George Guilfoyle, James McHugh and Nicholas DiMarzio who have made lasting contributions to the

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building up of this Church. I thank them as well as Bishops Eustace, McCarthy and Archbishop Damiano for having laid such deep and firm foundations. Please pray that I may live up to the example that they have all set.

A special word of thanks is due to Msgr. Thomas Morgan who has guided the diocese over the past months. He has been a good and faithful steward and I am grateful to him for his service and to those who worked with him. Thank you as well to all the priests in the diocese for their constant fidelity.

When I became a bishop I chose as my motto *Have the mind of Jesus*. This remains my goal and my desire for myself as well as for all of us. I invite all of you to join with me in coming to know Jesus more intimately, to love Jesus more ardently, and to live Jesus more totally.

I eagerly look forward to coming to know and to collaborate with the laity, religious and clergy of our Diocese.

(3/23/2004 with permission from Andrew J. Walton,
Director of Communications, (856) 756-7900 ext. 5282
<http://www.camdendiocese.org/pdf/Statement%20of%20Galante%20on%20Letterhead.pdf>

LOST and FOUND

During the 12-17 March 2004 events at the Hilton Hotel many items were left in the Grand Ballroom and are now at the PFMC. Please if you lost notebooks, diaries, sweaters, glasses, etc. please call (856) 768-9228 and describe what you lost so we can hold it for your pick-up. If you live at great distance, we can mail the item to you.

During the **Ivan** visit on 23 March 2004, a red rosary case with a pearl rosary with cross and medal from *Saint Anne de Beaupre* in it was found and turned in. It has the name **John Beermann** printed on it in ink with "Rosary Rm. 204." This name was not on the tickets so we are asking anyone who knows this name to call us at (856) 768-9228.

"THE PASSION of the CHRIST"

The movie "The Passion of the Christ" opened on **February 25, 2004, Ash Wednesday**. Every adult claiming to be Catholic should see this movie and bring non-Catholic friends. Children should be counseled about the graphic content and taken with adults who can explain the truth in the Gospels, the medical doctor opinions and books, and the Shroud of Turin. See article on pages 24 as well as the detailed Bulletin Notice on page 30.

PLEASE MARK YOUR 2004 CALENDAR for PFMC EVENTS

See **Conference Corner** on page 23 as well as **Bulletin Notices** on pages 22 through 23. Most **PFMC** events will be preceded by their own **PFMC** information sheets with reservation forms.

April 2004

April 26, 2004, Monday, 9 AM to 1 PM: "Medical Day of Recollection" with **Father John O'Leary**. This is for any kind of medical personnel including aides, RNs and LPNs, Medical Office Personnel, Student Nurses, Doctors, Lab and X-ray technicians or medical staff from other departmental areas. We also invite Physician Assistants, Orthopedic Technicians, Athletic Trainers, and Physical Therapists. Spend a few hours away from all the rushing and work. **Father John** is the Pastor of

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Assumption Parish, **Atco, NJ**, and has been a teacher at **Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital School of Nursing**. Requested donation for this **Day of Recollection** is \$15. Light breakfast will be provided at **8:30 AM**. Talks will begin **PROMPTLY at 9 AM**. See enclosed information sheet with reservation form.

May 2004

May 22, 2004, Saturday, Father Bill McCarthy of *My Father's House* will conduct a "Healing Day of Recollection" for those in the healing ministry and those in need of healing. The original focus "Healing of Physical and Sexual Abuse" will still be addressed, particularly if applicants ask for it. If you are interested in this **Day of Recollection** and prayer, please call (856) 768-9228. Advance reservations must be made for this event. Requested donation for the day is \$25 including a light lunch and snacks. See enclosed information sheet with reservation form.

June 2004

June 27, 2004, Sunday, Keith and Kathleen will be celebrating their **40th Wedding Anniversary**, and will be away from **June 12** through **June 28, 2004**. Many of the **PFMC** staff volunteers will be joining **Keith and Kathleen** from the **19th** to the **26th**, so the **PFMC** will be closed during these days.

July 2004

The **PFMC Annual Meeting and Pot Luck Picnic**, scheduled in our by-laws for the **First Sunday in August** will have to again be moved to accommodate those who wish to attend other meetings. It will be on **Saturday, 31 July 2004**.

August 2004

August is a busy time for Roman Catholics in the **New England / Mid-Atlantic States**. **God, The Father, Day**, is celebrated at the *National Shrine of Our Lady of Fatima* in **Washington, NJ** on the **First Sunday in August**. This will be **Sunday, 1 August 2004**. The **Scranton Charismatic Conference** will be on **Friday, 6 August 2004**, through **Sunday, 8 August 2004**.

August 1, 2004 through **August 9, 2004**, **Father John Tino** will lead a **PFMC Pilgrimage to Lourdes (PPL) via Paris**. Visit the **Grotto of Massabielle**, the **Rosary Basilica**, the **Stations of the Cross**, and much more. Bathe in the healing waters of **Lourdes**, and enjoy a daily full program of Holy Mass and healing prayer. In **Paris** you will visit the **Miraculous Medal Chapel on Rue de Bac**, where *Saint Catherine Laboure* lies incorrupt. You will enjoy seeing the **Sacre Coeur Basilica, Notre Dame**, as well as the **Eiffel Tower**, as well as dining in the **Latin Quarter**. The cost of this pilgrimage is **\$1999**

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plus \$130 to cover air taxes. This includes air fare round trip, hotels, guides, land transfers, all breakfasts, and all but one supper while in **Paris**. In our planning for seeing more of **France**, we are evaluating the possibility of extensions with limited numbers of pilgrims for visiting areas to the southeast of **Paris** (**Ars, Paray le Monial, Taize, Nevers**) or the northwest of **Paris** (**Alencon, Lisieux, Pontmain, Mont San Michel, Chartres**). Extension plan options will be sent to each pilgrim after sign-up for the main pilgrimage. There is a blue color information sheet with reservation forms enclosed in this issue of "**The PILGRIM**." Call (856) 768-9228 if you do not have one. When you register for this pilgrimage, please indicate your desires for extending in **France**. Full payment is due *1 May 2004*.

October 2004

We have planned a **PFMC** Pilgrimage to **Medjugorje (PPM)** via **Rome** for **Doctor Bob** and **Anita Rice** of "**In His Omnipotent Presence (IHOP) Ministries**" with **Father Phil Sladicka** of **Olyphant, PA**. The desired dates have been adjusted to *Sunday, 10 October 2004*, through *Friday, 22 October 2004* in order to facilitate *2 days* in **Rome** with an opportunity for a *Wednesday* audience with the **Holy Father, Pope John Paul II**, and then *2 days* in **Rome** before coming home. Call (856) 768-9228 if you do not have an orchid color information sheet with reservation forms. There should be one enclosed in this issue of "**The PILGRIM**." Fill out a reservation form and send it in with your deposit.

(The **PFMC** Volunteer Staff Members)

SIGN-UP NOW for PFMC EVENTS

The **PFMC** has suffered, as have all ministries since 9/11/2001, with lower participation in planned events. The ministries we coordinate with find that participants in events wait until the last minute to register their intent to participate. We often hear that people are planning to participate but do not have their registration on file.

PLEASE REGISTER for **PFMC** events in a timely fashion. Events are listed on page 1 and following as well as in the Bulletin Notices on pages 22 and 23.

Please help us with posting Bulletin Notices in your Parish Bulletin.

Ask your pastor if you can put out information sheets in the church or have them posted on the Bulletin Boards.

CONTACT with the PFMC

Do you wish to keep receiving "**The PILGRIM**"? Most of you see a copy of "**The PILGRIM**" on a monthly basis, but make no written contact with the **PFMC**. We need this contact on a **regular basis to keep our mailing lists up to date**. See NOTICE in the box on page 7 about a regular response to these mailings. The enclosed envelope has a form on which you can indicate your desires to continue or discontinue receiving "**The PILGRIM**" on a monthly basis. If you wish to be completely deleted from regular or annual contact by the **PFMC**, please let us know that as well. We do respond.

Take a minute to contact us by phone, FAX, e-mail, Internet guest book, and/or regular mail. Please let us know you are getting "**The PILGRIM**", and want to keep receiving it.

Please include a donation for our ministries in your regular mail contact with the **PFMC**. Donations are not keeping up with monthly expenses. We must trim the bulk mail list down to those who regularly contact us. Just because we see you in church or at a prayer meeting does not mean that we remember to check off the regular contact box for the **PFMC**.

PLEASE CONTACT US REGULARLY, QUARTERLY, if at all possible, and AT LEAST ONCE PER YEAR.

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

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Brendan Williams, Father Joseph Szolack, as well as many of Mary's

other beloved priests from the Philadelphia and Newark Archdioceses as well as the Brooklyn, Camden, Harrisburg, Metuchen, Norwich,

Pittsburgh, Scranton, Trenton and Wilmington Dioceses. Father

Hartman is reviewing every issue. Father Joseph Szolack, Dean of Men at Saint Charles Borromeo Seminary, Philadelphia, PA.

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

HEALING PATHWAYS of LENT

I have often wondered what the Season of Lent really means in our process of healing. Lent had always meant fasting to me, and praying, and going to Mass, but there had to be more in all that. As I grew to search more into the meanings within healing ministry I would like to share with you some insights.

The season of Lent is following the path of death and resurrection, about personally participating in Jesus' final journey. It is a need to die to specific things in our lives. Perhaps this might be a behavior that has become destructive or dysfunctional. Perhaps there is a relationship that has ended or gone bad, or perhaps there is an unresolved grief or to a stage in our life that one finds it is time to let go of it. Perhaps we have to give up ones self-preoccupation, self will, or self love. In discovering the deadness in ones life, it is time to look upward toward light instead of always downward with gloom, complaints, sadness, or depression. So, the journey of Lent is about being born again to light. It is about dying and rising and about mortality and transformation.

On Ash Wednesday, we Catholics are reminded of our own mortality in a very vivid way, as the ashes are marked on our foreheads in the sign of the cross. In that sign of the cross, one hears the words spoken over us, "Dust thou art and to dust thou wilt return." This is a reminder not just of our physical mortality, but of the very path of Lent itself. One begins this season of Lent not only reminded of our death, but one is marked for death, and that path of death is about ones transformation, ones healing.

The journey of Lent is about participating in the death and resurrection of Jesus, about that journey from Galilee to Jerusalem. The journey ends with its climax in Good Friday and Easter. It is about embarking on the way of Jesus on that path of mortality and transformation that is at the very center of the Christian life. When you think of it, who does not yearn for this? Who does not yearn for a fuller connection to life? Who does not yearn for an identity that releases one from anxiety and self-preoccupation, withdrawal, aggression, lust, gluttony, pride, sloth, anger, unforgiveness, and so many other behaviors?

It seems to me that Lent is a time to look to ones need for healing, and to look at the light of starting the steps toward freedom. It is a time to be born again into that personal relationship that God the Father so yearns to have with each of us. It is a time to look at who really holds back the relationship instead of always blaming God for the sadness of our lives. The season of Lent to Easters new birth corresponds to our deepest yearning. May we this Lent experience that

internal transformation and healing and deliverance that is at the center of the Christian life. May we experience the freedom to be all that God calls us to be through his infinite Love and Mercy. .

If you are in need of healing, call the Pilgrims of Faith Marian Center at 856 768 9228 . God is a healing God, and He cares about you very much.

Kathleen Werner

WHAT IS SPIRITUAL DEPRESSION?

Depression – it is a huge word taking in everything from the physical to the psychological. But there is another depression called "spiritual depression."

Spiritual Depression occurs when a person feels "cut off" or "far away" from God. It is a very real feeling, and has God set somewhere where you cannot access His Mercy or love. It can be caused by sin, pain, or physical, emotional, material, or spiritual suffering.

Spiritual Depression occurs more frequently now than ever before. We see its behaviors, because of financial problems, deaths, sickness, divorces, parental problems with their children, or personality issues in the home, work or social areas.. While in it there is no enthusiasm for God's Word. One seems "weary in well doing." One may feel ready to collapse under persecution. One might sound like the Psalmist when he states,

"Why are you in despair, O my soul? And why have you become disturbed within me" (Ps. 42:5).

He repeats this refrain over and over. He says his **"soul thirsts for God (42:2) like a deer longs for water (v.1).**

He acknowledges that he is **"in mourning" (v.9)** and that **"deep calls to deep at the sound of thy waterfalls; All thy breakers and thy waves have rolled over me."(v.7).**

It is almost as though things are too hard to bear.

What is the solution to this depression? **It is self-talk** - negative, irrational self-talk in the form of simple declarative sentences often leads to this depression. And therefore, appropriate self-talk can lift one out of spiritual depression.

Prayer of the heart, telling God just how you feel, speaking to someone authentically such as a priest or one in healing ministry can help you to see the lie of the place you are in. Healing can only begin when a person comes to the mirror and says, "I can't do it

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alone...I need you God...Show me your face. It might take tears, confession, deliverance, or quiet time to really listen before one can truly enter into a spiritual filling. But it means to go into the fire of purification and healing, to experience the pain, and to welcome the emergence of new behaviors and relationships with a mighty God who wants you to believe and live joyfully, even in that path of the Cross.

Kathleen Werner

THE PASSION of the CHRIST

Recorded below are comments from Jody Dean, a Dallas, Texas CBS news anchor.

There've been a ton of emails and forwards floating around recently from those who've had the privilege of seeing Mel Gibson's "The Passion Of The Christ" prior to its actual release. I thought I'd give you my reaction after seeing it last night.

The screening was on the first night of "Elevate!", a weekend-long seminar for young people at Prestonwood Baptist Church in Plano. There were about 2,000 people there, and the movie was shown after several speakers had taken the podium. It started around 9 and finished around 11...so I reckon the film is about two hours in length. Frankly, I lost complete track of time - so I can't be sure.

I want you to know that I started in broadcasting when I was 13-years-old. I've been in the business of writing, performing, production, and broadcasting for a long time. I've been a part of movies, radio, television, stage and other productions - so I know how things are done. I know about soundtracks and special effects and make-up and screenplays. I think I've seen just about every kind of movie or TV show ever made - from extremely inspirational to extremely gory. I read a lot, too - and have covered stories and scenes that still make me wince. I also have a vivid imagination, and have the ability to picture things as they must have happened - or to anticipate things as they will be portrayed. I've also seen an enormous amount of footage from Gibson's film, so I thought I knew what was coming. But there is nothing in my existence - nothing I could have read, seen, heard, thought, or known - that could have prepared me for what I saw on screen last night. This is not a movie that anyone will "like". I don't think it's a movie anyone will "love". It certainly doesn't "entertain". There isn't even the sense that one has just watched a movie. What it is, is an experience - on a level of primary emotion that is scarcely comprehensible. Every shred of human preconception or predisposition is utterly stripped away. No one will

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eat popcorn during this film. Some may not eat for days after they've seen it. Quite honestly, I wanted to vomit. It hits that hard. I can see why some people are worried about how the film portrays the Jews. They should be worried. No, it's not anti-Semitic. What it is, is entirely shattering. There are no "winners". No one comes off looking "good" -except Jesus. Even His own mother hesitates. As depicted, the Jewish leaders of Jesus' day merely do what any of us would have done - and still do. They protected their perceived "place" - their sense of safety and security, and the satisfaction of their own "rightness". But everyone falters. Caiphus judges. Peter denies. Judas betrays. Simon the Cyrene balks. Mark runs away. Pilate equivocates. The crowd mocks. The soldiers laugh. Longinus still stabs with his pilus. The centurion still carries out his orders. And as Jesus fixes them all with a glance, they still turn away. The Jews, the Romans, Jesus' friends - they all fall. Everyone, except the Principal Figure. Heaven sheds a single, mighty tear - and as blood and water spew from His side, the complacency of all creation is eternally shattered.

The film grabs you in the first five seconds, and never lets go. The brutality, humiliation, and gore is almost inconceivable - and still probably doesn't go far enough. The scourging alone seems to never end, and you cringe at the sound and splatter of every blow - no matter how steely your nerves. Even those who have known combat or prison will have trouble, no matter their experience - because this Man was not conscripted. He went willingly, laying down His entirety for all. It is one thing for a soldier to die for his countrymen. It's something else entirely to think of even a common man dying for those who hate and wish to kill him. But this is no common man. This is the King of the Universe. The idea that anyone could or would have gone through such punishment is

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unthinkable - but this Man was completely innocent, completely holy - and paying the price for others. He screams as He is laid upon the cross, "Father, they don't know. They don't know..."

What Gibson has done is to use all of his considerable skill to portray the most dramatic moment of the most dramatic events since the dawn of time. There is no escape. It's a punch to the gut that puts you on the canvas, and you don't get up. You are simply confronted by the horror of what was done - what had to be done - and why. Throughout the entire film, I found myself apologizing.

What you've heard about how audiences have reacted is true. There was no sound after the film's conclusion. No noise at all. No one got up. No one moved. The only sound one could hear was sobbing. In all my years of public life, I have never heard anything like that.

I told many of you that Gibson had reportedly re-shot the ending to include more "hope" through the Resurrection? That's not true. The Resurrection scene is perhaps the shortest in the entire movie - and yet it packs a punch that can't be quantified. It is perfect. There is no way to negotiate the meaning out of it. It simply asks, "Now, what will you do?"

I'll leave the details to you, in the hope that you will see the film - but one thing above all stands out, and I have to tell you about it. It comes from the end of Jesus' temptations in the wilderness - where the Bible says Satan left him "until a more opportune time". I imagine Satan never quit tempting Christ, but this film captures beyond words the most opportune time. At every step of the way, Satan is there at Jesus' side - imploring Him to quit, reasoning with Him to give up, and seducing Him to surrender. For the first time, one gets an heart-stopping idea of the sense of madness that must have enveloped Jesus - a sense of the evil that was at His very elbow. The physical punishment is relentless - but it's the sense of psychological torture that is most overwhelming. He should have quit. He should have opened His mouth. He should have called 10,000 angels. No one would have blamed Him. What we deserve is obvious. But He couldn't do that. He wouldn't do that. He didn't do that. He doesn't do that. It was not and is not His character. He was obedient, all the way to the cross - and you feel the real meaning of that phrase in a place the human heart usually doesn't dare to go. You understand that we are called to that same level of obedience. With Jesus' humanity so irresistibly on display, you understand that we have no excuse. There is no place to hide.

The truth is this: Is it just a "movie"? In a way, yes. But it goes far beyond that, in a fashion I've never felt

- in any forum. We may think we "know". We know nothing. We've gone 2,000 years - used to the idea of a pleasant story, and a sanitized Christ. We expect the ending, because we've heard it so many times. God forgive us. This film tears that all away. It's as close as any of us will ever get to knowing, until we fully know. Paul understood. "Be urgent, in and out of season."

Luke wrote that Jesus reveals Himself in the breaking of the bread. Exactly. "The Passion Of The Christ" shows that Bread being broken. Go see this movie.

His, and His alone.

(Jodi Dean, Dallas TV News Anchor)

NY TIMES OP-ED PIECE on "THE PASSION of the CHRIST" MOVIE

Do You Recognize This Jesus?

Watching "The Passion of the Christ," Mel Gibson's new movie, I kept thinking the following: it is Christians, not Jews, who should be shocked by this film.

Mister Gibson's raw images invade our religious comfort zone, which has long since been cleansed of the Gospels' harsher edges. Most Americans worship in churches where the bloodied body of Jesus is absent from sanctuary crosses or else styled in ways so abstract that there is no hint of suffering. In sermons, too, the emphasis all too often is on the smoothly therapeutic: what Jesus can do for me.

More than 60 years ago, H. Richard Niebuhr summarized the creed of an easygoing American Christianity that has in our time triumphantly come to pass: "A God without wrath brought men without sin into a kingdom without judgment though the ministrations of a Christ without a cross." Despite its muscular excess, Mister Gibson's symbol-laden film is a welcome repudiation of all that.

"The Passion of the Christ" is violent - no question. Although Mel Gibson the believer identifies with a traditionalist movement that rejects Vatican Council II, Mel Gibson the artist here displays a thoroughly Catholic sensibility, one that since the Middle Ages has emphasized Jesus as the suffering savior crowned with thorns. Martin Luther, too, would have recognized in this film his own theology of the cross.

But there is a little twist here. In his prerelease screenings, Mister Gibson invited mostly conservative evangelical clergy. They in turn responded by reserving huge blocks of movie tickets for their congregations. When the film opens today,

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expect theaters around the country to be turned into temporary churches.

And what's so strange about this? Unlike Mister Gibson's film, evangelical Protestantism is inherently non-visual. As spiritual descendants of the left wing of the Reformation, evangelicals are heirs to an iconoclastic tradition that produced the "stripping of the altars," as the historian Eamon Duffy nicely put it. That began in the late 16th century, when radical Protestants removed Christ's body from the cross. To the Puritans, displays of the body of Jesus represented what they considered the idol worship of the Papists. To this day, evangelical sanctuaries can be identified by their lack of visual stimulation; it is rare to see statues or stained-glass windows with human figures. For evangelicals, the symbols are all in sermon and song: verbal icons. It's a different sensibility.

For this reason, I think, evangelical audiences will be shocked by what they see. And, as Mister Gibson has said repeatedly, he means to shock. Catholics will find themselves on familiar ground: they, at least, have retained the ritual of praying "the stations of the cross" - a Lenten practice that, like Mister Gibson's movie, focuses on the last 12 hours in the life of Jesus. By contrast, Southern Baptists and other mostly fundamentalist churches do not observe Lent, and even Catholics have muted the ancient tradition of fast and abstinence that commemorated the Passion of Jesus.

Indeed, Mister Gibson's film leaves out most of the elements of the Jesus story that contemporary Christianity now emphasizes. His Jesus does not demand a "born again" experience, as most evangelists do, in order to gain salvation. He does not heal the sick or exorcise demons, as Pentecostals emphasize. He doesn't promote social causes, as liberal denominations do. He certainly doesn't crusade against gender discrimination, as some feminists believe he did, nor does he teach that we all possess an inner divinity, as today's nouveau Gnostics believe. One cannot imagine this Jesus joining a New Age sunrise Easter service overlooking the Pacific.

Like Jeremiah, Jesus is a Jewish prophet rejected by the leaders of his own people, and abandoned by his handpicked disciples. Besides taking an awful beating, he is cruelly tempted to despair by a Satan whom millions of church-going Christians no longer believe in, and dies in obedience to a heavenly Father who, by today's standards, would stand convicted of child abuse. In short, this Jesus carries a cross that not many Christians are ready to share.

It is easy, of course, to contrast third-millennium Christian mores with the story of Christ's Passion.

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Like other Americans, Christians want desperately to know that they are loved, in the words of the old Protestant hymn, "just as I am." But the love of God, as Dorothy Day liked to put it, "is a harsh and dangerous love" that requires real transformation. It is not the sort imagined by today's spiritual seekers who are "into" Asian religions.

Significantly, the Passion and death of Jesus is the chief element in the Gospel story that other religions cannot accept. In Islam, Jesus does not die on the cross because such a fate is considered unfitting for a prophet of Allah. By Hindus and Buddhists, Jesus is often regarded as a spiritual master, but the story of his suffering and death are considered unbecoming of an enlightened sage. Like the Buddha, the truly liberated transcend suffering and death. But Jesus submits to it - willingly, Christians believe - for the sins of all.

Were we a nation of Bible readers, not just Bible owners, I don't think a film like Mister Gibson's would cause much fuss. While I do not think that "The Passion of the Christ" is anti-Semitic, I do think it presents Christians with a "teaching moment." But the lessons have more to do with forgotten Christian basics than with who killed Jesus.

(February 25, 2004, OP-ED CONTRIBUTOR, Kenneth L. Woodward, a contributing editor at Newsweek, is the author, most recently, of "The Book of Miracles.")

AIRLINE CONSTRAINTS REQUIRE EARLY PILGRIM NAMES and RESERVATIONS

Much has changed in the airline industry since **9/11/2001**. The airlines now ask that we assign names to our pilgrimage reserved seats as soon as possible after setting up a group seating arrangement with them. They call us, or our agents, at the **120 days** before departure point and ask for these names. They threaten to pull **half** of the seats without names on them at that time. We normally get a grace period for this until the **90 days** point. They ask again at **90 days, 60 days, and 30 days**. They want tickets issued for the seats no later than **30 days** before the flight. Obviously they need to fill each plane with paying passengers in all seats.

For each pilgrimage we publish a full payment date. This is **90 days** before the pilgrimage. For **Lourdes** this date is **5/1/2004**. For **Medjugorje**, this date is **7/12/2004**. **We need NAMES NOW!!**

Please, if you intend to join us for either these pilgrimages, send in your reservation form with partial or full payment NOW!!

MARY

Father, today I want to thank You for the most precious gift that You have given us: Your Mother.

When You decided to reveal Yourself, in Your intimate and hidden mercy, You already had jealously kept and planned since always, the one who would be Your Mother.

It wasn't hard to find her. She was always attainable and faithful to her mission. She was waiting Your moment.

And in a lost place, You choose a humble woman, HUMAN like us, of flesh and bones like us but how different to us! so You could be also like one of us.

Suddenly she felt disturbed emotionally. Her self esteem didn't allow her to have conscience of what was going to happen. The Angel calmed her fears and when she listened that You were in her, in the plenitude of the Grace, she didn't doubt for a second and in that sublime moment she was your Mother, but also, our Mother.

The Holy Spirit covered her with His shadow, for her faithfulness and trust, she simply: RESPONDED TO THE CALL.

Mary: I give you thanks for being at our side. You are unconditional gift, and never abandon us, You are the Mother and teacher who corrects and holds us when we walk far from the Creator.

You are the Helper in the trials and Mediator in our needs. But over all, You are Mother, you take care of us, you protect us and guide our spirits' grow and the love toward others.

You left your example, You didn't speak much and you were on the side, but with a strong presence. You suffered at the foot of the cross, and you are the teacher of the constant prayer.

Today I want to give you a new title: Our Lady of the Look.

Your brilliant eyes reflect the tenderness and the emotion of your heart, filled with the plenitude of the grace, always available to listen and to intercede for us to your beloved Son. And that special Grace that God gave you, you have it in your eyes when they look at us, they show the purity of your soul and the faithfulness to your commitment.

Look of ATTENTION toward our sufferings and our infidelities, to transform them in silent offerings.

Look of care so we don't divert from the right path.

Look of love and always awake to make us feel the favorite children of the Love of the Father.

Look that gives strength and happiness to encounter the One who gave His life for us.

Mother, we give you thanks for being always unconditionally at our side.

(Gustavo Daniel Gopar Echeverría, psychologist with children and adults in Montevideo, Uruguay, <http://www.netgate.com.uy/~ggopar/prayers.html>)

GENOA SETTING UP a TEAM for EXORCISMS also a "SCHOOL of CONFESSORS"

The Genoa Archdiocese is undertaking the formation of a team of priests to care for possible cases of exorcisms. It is also establishing a "school of confessors."

Cardinal Tarcisio Bertone explained the initiative in detail, in statements published today by the newspaper *Avvenire*. The Genoa archbishop outlined the initiative last September in his three-year pastor plan for the archdiocese.

First, the cardinal said, the archdiocese will offer "a more profound formation" for priests in the exercise of the "ministry of reconciliation and spiritual support."

The need to establish a "school of confessors" is in response to the times, which require well-prepared "confessors and genuine spiritual fathers, especially in shrines and churches visited especially for confessions."

"Unfortunately, this eminent form of pastoral charity has been left for too long to the good will of each one and to his talents from the beginning of the seminary," the archbishop said in his pastoral program. "It must no longer and cannot be like this!"

Cardinal Bertone said that priests must be formed in current issues, such as "the development of medical science, which poses new and complex questions."

The cardinal announced that progress is being made in the establishment of a diocesan team "specialized in the support of people who are suffering symptoms that are difficult to interpret, whether from the spiritual or psychological point of view, or in the framework of problems of exorcism."

Emphasizing the need for "prior discernment" in this delicate matter, the cardinal said that in the case of diabolic possession, "the person in question will be supported by an exorcist who will pronounce the prayers of the rite."

The cardinal said the names of the exorcists will not be published. He said the archdiocese will offer

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people the possibility of a preliminary contact, to discern those in real need, who will then be put in touch with “one of the priests in charge of this ministry.”

(GENOA, Italy, MARCH 23, 2004 (Zenit.org) - ZE04032303)

ROME’S INSTRUCTION on PRAYERS for HEALING

Footnotes are available on-line or at the **PFMC**.

INTRODUCTION

The longing for happiness, deeply rooted in the human heart, has always been accompanied by a desire to be freed from illness and to be able to understand the meaning of sickness when it is experienced. This is a human phenomenon, which in some way concerns every person and finds particular resonance in the Church, where sickness is understood as a means of union with Christ and of spiritual purification. Moreover, for those who find themselves in the presence of a sick person, it is an occasion for the exercise of charity. But this is not all, because sickness, like other forms of human suffering, is a privileged moment for prayer, whether asking for grace, or for the ability to accept sickness in a spirit of faith and conformity to God's will, or also for asking for healing.

Prayer for the restoration of health is therefore part of the Church's experience in every age, including our own. What in some ways is new is the proliferation of prayer meetings, at times combined with liturgical celebrations, for the purpose of obtaining healing from God. In many cases, the occurrence of healings has been proclaimed, giving rise to the expectation of the same phenomenon in other such gatherings. In the same context, appeal is sometimes made to a claimed charism of healing.

These prayer meetings for obtaining healing present the question of their proper discernment from a liturgical perspective; this is the particular responsibility of the Church's authorities, who are to watch over and give appropriate norms for the proper functioning of liturgical celebrations.

It has seemed opportune, therefore, to publish an Instruction, in accordance with canon 34 of the Code of Canon Law, above all as a help to local Ordinaries so that the faithful may be better guided in this area, though promoting what is good and correcting what is to be avoided. It was necessary, however, that such disciplinary determinations be given their point of reference within a well-founded doctrinal framework,

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to ensure the correct approach and to make clear the reasoning behind the norms. To this end, it has been judged appropriate to preface the disciplinary part of the Instruction with a doctrinal note.

I. DOCTRINAL ASPECTS

1. Sickness and healing: their meaning and value in the economy of salvation

«People are called to joy. Nevertheless each day they experience many forms of suffering and pain.» (1) Therefore, the Lord, in his promises of redemption, announces the joy of the heart that comes from liberation from sufferings (cf. Is 30:29; 35:10; Bar 4:29). Indeed, he is the one «who delivers from every evil» (Wis 16:8). Among the different forms of suffering, those which accompany illness are continually present in human history. They are also the object of man's deep desire to be delivered from every evil.

In the Old Testament, «it is the experience of Israel that illness is mysteriously linked to sin and evil.» (2) Among the punishments threatened by God for the people's unfaithfulness, sickness has a prominent place (cf. Dt 28:21-22, 27-29, 35). The sick person who beseeches God for healing confesses to have been justly punished for his sins (cf. Ps 37; 40; 106:17-21).

Sickness, however, also strikes the just, and people wonder why. In the Book of Job, this question occupies many pages. «While it is true that suffering has meaning as punishment, when it is connected with a fault, it is not true that all suffering is a consequence of a fault and has the nature of a punishment. The figure of the just man Job is a special proof of this in the Old Testament... And if the Lord consents to test Job with suffering, he does it to demonstrate the latter's righteousness. The suffering has the character of a test.» (3)

Although sickness may have positive consequences as a demonstration of the faithfulness of the just person, and for repairing the justice that is violated by sin,

(Continued on page 15)

MESSAGE of 3/25/2004 via Maria Pavlovic Lunetti

Dear Children! Also today, I call you to open yourselves to prayer. Especially now, in this time of grace, open your hearts, little children, and express your love to the Crucified. Only in this way, will you discover peace, and prayer will begin to flow from your heart into the world. Be an example, little children, and an incentive for the good. I am close to you and I love you all. Thank you for having responded to my call.

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

REFLECTION on the MESSAGE of 3/25/2004

The Blessed Virgin Mary begins her message, also today, with a call: Dear children, open yourselves to prayer. Throughout the years of her apparitions, Mary taught us and she still teaches us to put the prayer at the first place and to pray, until prayer becomes a joy for us. There is no other way towards God but the way of prayer. This way can appear difficult and not very attractive, and yet: whatever has value, whatever is precious in our life is difficult and require an effort. By nature, human beings do not decide so easily for prayer. Our nature is wounded and we tend towards idleness, pleasures and the choice of what is rather easy. This is why we must make a decision and an effort, for prayer and for all that is good and positive.

This is why we need prayer and all the means that our Mother is giving us, in order not to become sick. If the doctor tells us to take a bitter but useful remedy, we obey to him. How much more should we obey to Mary, our Mother, who knows best what we need in our life.

Together with the Church, she calls us and tells us that this time is a time of grace. It is a time when God is in a particular way favorable to his people. This is why she tells us: Open your hearts. Pray with the heart. Express your love to the Crucified.

The heart is the place of prayer. Our prayer must go down from our head to our heart. The heart is the place into which we want to invite Jesus through prayer. The prayer with the heart gets hold of the entire person and the entire person is in prayer. The heart is the symbol of life, of love, of all that is noble in us. Inside of us, we are not poor but rich, because God dwells in us. The more we know God, the more we can believe in Him and more we can love Him.

This is why Mary, our Mother, untiringly invites us to make the experience of the love of God in which she believed and of which she is living. This desire makes her come to us, so that we also may desire and experience what she possesses by the grace of God.

It is only through love that we can know Jesus who was crucified for us and because of us. Let us learn how to know his heart with which he loved us. The heart of Jesus is meek and humble. He is not forcing us, but he wants that we came to him freely. All that God is asking from us is trust and faith. Jesus wants to give his heart only to those who come to him with trust. He comes towards us first. He said it clearly: "It is not you who have chosen me, it is I who have chosen you". (Cf.: Jn 15,16) Jesus believes that our heart - wounded and marked by sin - has the capacity to come closer his heart. He has done everything to show us his love and the love of his Father. The apparitions of Our Lady, her calls, her simple and maternal messages, are an expression of the love of Jesus towards us, his love that is not forgetting us. This is why, in this message, Mary our Mother invites us to look at the Crucified with the heart. This is the heart that knew neither hatred nor greed nor envy, but only love which embraces all the humanity, and which wants to touch your heart and my heart. God became vulnerable in order to be able to touch all our wounds, to be able to receive the love of vulnerable men and women. God wants to be loved by those that he came to save. His heart is completely open to give and to receive love.

Today still, God is crucified with all those who are abandoned, scorned and rejected in this world. He has identified himself with the smallest person of this world in order to rise it and make it enter into his glory.

As Mary is with us, let us be with her - and through her with her Son Jesus and with one another.

Father Ljubo Kurtovic, Medjugorje, March 26, 2004

PRESS BULLETIN 196, 3/26/2004

TWO MOVIES: THE POWER of GOD and the POWER of MONEY

When "The Lord of the Rings" appeared on the screens, the media exalted the perfection of the

technique, the art of the actors, the quality of the script... More still, this film was presented as an inimitable and unsurpassable mythical work. The financial means invested were beyond anything that has ever been done in cinematographic industry. It was adorned with praises and accompanied by a systematic and aggressive publicity in all the media. And more... The power of money, visible in all dimensions of this movie, went even further: the film gained all the 11 Oscars. "Perfection! Miracle!", said radio, television, the press... the capacity of the money was presented in all its might.

At the time of this summit of the world cinematographic production, a film that speaks about the last hours in the life of Jesus Christ appeared on the screens. Exaggerated sensibilities... turmoil in the hearts of those who feel embarrassed by the Christ and by the Church... attempts to disqualify the movie. Accusations concerning the presentation of the subject of this movie. However, the sons of this world - who counted on the capacity of the money and the media that they control - were mistaken. Their calculations proved to be false, because they forgot the words of the Gospel of Matthew: "For men it is impossible, but for God all is possible." (Mt 19,26) God showed His power and His might once again. For the first time in the world of the cinema, it happened that the distribution of the Academy Awards happened in the shadow of another movie.

The film "The Passion of the Christ" in which much less money has been invested than in "The Lord of the Rings" conquered the world. The cinema halls became too small. The media could not dissimulate it.

Perhaps we ask ourselves how it can be possible? The answer comes from the Christ who says that all is possible to God. What is particularly interesting in this story, written according to the plan of God, is that Jim Caviezel, who plays the main role, bears witness: "I received this role thanks to Medjugorje, thanks to Our Lady. During the preparations, I was using all that I learned through Medjugorje. Mel Gibson and myself went every day together for [Holy M]ass. I was also fasting. I was reading Our Lady's messages all the time. I was praying the Rosary every day." (Interview for Radio "Mir" Medjugorje, December 6, 2003)

By reading that, let us not be surprised that this film surpassed all the expectations and raised above all malevolent criticisms. When somebody collaborates with God, the miracle can arrive. This film shows it in an extremely clear way. Glory to God!

Father Mario Knezovic

COMMUNIONS and CONCELEBRANTS

During the month of February, 22,000 received Holy Communion and 652 priests from this country and abroad concelebrated Holy Mass in Medjugorje.

THE 11TH INTERNATIONAL MEETING for GUIDES

The 11th International Meeting for Guides and Leaders of Peace Centres and Medjugorje Prayer, Pilgrim and Charity Groups took place in Medjugorje from February 22 to 26. There were about 100 participants from several countries of the world. The theme was, "Penance and contemporary men".

The participants concluded with a common declaration, which we publish entirely.

DECLARATION

Just as in the preceding years, we gathered under the protection of the Queen of Peace in Medjugorje for the 11th International Meeting for Guides and Leaders of Peace Centres and Medjugorje Prayer, Pilgrim and Charity Groups. Open for the inspirations of the Holy Spirit, inside of the Holy Church and with the intercession of our heavenly Mother, we were meditating on "Penance and contemporary men".

In the world that is becoming more and more a society of consumerism, we renewed God's own words about penance and about renunciation. In an atmosphere of prayer, we listened again Our Lady's messages in which she is calling us to penance. "Dear children! Also today I call you to fasting and renunciation. Little children, renounce that which hinders you from being closer to Jesus..." (March 25, 1998) Keeping this in mind, we believe that Our Lady's voice from Medjugorje is able to open to contemporary men the door to Jesus. In a time in which young generations live more and more according to the flesh and not according to the Spirit, we consider that it is important to hear and to respond to the call to penance, to renunciation, to fasting.

From this meeting, we invite the Church and every member of the Church to walk again on the path of conversion towards Jesus. "Be converted, the Kingdom of God is near" (Mt 3,2). Numerous experiences of pilgrims inspire us to declare that precisely in Medjugorje, by means of Our Lady's call, people decide more easily for renunciation, fasting and penance. Through Mary, God proposes to us again his covenant and a time of grace in which we can reach our personal salvation. So, let us read "the signs of times" (Lc 54-59), because there is also a time that is lost and that never comes back.

From this meeting, we invite in a special way the pilgrims of Medjugorje to be a blessing for the Church, a strength and a hope for our times, through their personal sacrifice, renunciation and prayer. We deeply believe that with prayer and fasting wars also can be stopped and all other evil. (Cf. Our Lady's message, February 2, 2003) May the blessing of the Queen of Peace lead us on this way.

Medjugorje, February 26, 2004
The participants

IRISH and POLISH AMBASSADORS

Mister Gerald F. Ansbro, Ambassador of Ireland for Slovenia, Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina, visited Medjugorje on Thursday, February 26, 2004. A special motive of his visit was the fact that numerous citizens of Republic of Ireland come on pilgrimage to the Shrine of the Queen of Peace.

Mister Doctor Leszek Hensel, polish ambassador in Bosnia and Herzegovina, visited Medjugorje on Saturday, February 28, 2004. During his meeting with the representatives of the Tourist Association Medjugorje-Bijakovici, he discussed the question of the entry visas for Bosnia and Herzegovina for Polish citizens who come numerous to the Shrine of the Queen of Peace.

Father Branko Rados, Pastor of Medjugorje, received both ambassadors and informed them about the life of the parish and the events of Medjugorje.

MEDJUGORJE in SLOVENIA

A painting representing Father Slavko Barbaric, work of Angel Zerbo, an autodidact painter, was blessed on February 29, in Korte (Slovenia) by Father Dinko Bizjak, in the presence of a prayer group that gathers each Sunday for the prayer of the Rosary and the Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament.

CELEBRATION of the 70TH ANNIVERSARY of the CONSTRUCTION of the CROSS on CROSS MOUNTAIN

On March 16, the parish Medjugorje commemorated the 70th anniversary of the blessing of the cross and of the celebration of the first Mass on Cross Mountain. At 1.30 PM, there was prayer of the Way of the Cross, and at 3 PM, Father Branko Rados, pastor of Medjugorje, presided holy mass in presence of about 3000 parishioners and pilgrims, in concelebration with 25 priests from the country and from abroad.

It was a day of thankfulness to all those who built the cross and a day of abandonment to God of the whole parish and of all the pilgrims who will come here. Let
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us remember: this cross was built during the Jubilee year of the Redemption, in memory of 1900 years of the death of the Redeemer. At that time, the hill called Sipovac received the name of Krizevac (Cross Mountain).

For this occasion, a commemorative booklet with a "Way of the Cross" has been published. There was also an exposition of old photographs, recalling the history of Cross Mountain.

SEMINARS AT "DOMUS PACIS"

At "Domus Pacis", members of the "Legion of Mary" from Zagreb had their time of recollection.

Here were 3 "Prayer and Fasting" seminars for pilgrims from Korea, France, Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina, led by Father Ljubko Kurtovic.

There were two recollections for 80 members of the Franciscan Youth Fraternity.

Franciscan School Sisters led 2 seminars for 85 young girls.

Franciscan novices from Herzegovina and from Bosnia also had a recollection in this house of prayer.

<http://www.medjugorje.hr/ulazakenstipe.htm>

MARCH 18, 2004, ANNUAL APPARITION of OUR LADY to MIRJANA DRAGICEVIC-SOLDO



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 secret, and told her that she would appear to her once a year, on the 18th of March. It has been this way through the years.

This year several thousand pilgrims gathered to pray the Rosary at the Cennacolo Community in Medjugorje. The apparition lasted from 13:58 to 14:03 and Our Lady gave the following message:

Dear children! Also today, watching you with a heart full of love, I desire to tell you that what you persistently seek, what you long for, my little children, is before you. It is sufficient that, in a cleaned heart, you place my Son in the first place, and then you will be able to see. Listen to me and permit me to lead you to this in a motherly way.

<http://www.medjugorje.hr/ulazakenstipe.htm>

The PILGRIM, Volume 15, Number 4 - April 2004

CARDINAL JOSIP BOZANIÆ, ARCHBISHOP of ZAGREB: NO JUDGMENT about MEDJUGORJE

On Thursday, February 12, 2004, during an encounter with students of a Secondary School in Zagreb, Cardinal Josip Bozanic, Archbishop of Zagreb, answered the question about the position of the Church on Medjugorje:

“The Church says that what we are called to, is to believe the Sacred Scripture. The Church, however, also recognizes the possibility of the so-called private revelations, but the faithful are not obliged to believe in them. Medjugorje can be considered under this aspect.” The Cardinal reminded that, in the beginning of the 90’s, the Bishops concluded in Zadar that, on the basis of their investigations, they cannot speak about the supernatural of Medjugorje, but neither have they denied it. “Still today, we do not wish to give our judgment, because we do not have sufficient argument although we do not deny people the right to pray there or to go on pilgrimage. We desire that, what is given there, be a true Catholic doctrine, but for Masses not to be linked to the alleged apparitions.”

(translated from “Slobodna Dalmacija, 13.02.2004”:
<http://www.fcpeace.com/Cardinal%20Josip.htm>)

CARDINAL BOZANIÆ in “GLAS KONCILA”

Concerning the recent visit of Cardinal Bozanic to the 7th Secondary School in Zagreb, the Catholic Weekly “Glas Koncila” - edited by all the Croatian Catholic dioceses - in N^o 8 (1548), 22.02.2004, reports:

“The Cardinal said that, as believers, we are not obliged to believe in private revelations, and that for now we cannot speak about something supernatural, but that the Church has not denied Medjugorje either. The Church,” said Cardinal Bozanic, “still has not sufficient argument to pronounce itself about the apparitions themselves.” *“We see that, in Medjugorje, people receive various graces, and this is why everything that is offered to the faithful there must be according to the Catholic doctrine”*, underlined the Cardinal and added that, *“as for now, nobody is obliged to believe in the apparitions of Medjugorje.”*

(translated from “GLAS KONCILA” and posted at:
<http://www.medjugorje.hr/ulazakenstipe.htm>)

(Continued from page 11)

ROME’S INSTRUCTION on PRAYERS for HEALING (continued)

Footnotes are available on-line or at the **PFMC**.

and also because it may cause a sinner to reform and set out on the way of conversion, it remains, however, an evil. For this reason, the prophet announces the future times in which there will be no more disease and infirmity, and the course of life will no longer be broken by death (cf. Is 35:5-6; 65: 19-20).

It is in the New Testament, however, that the question of why illness also afflicts the just finds a complete answer. In the public activity of Jesus, his encounters with the sick are not isolated, but continual. He healed many through miracles, so that miraculous healings characterized his activity: «Jesus went around to all the towns and villages, teaching in their synagogues, proclaiming the Gospel of the kingdom, and curing every disease and illness» (Mt 9:35; cf. 4:23). These healings are signs of his messianic mission (cf. Lk 7:20-23). They manifest the victory of the kingdom of God over every kind of evil, and become the symbol of the restoration to health of the whole human person, body and soul. They serve to demonstrate that Jesus has the power to forgive sins (cf. Mk 2:1-12); they are signs of the salvific goods, as is the healing of the paralytic of Bethesda (cf. Jn 5:2-9, 19-21) and the man born blind (cf. Jn 9).

The first preaching of the Gospel, as recounted in the New Testament, was accompanied by numerous miraculous healings that corroborated the power of the Gospel proclamation. This had been the promise of the Risen Jesus, and the first Christian communities witnessed its realization in their midst: «These signs will accompany those who believe: ...they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover» (Mk 16:17-18). The preaching of Philip in Samaria was accompanied by miraculous healings: «Philip went down to a city of Samaria and proclaimed the Christ to them. With one accord, the crowds paid attention to what was said by Philip when they heard it and saw the signs he was doing. For unclean spirits, crying out in a loud voice, came out of many possessed people, and many paralyzed and crippled people were cured» (Acts 8:5-7). Saint Paul describes his own proclamation of the Gospel as characterized by signs and wonders worked by the power of the Holy Spirit: «For I will not dare to speak of anything except what Christ has accomplished through me to lead the Gentiles to obedience by word and deed, by the power of signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit» (Rom 15:18-19; cf. 1 Thes 1:5; 1

Cor 2:4-5). It would not be without foundation to suppose that these signs and wonders, manifestations of the power of God that accompanied the preaching of the Gospel, were constituted in large part by miraculous healings. Such wonders were not limited to Saint Paul's ministry, but were also occurring among the faithful: «Does then the one who supplies the Spirit to you and works mighty deeds among you do so from works of the law or from faith in what you have heard preached?» (Gal 3:5).

The messianic victory over sickness, as over other human sufferings, does not happen only by its elimination through miraculous healing, but also through the voluntary and innocent suffering of Christ in his passion, which gives every person the ability to unite himself to the sufferings of the Lord. In fact, «Christ himself, though without sin, suffered in his passion pains and torments of every type, and made his own the sorrows of all men: thus he brought to fulfillment what had been written of him by the prophet Isaiah (cf. Is 53:4-5). (4)» But there is more: «In the cross of Christ not only is the redemption accomplished through suffering, but also human suffering itself has been redeemed... In bringing about the redemption through suffering, Christ has also raised human suffering to the level of the redemption. Thus each man in his suffering can also become a sharer in the redemptive suffering of Christ.» (5)

The Church welcomes the sick not only as the recipients of her loving care, but also by recognizing that they are called «to live their human and Christian vocation and to participate in the growth of the kingdom of God in a new and more valuable manner. The words of the Apostle Paul ought to become their approach to life or, better yet, cast an illumination to permit them to see the meaning of grace in their very situation: 'In my flesh I complete what is lacking in Christ's afflictions for the sake of his body, that is, the Church' (Col 1:24). Precisely in arriving at this realization, the Apostle is raised up in joy: 'I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake' (Col 1:24). (6)» It is a paschal joy, fruit of the Holy Spirit, and, like Saint Paul, «in the same way many of the sick can become bearers of the 'joy inspired by the Holy Spirit in much affliction' (1 Thess 1:6) and be witnesses to Jesus' resurrection.» (7)

2. The desire for healing and prayer to obtain it

Presuming the acceptance of God's will, the sick person's desire for healing is both good and deeply human, especially when it takes the form of a trusting prayer addressed to God. Sirach exhorts his disciple: «My son, when you are ill, delay not, but pray to God, who will heal you» (Sir 38:9). A number of the Psalms also ask for healing (cf. Ps 6; 37; 40; 87).

Large numbers of the sick approached Jesus during his public ministry, either directly or through friends and relatives, seeking the restoration of health. The Lord welcomes their requests and the Gospels contain not even a hint of reproach for these prayers. The Lord's only complaint is about their possible lack of faith: «If you can! Everything is possible to one who has faith» (Mk 9:23; cf. Mk 6:5-6; Jn 4:48).

Not only is it praiseworthy for individual members of the faithful to ask for healing for themselves and for others, but the Church herself asks the Lord for the health of the sick in her liturgy. Above all, there is the sacrament «especially intended to strengthen those who are being tried by illness, the Anointing of the Sick.»(8) «The Church has never ceased to celebrate this sacrament for its members by the anointing and the prayer of its priests, commending those who are ill to the suffering and glorified Lord, that he may raise them up and save them.»(9) Immediately before the actual anointing takes place, in the blessing of the oil, the Church prays: «Make this oil a remedy for all who are anointed with it; heal them in body, in soul, and in spirit, and deliver them from every affliction»(10) and then, in the first two prayers after the anointing, the healing of the sick person is requested.(11) Since the sacrament is a pledge and promise of the future kingdom, it is also a proclamation of the resurrection, when «there shall be no more death or mourning, crying out or pain, because the old order has passed away» (Rev 21:4). Furthermore, the Roman Missal contains a Mass pro infirmis in which, in addition to spiritual graces, the health of the sick is requested.(12)

In the De benedictionibus of the *Rituale Romanum*, there is an *Ordo benedictionis infirmorum*, in which there are various prayers for healing: in the second formulary of the *Preces* (13), in the four *Orationes benedictionis pro adultis* (14), in the two *Orationes benedictionis pro pueris* (15), and in the prayer of the *Ritus brevior* (16).

Obviously, recourse to prayer does not exclude, but rather encourages the use of effective natural means for preserving and restoring health, as well as leading the Church's sons and daughters to care for the sick, to assist them in body and spirit, and to seek to cure disease. Indeed, «part of the plan laid out in God's providence is that we should fight strenuously against all sickness and carefully seek the blessings of good health...»(17)

3. The «charism of healing» in the New Testament

Not only did wondrous healings confirm the power of the Gospel proclamation in Apostolic times, but the New Testament refers also to Jesus' real and proper transmission of the power to heal illnesses to his

Apostles and to the first preachers of the Gospel. In the call of the Twelve to their first mission, according to the accounts of Matthew and Luke, the Lord gave them «the power to drive out unclean spirits and to cure every disease and illness» (Mt 10:1; cf. Lk 9:1), and commanded them: «Cure the sick, raise the dead, cleanse lepers, drive out demons» (Mt 10:8). In sending out the seventy-two disciples, the Lord charges them: «cure the sick» (Lk 10:9). The power to heal, therefore, is given within a missionary context, not for their own exaltation, but to confirm their mission.

The Acts of the Apostles refers in general to the wonders worked by them: «many wonders and signs were being done by the apostles» (Acts 2:43; cf. 5:12). These were amazing deeds that manifested the truth and the power of their mission. However, apart from these brief general references, the Acts of the Apostles refers above all to the miraculous healings worked by individual preachers of the Gospel: Stephen (cf. Acts 6:8), Philip (cf. Acts 8:6-7), and, above all, Peter (cf. Acts 3:1-10; 5:15; 9:33-34, 40-41) and Paul (cf. Acts 14:3, 8-10; 15:12; 19: 11-12; 20:9-10; 28: 8-9).

In the conclusion to the Gospel of Mark, as well as in the Letter to the Galatians, as seen above, the perspective is broadened. The wondrous healings are not limited to the activity of the Apostles and certain of the central figures in the first preaching of the Gospel. In this perspective, the references to the «charisms of healing» in 1 Cor 12:9, 28,30 acquire special importance. The meaning of charism is per se quite broad - «a generous gift» - and in this context it refers to «gifts of healing obtained.» These graces, in the plural, are attributed to an individual (cf. 1 Cor 12:9), and are not, therefore, to be understood in a distributive sense, as the gifts of healing received by those who themselves have been healed, but rather as a gift granted to a person to obtain graces of healing for others. This is given in uno Spiritu, but nothing is specified about how that person obtains these healings. It would not be farfetched to think that it happens by means of prayer, perhaps accompanied by some symbolic gesture.

In the Letter of James, reference is made to the Church's action, by means of the priests, directed toward the salvation - in a physical sense as well - of the sick. But this is not to be understood as a wondrous healing; it is different from the «charisms of healing» of 1 Cor 12:9. «Is anyone sick among you? He should call for the priests of the Church and have them pray over him and anoint him with oil in the name of the Lord and the prayer of faith will save the sick person and will raise him up. If he has

committed any sins, he will be forgiven» (Jas 5:14-15). This refers to a sacramental action: anointing of the sick with oil and prayer «over him» and not simply «for him,» as if it were only a prayer of intercession or petition; it is rather an efficacious action on the sick person.(18) The verbs «will save» and «will raise up» do not suggest an action aimed exclusively or predominantly at physical healing, but in a certain way include it. The first verb, even though the other times it appears in the Letter of James it refers to spiritual salvation (cf. 1:21; 2:14; 4:12; 5:20), is also used in the New Testament in the sense of «to heal» (cf. Mt 9:21; Mk 5:28, 34; 6:56; 10:52; Lk 8:48); the second, while having at times the sense of «to rise» (cf. Mt 10:8; 11:5; 14:2), is also used to indicate the action of «raising up» a person who is lying down because of illness, by healing the person in a wondrous fashion (cf. Mt 9:5; Mk 1:31; 9:27; Acts 3:7).

4. Prayers to obtain healing from God in the Church's tradition.

The Fathers of the Church considered it normal that believers would ask God not only for the health of their soul, but also for that of their body. With regard to the goods of life, health, and physical integrity, Saint Augustine writes: «We need to pray that these are retained, when we have them, and that they are increased, when we do not have them.»(19) Saint Augustine has also left us the testimony of a friend's healing, obtained through the prayers of a Bishop, a priest, and some deacons in his house.(20)

The same perspective is found in both the Eastern and Western liturgical rites. One of the post Communion prayers of the Roman Missal asks «...may the power of this heavenly gift take hold of our minds and bodies.»(21) In the liturgy of Good Friday, Christians are invited to pray to God the Father Almighty that he «may keep diseases away... and grant health to the sick.»(22) Among the texts that are most significant is that of the blessing of the oil of the sick, in which

HOLY MASS TIMES

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

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

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

God is asked to pour forth his holy blessing so that all «those who are anointed with it may receive healing, in body, soul and spirit, and be delivered from all sadness, all weakness and suffering.»(23)

The expressions used in the prayers of the anointing of the sick in the Eastern Rites are very similar. For example, in the anointing of the sick in the Byzantine Rite, there is the prayer: «Holy Father, doctor of souls and bodies, you who sent your only begotten Son Jesus Christ to cure every sickness and to free us from death, heal also your servant from the infirmity of body and spirit that afflicts him, by the grace of your Christ.»(24) In the Coptic Rite, the Lord is invoked to bless the oil so that all who will be anointed with it will obtain health of spirit and body. Then, during the anointing of the sick person, the priests make mention of Jesus Christ who was sent into the world «to heal all sicknesses and to free from death» and ask God «to heal the sick person of the infirmities of body and to grant him the right path.»(25)

5. The «charism of healing» in the present-day contest

In the course of the Church's history there have been holy miracle-workers who have performed wondrous healings. The phenomenon was not limited to the Apostolic period; however, the so-called «charism of healing,» about which it seems appropriate to offer some doctrinal clarifications, does not fall within these phenomena of wonder-working. Instead, the present question concerns special prayer meetings organized for the purpose of obtaining wondrous healings among the sick who are present, or prayers of healing after Eucharistic communion for this same purpose.

There is abundant witness throughout the Church's history to healings connected with places of prayer (sanctuaries, in the presence of the relics of martyrs or other saints, etc.). In Antiquity and the Middle Age, such healings contributed to the popularity of pilgrimages to certain sanctuaries, such as that of Saint Martin of Tours or the Cathedral of Saint James in Compostela, as well as many others. The same also happens today at Lourdes, as it has for more than a century. Such healings, however, do not imply a «charism of healing,» because they are not connected with a person who has such a charism, but they need to be taken into account when we evaluate the above-mentioned prayer meetings from a doctrinal perspective.

With respect to prayer meetings for obtaining healing, an aim which even if not exclusive is at least influential in their planning, it is appropriate to distinguish between meetings connected to a «charism of healing,» whether real or apparent, and

those without such a connection. A possible «charism of healing» can be attributed when the intervention of a specific person or persons, or a specific category of persons (for example, the directors of the group that promotes the meetings) is viewed as determinative for the efficacy of the prayer. If there is no connection with any «charism of healing,» then the celebrations provided in the liturgical books, if they are done with respect for liturgical norms, are obviously licit and often appropriate, as in the case of a Mass pro infirmis. If the celebrations do not respect liturgical law, they lack legitimacy.

In sanctuaries, other celebrations are held frequently which may not be aimed per se at specifically asking God for graces of healing, but in which, in the intentions of the organizers and participants, the obtaining of healing has an important part. With this purpose in mind, both liturgical and non-liturgical services are held: liturgical celebrations (such as exposition of the Blessed Sacrament with Benediction) and non-liturgical expressions of popular piety encouraged by the Church (such as the solemn recitation of the Rosary). These celebrations are legitimate, as long as their authentic sense is not altered. For example, one could not place on the primary level the desire to obtain the healing of the sick, in a way which might cause Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament to lose its specific finality, which is to «bring the faithful to recognize in the Eucharist the wonderful presence of Christ and to invite them to a spiritual union with him, a union which finds its culmination in sacramental Communion.»(26)

The «charism of healing» is not attributable to a specific class of faithful. It is quite clear that Saint Paul, when referring to various charisms in 1 Corinthians 12, does not attribute the gift of «charisms of healing» to a particular group, whether apostles, prophets, teachers, those who govern, or any other. The logic which governs the distribution of such gifts is quite different: «All these are activated by one and the same Spirit, who distributes to each one individually just as the Spirit chooses» (1 Cor 12:11). Consequently, in prayer meetings organized for asking for healing, it would be completely arbitrary to attribute a «charism of healing» to any category of participants, for example, to the directors of the group; the only thing to do is to entrust oneself to the free decision of the Holy Spirit, who grants to some a special charism of healing in order to show the power of the grace of the Risen Christ. Yet not even the most intense prayer obtains the healing of all sicknesses. So it is that Saint Paul had to learn from the Lord that «my grace is enough for you; my power is made perfect in weakness» (2 Cor 12:9), and that the meaning of the experience of suffering can be that

«in my flesh I complete what is lacking in Christ's afflictions for the sake of his body, that is, the Church» (Col 1:24).

II. DISCIPLINARY NORMS

Art. 1 - It is licit for every member of the faithful to pray to God for healing. When this is organized in a church or other sacred place, it is appropriate that such prayers be led by an ordained minister.

Art. 2 - Prayers for healing are considered to be liturgical if they are part of the liturgical books approved by the Church's competent authority; otherwise, they are non-liturgical.

Art. 3 - § 1. Liturgical prayers for healing are celebrated according to the rite prescribed in the Ordo benedictionis infirmorum of the Rituale Romanum (28) and with the proper sacred vestments indicated therein.

§ 2. In conformity with what is stated in the Praenotanda, V., De adaptationibus quae Conferentiae Episcoporum competunt (29) of the same Rituale Romanum, Conferences of Bishops may introduce those adaptations to the Rite of Blessings of the Sick which are held to be pastorally useful or possibly necessary, after prior review by the Apostolic See.

Art. 4 - § 1. The Diocesan Bishop has the right to issue norms for his particular Church regarding liturgical services of healing, following can. 838 § 4.

§ 2. Those who prepare liturgical services of healing must follow these norms in the celebration of such services.

§ 3. Permission to hold such services must be explicitly given, even if they are organized by Bishops or Cardinals, or include such as participants. Given a just and proportionate reason, the Diocesan Bishop has the right to forbid even the participation of an individual Bishop.

Art. 5 - § 1. Non-liturgical prayers for healing are distinct from liturgical celebrations, as gatherings for prayer or for reading of the word of God; these also fall under the vigilance of the local Ordinary in accordance with can. 839 § 2.

§ 2. Confusion between such free non-liturgical prayer meetings and liturgical celebrations properly so-called is to be carefully avoided.

§ 3. Anything resembling hysteria, artificiality, theatricality or sensationalism, above all on the part of those who are in charge of such gatherings, must not take place.

Art. 6 - The use of means of communication (in particular, television) in connection with prayers for healing, falls under the vigilance of the Diocesan Bishop in conformity with can. 823 and the norms

established by the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith in the Instruction of March 30, 1992.(30)

Art. 7 - § 1. Without prejudice to what is established above in art. 3 or to the celebrations for the sick provided in the Church's liturgical books, prayers for healing - whether liturgical or non-liturgical - must not be introduced into the celebration of the Holy Mass, the sacraments, or the Liturgy of the Hours.

§ 2. In the celebrations referred to § 1, one may include special prayer intentions for the healing of the sick in the general intercessions or prayers of the faithful, when this is permitted.

Art. 8 - § 1. The ministry of exorcism must be exercised in strict dependence on the Diocesan Bishop, and in keeping with the norm of can. 1172, the Letter of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith of September 29, 1985,(31) and the Rituale Romanum (32).

§ 2. The prayers of exorcism contained in the Rituale Romanum must remain separate from healing services, whether liturgical or non-liturgical.

§ 3. It is absolutely forbidden to insert such prayers of exorcism into the celebration of the Holy Mass, the sacraments, or the Liturgy of the Hours.

Art. 9 - Those who direct healing services, whether liturgical or non-liturgical, are to strive to maintain a climate of peaceful devotion in the assembly and to exercise the necessary prudence if healings should take place among those present; when the celebration is over, any testimony can be collected with honesty and accuracy, and submitted to the proper ecclesiastical authority.

Art. 10 - Authoritative intervention by the Diocesan Bishop is proper and necessary when abuses are verified in liturgical or non-liturgical healing services, or when there is obvious scandal among the community of the faithful, or when there is a serious lack of observance of liturgical or disciplinary norms.

(The Sovereign Pontiff John Paul II, at the Audience granted to the undersigned Cardinal Prefect, approved the present Instruction, adopted in Ordinary Session of this Congregation, and ordered its publication.

Rome, from the Offices of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, September 14, 2000, the Feast of the Triumph of the Cross.

+Joseph Cardinal RATZINGER, Prefect +Tarcisio BERTONE, S.D.B. Archbishop Emeritus of Vercelli, Secretary

http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/rc_con_cfaith_doc_20001123_istruzione_en.html

Footnotes are available on-line or at the PFMC.

VOCATIONS DEPARTMENT

If you need vocation information and you do not find it in your local parish or diocese, please call Elizabeth Wisniewski at (856) 768-9228. She has been collecting vocation information for years and now provides that information willingly to friends of the **PFMC**. She has been acquiring pamphlets for distribution from religious communities, particularly those who have Perpetual Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament.

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

NAZARETH HOUSE

A place of discernment and formation for men aspiring to priesthood in the Roman Catholic Church, Nazareth House is located on the campus of Camden Catholic High School in Cherry Hill.

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

The mission of Nazareth House is to assist young men between the ages of 18-35 in the discernment and development of the seeds of a priestly vocation.

The staff provides them with the foundation for seminary theologate formation, through a shared community life of prayer and worship; human, spiritual and intellectual development; and pastoral service.

It now houses the Camden Diocese Office of Vocations.

FOR MORE INFORMATION or APPLICATION MATERIALS, CONTACT:

**Director of Vocations, Diocese of Camden,
Father Cadmus Mazzarella,**

mazzarella@camdendiocese.org,

Director of Vocation Recruitment for Priestly and Religious Vocations, Father Chris Bakey, Director of Nazareth House, cbakey@camdendiocese.org

please visit: <http://www.beapriest.org>, or
Nazareth House, 300 Cuthbert Boulevard, Cherry Hill,
NJ 08002 (856) 910-4930 or FAX: (856) 662-8917

TRUE HAPPINESS in FOLLOWING CHRIST

Everyone wants to be happy. Great quantities of money are spent in pursuit of this seemingly unreachable beatitude, and countless books are written claiming to possess the magic formula to

achieve this sought after state of perpetual bliss. This incessant yearning written on fabric of the human spirit motivates scores of decisions. Yet happiness seems to slip by most of us right at the very moment we thought we were grasping it or so it might appear at first glance.

I remember when I was about eight years old, still young enough to love birthdays. I used to look forward to each birthday with nearly the same excitement with which I awaited the coming of Christmas. That year I received a Legos helicopter. Oh boy, was I excited! It was bright yellow with a black propeller and you could put little men inside it. I was so happy... I spent hours flying that thing all around the house. About week after my birthday, I parked myself in the toy department of a local store, while my Mom went shopping. There I was glancing around at all the toys, when all of a sudden, I set my eyes on a Legos Space Station. Wow; it was love at first sight! My infatuation with the toy helicopter vanished in an instant. Suddenly, all I wanted was the space station and I didn't stop reminding my parents how much I wanted it until they broke down and bought it for me, as well as other Legos kits besides. But each time it was the same old story. I would get what I wanted and for a short while I would be thrilled to death. But a week or two later, I was already bugging my parents for something else. And so I spent my childhood seeking out and putting aside the latest novelties in Legos blocks, electronic games, skateboards, bicycles, and much, much more.

Then one day, as I was nearing fourteen, the ultimate in electronic technology arrived on the market. It was none other than the first Nintendo Play Station. This, to my young mind, was a crossroads; I quickly became convinced that now I was embarking on the final step of my assiduous journey towards happiness. At last I was going to be truly and definitively happy. My Mom was the first to know of my life-changing discovery. "Mom, pleeeeee! You've just got to buy me a Nintendo Play Station! I promise I'll never ask you for anything else, really!" I had done some serious thinking for my age and I had it all worked out. True, I might get bored with the first few games, but that was okay because I could always get more and more new game cartridges! It was one of my first ideas of infinity and it seemed at the time that this was the solution to uninterrupted enjoyment. Finally, after much pleading, dishwashing and lawn mowing I got what I wanted. On my birthday there it was, a brand new Nintendo Play Station. I was overjoyed! I hooked it up, called over my friends, and we had a blast... well, until we won the game that is. And then I had to buy another game and then another and then another. After buying around 10 games at 40 dollars a

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game, I decided that I needed a more economical form of happiness. "No, what I really need is a computer," I thought and I got that as well ... but I was still looking for something more. Later I got a car, and then my own bank account, a credit card and a checkbook. I was only 16, but I felt something was missing.

I remember vividly the moment when it finally dawned on me that happiness couldn't be bought. I was in religion class, which always seemed to drag on and on, when that particular day the teacher put on a video about a little nun who worked with poor people in India. She was the oldest and most wrinkled person I had ever seen, but what a smile! Mother Teresa of Calcutta and her nuns prayed constantly and spent long 12-hour days on the streets of India helping the sick and dying. They ate little, hardly slept at all and only washed up with cold water, but what smiles! The smile on that old nun's face moved me down to the depths of my soul and I knew that my quest for happiness needed to take a new turn. Her smile taught me one of the most important lessons of life: that happiness is not in having something, but in being someone.

Inspired by the example of that little nun, I turned to the Lord in prayer and He began to hint that I should go down a very different road to happiness than the one I had previously been following. I started to suspect a call to the priesthood: a life totally dedicated to God and to others. Actually God had planted the seed of my vocation long before in the rich soil of my family's Catholic faith, but the weeds of worldly goods had threatened to choke that tender plant.

The excitement began when I received a call from a priest my mother had contacted. He came over and we talked for a while and he suggested I go on retreat, which I did. The next year, my senior year in high school, the Lord's call became ever stronger and so did my decision to give seminary life a try. In fact, that summer I flew out to the East Coast for a three month "test your call" period called candidacy, but three days were enough to convince me that this was for me. The guys there were so normal, and I had thought that the priesthood was for holy rollers. Here they were, 40 young men seriously considering giving God the first place in their lives by dedicating their lives to the service of others and they were all so happy about it! Charity reigned supreme. When the three months were over, I went home for a few days, packed a few last things, and returned for good. I sure left a lot of stuff behind, but haven't missed it a bit. I had discovered a happiness that money can't buy, a happiness that grows greater with every passing year. I bet those Legos are still in the closet right where I

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left them, and my bike is probably rusting in the back yard. As for my dusty computer ... know someone who wants an Apple II 64k as a museum piece?

Twelve years have passed since I left home and I was just ordained a priest a few weeks ago. I can't tell you how happy I am! I wish I could give you some idea of what it means to be happy just in being near the Lord and serving Him in others.

Possibly you already know what I am getting at. Then again, maybe you have given up trying to be happy and become convinced that happiness can't be found. And even if it could it's simply not for you. Have you tried everything? Often times we tell the Lord what we want his Will for us to be. But, it is only by listening in the silence of prayer to God's genuine Will for our lives and setting out, albeit with tiny baby steps, that he reaches out and brings us much further along the road to happiness than we could ever arrive on our own.

The secret of true happiness is only found when you discover and accept that God loves you and that nothing can separate you from his love. Contrary to the modern mentality, you aren't what you eat, or what you wear, you aren't who you are because of the car you drive or the house you own. It is not even the people you know who make you who you are. You are truly someone when you live for God and for others. This is the message I learned from Mother Theresa on that day 12 years ago. This is the message God has been fortifying in my soul throughout my years in the seminary right up to the priesthood. This is the message I invite you to make your own.

(Father John Doyle, [Legionaries of Christ](#) and [Regnum Christi](#), founded by [Father Marcial Maciel, L.C.](#))

FATHER PAVONE to SPEAK in ALLENTOWN, 4/17 and 4/18/2004

The National Director of *Priests for Life*, <http://www.priestsforlife.org>, Father Frank Pavone will speak at all the Holy Masses in *Saint Thomas More Church, 1040 Flexer Avenue, Allentown, PA 18103* on *April 17 and 18, 2004*.

Father Pavone will give a Pro-life talk in the church on *Sunday, April 18, 2004* at 3 PM.

PILGRIMS of FAITH MARIAN CENTER (PFMC)

The **PFMC** is not a church, store or travel agency but has aspects of all three. The **PFMC** operates

as a non-profit, with 501(c)(3) tax exempt status, religious association and ministry whose volunteers are lay persons professing a belief in Jesus Christ, Our Lord and Savior, as the Only Begotten Son of God the Father, Creator of the Universe.

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

The **PFMC** was established in the home of Keith and Kathleen Werner based on pilgrimages to Medjugorje, Bosnia-Hercegovina, and other holy places or shrines worthy of pilgrimage.

Books, pamphlets, and religious articles brought back from pilgrimages were placed on display for others to view and acquire for themselves based on donations. Our inventory is quite extensive. The inventory management volunteers, currently **Vince** and **Livia Nocella**, are always happy to find something for you.

The **PFMC** is NOT a store and does not sell anything. We strongly support the use of Catholic stores for books, pamphlets, and religious articles wherever they are convenient to our readers.

We send people to other ministries and commercial operations such as the **Saint Jude Shops**, **Abbott's**, and **Angels of Our Lady of Medjugorje** operated by **Ceal Prizer** for things that we do not carry.

For books, pamphlets, and religious articles, the **PFMC** operates like a church pamphlet or bookrack where selections are made and donations offered based on value posted or received. Most of the other outlets are operating on a for profit basis. Your gifts from the **PFMC** may be a tax break for you.

The **PFMC** has items from inventory on display at Epiphany House. Order forms have been produced in the past and enclosed in previous issues of "**The PILGRIM**" as well as loaded on the Internet as printable pages such as the one for December 2003 <http://www.geocities.com/pilgrimsfaith/12OF03.pdf>.

Copies are available if you did not get yours or if you need extras. We need volunteers to help us get the entire inventory available for production of order forms. We eventually want to take pictures and load up a shopping cart program. If you have inventory or computer skills we would love to have your help.

If you wish to order, please determine your order request, make out a check or complete the information for use of a credit card, i.e. card type, number, expiration date, and name on card, sign, and

mail to **PFMC**. 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.

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

Operating for many years on a cash only basis, the **PFMC** now accepts DISCOVER/PRIVATE ISSUE (NOVUS), MASTER CARD (CIRRUS) and VISA (PLUS) for all transactions requiring donations to the **PFMC**. This includes for books and religious articles, pilgrimages, retreats, conferences, seminars, "**The PILGRIM**," or any of the various funds. We ask that those who use credit cards assist us with the costs associated with their use, about 3%.

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

Thank you and God bless you,

(Kathleen and the Volunteer Staff

BULLETIN NOTICES for PFMC AREA EVENTS

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

We send "The PILGRIM" to many parishes and ask many pastors to post our Bulletin Notices. We are told that they get so many requests from outside the parish that they simply cannot respond to them all. They have to respond to requests from parishioners.

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

SATURDAY, 22 MAY 2004, HEALING DAY of RECOLLECTION with FATHER BILL McCARTHY, M.Ss.A.

The Pilgrims of Faith Marian Center (PFMC) will host **Father Bill McCarthy, M.Ss.A.**, co-founder of **My Father's House**, Moodus, CT, as he conducts a healing day of recollection for those in the healing ministry and those in need of healing. The original focus "**Healing of Physical and Sexual Abuse**" will **The PILGRIM, Volume 15, Number 4 - April 2004**

still be addressed, particularly if applicants ask for it. If you are interested in this day of recollection and prayer, please call (856) 768-9228. Advance reservations must be made for this event. Donation for the day is \$25 including a light lunch and snacks.

**1 AUGUST 2004 - 9 AUGUST 2004,
PILGRIMAGE to LOURDES, FRANCE
via PARIS, FRANCE**

The Pilgrims of Faith Marian Center (PFMC) will coordinate a pilgrimage to Lourdes, France via Paris, France, with Father John (Giovanni) Tino, Saint Joan of Arc, Jackson Heights, NY, as Spiritual Director.

Reservation forms are available at:
www.geocities.com/pilgrimsfaith/2004/04PPL08.pdf.

Departure is on Sunday, 1 August 2004, from John F. Kennedy (JFK) International Airport, NY. Return is to JFK on Monday, 9 August 2004.

Requested donation is \$1999 per person double occupancy plus \$130 to cover air taxes. Single supplement is \$399. As with all **PFMC** pilgrimages, this includes breakfasts and suppers throughout the pilgrimage. A deposit of \$500 is required with reservation. Full payment is due by 1 May 2004.

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

**10 – 22 OCTOBER 2004, PILGRIMAGE
to MEDJUGORJE, B-H via ROME, IT**

The Pilgrims of Faith Marian Center (PFMC) will coordinate a pilgrimage to Medjugorje, Bosnia-Herzegovina via Rome, Italy, with Doctor Bob and Anita Rice of In His Omnipotent Presence (IHOP) Ministries, Albuquerque, NM, and Father Phil Sladicka, Saint Patrick / Holy Spirit / Saint Michael, Olyphant, PA, as Spiritual Directors.

Reservation forms are available at:
www.geocities.com/pilgrimsfaith/2004/04PPM10.pdf.

Departure is on Sunday, 10 October 2004, from John F. Kennedy (JFK) International Airport, NY. Return is to JFK on Friday, 22 October 2004.

Requested donation is \$2299 per person double occupancy plus \$130 to cover air taxes. Single supplement is \$399. As with all **PFMC** pilgrimages, this includes breakfasts and suppers throughout the pilgrimage. A deposit of \$500 is required with reservation. Full payment is due by 12 July 2004.

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

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Thanks for anything you can do to post these notices in parish bulletins or even with local prayer groups. Please help us to spread the word.

(Kathleen as well as all the **PFMC** Volunteer Staff)

CONFERENCE CORNER

23-25 April 2004: "Follow the Spirit" New Jersey Catholic Charismatic Conference (NJCCC), Hilton East Brunswick, NJ. (732) 495-4561 FAX: (732) 364-4879. E-mail: njcathconf@aol.com.

23-25 April 2004: Mid-Atlantic Regional Conference, "Stir into flame the gift of God [1 Tim 1:6]" Alliance of Filipino Catholic Charismatic Prayer Communities (AFCCPC), Baltimore Convention Center. (888) 213-5263 www.afccpc.org

24 April 2004: Philadelphia Charismatic Rally, Adams Mark Hotel (215) 637-1430.

24 April 2004: Day of Prayer and Healing with Frank Kelly, Hilton Hotel, King of Prussia, PA. Contact *In His Sign (IHS) Ministries* (610) 527-2906.

May 28-30, 2004 - 16th Annual Medjugorje Conference, University of Notre Dame, Notre Dame, IN. <http://www.queenofpeaceministries.com> or (574)288-8777.

25-27 June 2004: National Catholic Charismatic Renewal Conference "Lord, we long to see Your face." Paul E. Tsongas Arena, Lowell, MA www.nsc-chariscenter.org/Massachusetts/index.asp.

6-8 August 2004: Scranton Diocese Catholic Charismatic Renewal Conference, "Jesus the Way, the Truth, and the Life," University of Scranton, Scranton, PA (570) 346-0922 FAX: (570) 963-1731.

8-10 October 2004: Camden Diocese Catholic Charismatic Renewal Conference, Wildwood Convention Center, Wildwood, NJ. (609) 522-6586

22-24 October 2004: Ninth Annual Catholic Unity Conference, Hilton Hotel, King of Prussia, PA. Contact *In His Sign (IHS) Ministries*, (610) 527-2906 or visit www.inhissign.com.

November 6, 2004 - Medjugorje Conference, Pheasant Run Resort, Saint Charles, IL. *Dupage Marian Center*, Westmont, IL (630) 968-5268.

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

Please FAX any printed notices to (856) 768-9428 or mail them to the address on page 24.

CALENDARS:

In *April*, the Church celebrates Solemnities of **PASSION (PALM) SUNDAY (4)**, **EASTER (RESURRECTION) SUNDAY (11)**, and **DIVINE MERCY SUNDAY (18)**, the Memorial of *Saint Catherine of Siena (29)*, and the Optional Memorials of *Saints Francis of Paola (2)*, *Anselm (21)*, *Adalbert (23)*, *George, Martyr (23)*, *Fidelis of Sigmaringen (24)*, *Peter Chanel (28)*, *Louis Mary de Monfort (28)*, and *Pius V, Pope (30)*. The **EASTER TRIDUUM** is **Holy Thursday (8)**, **Good Friday (9)** and **Holy Saturday (10)**. The **DIVINE MERCY NOVENA** starts on **Good Friday (9)**. See insert in this issue.

In *May*, the Church celebrates the Solemnities of **ASCENSION of the LORD (20)** and **PENTECOST (30)**, the Feasts of *Saints Philip and James (3)*, and *Matthias, Apostle (14)*, the Memorials of *Saints Philip Neri (26)* and the *Visitation (31)*, and the Optional Memorials of *Saints Joseph the Worker (1)*, *Nereus (12)*, *Achilleus (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 *Augustine of Canterbury (27)* and *Blessed Damien Joseph De Vuester of Molokai (10)*. Church calendars recognize **Mother Day (9)**, and **Memorial Day (observed) (31)**.

AROUND the **PFMC** AREA

Please review the announcements on pages 1 through 6, the enclosed color information sheets with reservation forms for **Days of Recollection** on **4/26/04** and **5/22/04**, the **August 1-9, 2004** pilgrimage to **Lourdes via Paris**, and the **October 10-22, 2004** pilgrimage to **Medjugorje via Rome** as well as the **Bulletin Notices** on pages 22 through 23.

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

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

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

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

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!"



Please help get the word out on **PFMC** activities, events, and pilgrimages. Ask your pastor to post bulletin notices and allow information sheets to be put out in church. Please do not put material in your church without obtaining permission from the pastor or his representative.

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



PFMC DISPLAYS or PRESENTATIONS

Kathleen and Keith are available to participate in parish or other prayer group meetings with witness, and/or videotape or slide presentations, followed by a question and answer session.

The experiences and continuation of the **PFMC** ministries for Our Lady and her Son in this time of manifestation of Our Lord's mercy and graces are shared at no cost.

Free will offerings are accepted.

This is especially true for books, tapes, and religious articles, when they are made available in displays at the presentation sites.

Recipients are asked to donate at or above the suggested value posted on each article made available at the displays.

Displays may be set up without presentations.

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