



The **PILGRIM**

Vol. 15, No. 5

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May 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



Our God, our Heavenly Father, we thank you for delivering us through Your Holy Cross. You brought us back from death and sin, from all that brought us and held us in darkness. You have given us life, and the light of the Holy Spirit that we may find life and joy.

When it comes to the choices we make today, Lord, help us to care deeply of what is in Your Heart. If someone tries to influence us to do wrong, even those who ridicule that which is on our conscience, help us to follow You and be more secure.

In all sufferings, teach us the power of intercession, and of surrender to Your Love. Let Your Mother Mary minister to each of our souls, and protect us through the great angels of warfare.

We come now to You, our Heavenly and victorious Savior, and know that you will help each of us walk the path of holiness, the path with You in control and giving us direction and immense love.

AMEN

(Kathleen prays from the heart for each issue.)

HAPPY MOTHER'S DAY

Please remember your earthly mother on *Sunday, May 9th, 2004*, which is **Mother's Day** in America.

We remember all the mothers in the families of the **PFMC** volunteers, especially those having difficulty delivering full term babies.

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

We have printed some comments about **Ivan's** visit to **New Jersey** on *Tuesday, 3/23/04* on pages 22 through 25. Please review them.

The *April* MESSAGE, from **GOSPA, Our Lady, Queen of Peace**, to an alleged visionary from **Medjugorje, Bosnia-Hercegovina**, is presented beginning on page 14 (centerfold page) with the 4/26/04 PRESS BULLETIN.

PFMC CLOSED - FRIDAY, 18 JUNE 2004 until MONDAY, 28 JUNE 2004.

Due to the long planned *40th Anniversary* vacation for **Keith and Kathleen** with a lot of the other **PFMC** volunteers joining them, the **PFMC** will be closed from *FRIDAY, 18 JUNE 2004* until *MONDAY, 28 JUNE 2004*.

PLEASE TRY TO CONDUCT ALL URGENT BUSINESS PRIOR TO FRIDAY, 11 JUNE 2004. This is particularly true for anything related to the **LOURDES** pilgrimage departing on *SUNDAY, 1 AUGUST 2004*. Final payment was due on *1 MAY 2004* and special considerations are necessary to join the pilgrimage after *1 JUNE 2004*.

Try not to forget us over the summer as our daily and monthly expenses continue. Your donations and special prayers mean a great deal to us.

PILGRIMAGE TO LOURDES, 1-9 AUGUST 2004 with FATHER TINO

The *August 2004* pilgrimage to Lourdes will be a time for healing and prayer, and special ministry for healing for all who attend. It is a time that will be paced slowly to allow for meditation and several baths in the miraculous waters. Most pilgrimages only stay in **Lourdes** for *3-4 days*, but we have extended this to allow time to rest, attend the day and candlelight evening processions, and to reflect upon the story of **Lourdes, Our Lady, and Bernadette**.

Father John (Giovanni) Tino from *Saint Joan of Arc Parish, Jackson Heights, NY*, will be the Spiritual Director. He will be hearing Confession for our group, celebrating daily Holy Mass, providing times of Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, and conducting daily Healing Services with Anointing.

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

Keith and **Kathleen** will be pilgrims with the group to assure that each pilgrim will be tended to in a calm and prayerful manner, and to assure that all pilgrims will feel comfortable both spiritually and physically. **Kathleen** is a licensed and registered nurse, and will be there to help with any physical needs or illnesses.

Please register NOW as we are in need of names to save seat reservations with *Air France*. Call the **PFMC** at (856) 768-9228 if you need more information than what is on the blue information sheet with reservation form enclosed.

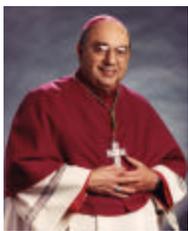
Remember that this year is the *150th Anniversary* of the **Dogma** of the *Immaculate Conception*. It was in **Lourdes** that *Our Lady* told *Bernadette* that she was the *Immaculate Conception*. **Pope John Paul II** plans to visit **Lourdes** around *August 15, 2004*, and we will be there just before that. All of the preparations for his visit should make **Lourdes** a very attractive spot for pilgrimages.

God Bless you and always ask yourself - IS **OUR LADY** CALLING YOU? PLEASE RESPOND NOW.

PFMC ANNUAL MEETING and POT LUCK LUNCHEON is Saturday, 31 July 2004

Plan now to attend this meeting and meet the volunteers in the **Upper Room** of the **PFMC**. Bring your favorite food with some to share. The **PFMC** volunteers will provide paper goods and refreshments. The required annual meeting will be short and sweet at about **3 PM** followed by **Divine Mercy Chaplet** and **Holy Rosary**.

BISHOP GALANTE EXCITED ABOUT HIS ASSIGNMENT to the DIOCESE of CAMDEN, NJ



Our readers in **Texas** and the priests of the **Camden Diocese** have verified that **Bishop Joseph A. Galante** is very excited about his assignment to the **Diocese of Camden, NJ**. By the time you receive this he will have been officially installed as the

Bishop of the **Diocese of Camden, NJ**, at a special program on *Friday, 30 April 2004*.

We are very pleased that there are reports he already knows about the **Pilgrims of Faith Marian Center (PFMC), A Religious Association, Inc.** and he was pleased that we put articles about him in **"The PILGRIM."**

We are looking forward to meeting him personally and working with him in whatever way he asks.

4-9 FEBRUARY 2005 EVENTS

The **2005 Retreat Conference (RC), 3-Day Extension (3DX), and Youth Track (YT)** events in the **Hilton Hotel, Cherry Hill, NJ**, will take place from *Friday, 4 February 2005* through *Wednesday, 9 February 2005*. This change was mandated by an error on the part of the Hilton Hotel staff who did not notice a booking for the previous time they offered us. The contract has been signed so plan to attend.

Father Bill Halbing will speak on *Friday* and *Saturday* will be. **Linda Schubert** from **Miracles of the Heart Ministries** and author of "Miracle Hour" will be the keynote speaker for *Saturday night* and stay for the **3DX**. More information on other speakers and the theme will be forthcoming.

PLEASE MARK YOUR 2004 CALENDAR for PFMC EVENTS

See **Conference Corner** on page 27 as well as **Bulletin Notices** on pages 26 through 27. Most **PFMC** events will be preceded by their own **PFMC** information sheets with reservation forms.

May 2004

May 11, 2004, Tuesday: **Father John (Giovanni) Tino** will celebrate a **Healing Mass** either at *Saint Lawrence Church* in **Lindenwold, NJ**, or at *Saint Peter Celestine Church* in **Cherry Hill, NJ**. More information and maps will be available.

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.

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.

Requested donation for the day is \$25 including a light lunch and snacks. If you are interested in this **Day of Recollection** and prayer, please call (856) 768-9228. Advance reservations must be made for this event and should be submitted using the registration form on the back of the green information sheet enclosed in this issue of **"The PILGRIM."**

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

July 9, 2004, Friday: Father Bill Halbing will celebrate a **Healing Mass** at *Saint Lawrence Church* in **Lindenwold, NJ**. More information and maps are available on the enclosed white information sheet.

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 (Giovanni) 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**, and the **Eiffel Tower**, as well as dining in the **Latin Quarter**. The cost of this pilgrimage is **\$1999** 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**. 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. Full final payment was due *1 May 2004* and should be sent with all registration forms. See pages 1 and 2.

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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"**. The dates are *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. Pray for **Father Phil Sladicka** in **Olyphant, PA**. He has had a heart attack (12/9/2003) and been given a fourth parish to watch over. He does not feel he can leave to be the priest Spiritual Director for this pilgrimage. We have asked **Father Tom Kiely** from *Saint Lawrence* in **Lindenwold, NJ**, to be the Spiritual Director and await his commitment. 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 or full payment. If you wish to know more about **Bob and Anita Rice**, read "**Former Protestant Pastor Speaks Out on the Holy Eucharist**" and "**Will the Real Apostolic Church Please Stand UP!**", both available at or from the **PFMC**. This will be their first opportunity to visit **Rome** and the **Vatican**.

(The PFMC Volunteer Staff Members)

HEALING through the SACRED HEART and SISTER JOSEFA MENENDEZ

All things in our life must work together for one's ultimate good. They say that nothing happens to a person without God's permission. I know that this is often questioned when things are difficult, or when tragedy occurs, but it is then that a person has the opportunities to become stronger.

Even though we can't understand the why of everything in this life, we will in the next life---and we will praise God for it for the rest of eternity!

In the spiritual life, how do we reconcile the fact that few of us make any major, outward progress? Few of us choose to accept any interior or spiritual healing that is so freely offered to us by God. Few of us will not face our own sins or offenses, nor accept responsibilities for our own actions. Few of us could be called living saints.

Despite our spiritual conversion, or what we have felt was some kind of change that occurred in our behavior, we seem destined to fall prey to the many imperfections of our nature. Over and over again we seem to commit the same sins repeatedly. And over and over again we confess them, not making any sense to why we have to do so many times when we know in our minds that God says He forgives them. We seem to be making progress, but then it seems we fall back.

We must work very hard to let the Lord's will completely rule our daily life. This is called surrender. But how and what really is true surrender? Oh, the struggle continues. No matter where we are in our spiritual conversion, we will battle imperfections to some degree until the end of our earthly life, until we truly reach the "transforming union" state. It is precisely here, in the gap between our desire or intention for perfection and the reality of our daily existence, that we meet the divine mercy of

God. Sooner or later, we must become willing to step out of those narrow realms of the beginner, where the pursuit of religion concerns only our own personal interests. It means to leave the areas where we are most comfortable and enter into those areas that we are not familiar, and to accept the newer challenges of the interior life.

When I was in High School I became obsessed with the writings of **Sister Josefa Menendez**, in the "Way of Divine Love." I would recommend it to everyone to not just read but to take and meditate on paragraph by paragraph. I would like to share with you how Our Lord instructs us through **Sister Josefa Menendez**: "*How often, in the course of the ages have I, in one way or another, made known My love for men. I have shown them how ardently I desire their salvation. I have revealed My Heart to them. This (Sacred Heart) devotion has been light cast over the whole earth, and today, by its means, those who labor to gain souls to My service have been enabled to do so.*"

"Now, I want something more, for if I long for love in response to my own, this is not the only return I desire from souls; I want them all to have confidence in My mercy, to expect all from My clemency, and never to doubt My readiness to forgive. I am a God, but a God of love! I am a Father, but a Father full of compassion and never harsh. My Heart is infinitely holy but also infinitely wise, and knowing human frailty and infirmity, stoops to poor sinners with infinite mercy---This is what I wish all to know. I will teach sinners that the mercy of My Heart is inexhaustible."

Jesus even goes so far as to demonstrate to **Sister Josefa Menendez** that our littleness and faults will be used as "assets." In teaching on healing, I always speak how Jesus will never look to our weaknesses, but will come to our strengths to heal us or in the healing of others."

He states to **Sister Josefa Menendez** "*I will make it known that My work rests on nothingness and misery---such is the first link in the chain of love that I have prepared for souls from eternity. I will use you to show that I love misery, littleness and absolute nothingness. I will reveal to souls the excess of My love and how far it will go in forgiveness, and how even their faults will be used by Me with blind indulgence--- I see---the very depths of souls. I see how they try to please, console and glorify Me, and the act of humility they are obliged to make when they see themselves so feeble is solace and glory to My Heart. What does their helplessness matter? Cannot I supply all their deficiencies? I will show how My Heart uses their*

very weakness to give life to many souls that have lost it.”

This is one of the most comforting statements we've ever heard from our sweet Jesus. When we constantly try or strive in this very difficult journey with our humble confessions, or endeavors, our new goals, or humbleness in facing our weaknesses, our Lord looks at our perfections, and helps us as we compare them to the lives of great saints. Then we will realize that a higher degree of perfection in this life will merit more eternal glory! This fact is crucial to understand so that we never lose hope.

Our Lord then reemphasizes this critical insight to **Sister Josefa Menendez** “*---a soul may and will fall again, but if she humbles herself, if she recognizes her nothingness, if she tries to repair her faults by little acts of generosity and love, if she confides and surrenders herself once more to My Heart--- she gives Me more glory and can do more good to other souls than if she had never fallen. Miseries and weaknesses are of no consequence--- what I do ask-- is love.*”

How generous is our God, and how can one turn away thinking of hopelessness and be discouraged? But it is in the hoping that God affirms us in our struggle. We can get up and walk, using His crutches, and His cane. He can be the one who will encourage us, and scripture alone is full of His promises and his covenants that have already been made with us.

Our Lord is very careful to give us the key rule in all this through **Sister Jose Menendez**. “*Yes, in spite of its miseries, a soul can love Me to folly--- Realize that I am speaking only of faults and frailty and inadvertence, not of willed sin or voluntary infidelity.*”

The great work of **Sister Josefa Menendez** is spreading to all of us, in more detail, what was given to **Saint Therese of Lisieux** --- **that in littleness and weakness we are made perfect through God's love and divine mercy.**

Our Lord asked **Sister Josefa Menendez** to offer her life for this specific intention. “*Offer your life, imperfect as it is, that all my chosen souls may realize the beautiful mission that they can carry out through their ordinary actions and in their daily struggles--- I am all love, and the flame in Me consumes all their weaknesses--- All human miseries are known to My Heart, and My compassion for them is great.*”

Our Lord again confirms the truth of this to **Sister Consolata Betrone**, when He instructs her on the words in the Gospel (“---Without Me you can do nothing”): “*This is for you the most comforting*

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saying in the Gospel, because it excuses all your weaknesses and throws you in complete abandonment upon the Heart of God--- The little ones are My weakness--- that explains everything!--- A sovereign is free to bestow his royal favors on whom he will.”

Our Lord concludes this immensely important instruction with this summary: “*I have chosen you who are poor and miserable, it is that all may realize once more that I want neither greatness nor holiness --- but only love. I Myself will do the rest.*”

Will you let Him? Will you let Him teach you and humble you, and make you His in all things?

Kathleen Werner

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 26 and 27.

Please help us with posting Bulletin Notices in your Parish Bulletin. See pages 26 and 27.

Ask your pastor if you can put out information sheets

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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**, is **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.

in the church or have them posted on the Bulletin Boards.

TO YOUTH: DO NOT BE AFRAID of ABANDONNING YOURSELF to GOD

VATICAN CITY, APR 2, 2004 (VIS) – Yesterday afternoon in Saint Peter’s Square, the Pope participated in a gathering with 20,000 young people from Rome and the region of Lazio in preparation for the 19th World Youth Day which will be celebrated this Palm Sunday. The event also commemorated the day twenty years ago that the Pope handed the Cross to young people at the end of the Holy Year of the Redemption. In those 20 years it has been traveling around the world.

The gathering included performances by pop singers, dancers from the Theater of the Opera of Rome, break-dancers and actors who recited texts by Blessed Mother Teresa of Calcutta. Young people from Spain, Argentina, France, Poland, the United States, Canada, the Philippines and Italy - countries which have hosted World Youth Day in previous years – participated in the event.

“Dear young people: be united to the Cross,” affirmed the Holy Father. “Your hearts bear so many wounds, often caused by the adult world! ... I invite you to believe that we have so much faith in you, that Christ has faith in you and that only in Him is there the salvation that we are searching for!”

After emphasizing that today more than ever it is necessary “to figure out a way to reach young people in order to announce the Gospel to them,” the Holy Father urged everyone present not to be afraid “to find new ways of total abandonment to the Lord and to mission ... Think of how you can carry the Cross in the world!”

John Paul II added that they should not be afraid of traveling on this path and, after recognizing that young people love the world “and rightly so, because the world was made for man,” he added that at a certain point in life “we must make a radical choice,” and, without “rejecting” the talents and gifts that God has given us, “we must know how to be on Christ’s side in order to bear witness to His love before all.”

“Following Christ,” he continued, “does not mean stifling the gifts that He gives us; it means choosing the path of radical giving to Him! ... Do not be afraid to trust in Him.”

The Holy Father referred to the change in today’s youth compared to twenty years ago. “The cultural

and social context that we live in has changed so much! But Christ has not changed. He is the Redeemer of man yesterday, today and always!” In the midst of applause, he added, “The Pope is with you! Believe in Jesus, contemplate the face of the crucified and risen Lord! That face that so many want to see but is so often hidden by our insufficient passion for the Gospel and by sin!”

“Since then youth have changed, as I too have changed, but your heart, like mine, is thirsty for truth, joy and eternity, and therefore, always young. This afternoon,” he concluded, “I put my faith once again in you, the hope of the Church and society! Do not be afraid!”

**(VATICAN INFORMATION SERVICE (VIS),
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WHAT IS the VALUE of VIRTUE?

There is an inherent Value to Virtue associated with our desire for that which is good, white, sweet, pure, and wholesome. Virtue is like the fruit of the tree of life, white above all that is white, pure above all that is pure, sweet above all that is sweet, pure and white as the driven snow. Virtue will not suffer anything that is vile, dirty, or ugly to enter into mind, heart, body, or spirit. The practice of being Virtuous is the practice of being holy, childlike, and personally pure. Even the most vile and corrupt of people will still admit a love and desire for that which is good and pure. The love of Purity is found in all of mankind, but it must be fortified and lifted up as an ennobling principle. Virtue lies at the foundation of Greatness. The purity of a people constitutes their spiritual strength. God will have a virtuous people, for the Spirit of God will not dwell in an unholy tabernacle. The man or woman that is unvirtuous cannot retain the Spirit of God. The Great, attendant Promise of Total Virtue is to have Absolute Confidence that God is with us.

www.angelfire.com/country/answers/virtueval.html

WHAT IS the TRUE DEFINITION of VIRTUE?

The true definition of Virtue comes as an attitude toward life. It means to orient self toward Purity of Life, living unto God in Purity of expression, thought, and action. Thus, all becomes Virtuous before God and man. Virtue will not suffer anything that is vile, dirty, or ugly to enter into mind, heart,

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body, or spirit. Suffer none of these things to enter into your heart. For it is better that ye shall deny yourselves of these things, wherein ye will take up your cross, than that ye should be cast into hell. Virtue is the opposite of Vice, the opposite of Lasciviousness. The love of Virtue and Purity will cause you to want to avoid all that is vulgar, profane, or that can defile the heart or mind, body, or soul. Loss of Virtue brings loss of self-respect, loss of discipline in managing one's mind and body, loss of Integrity. Virtue requires Pure and Correct thoughts. Let Virtue garnish thy thoughts unceasingly, then shall thy confidence wax strong in the Presence of God.

www.angelfire.com/country/answers/virtuedef.html

TO U.S. PRELATES: REFLECTIONS on a BISHOP'S TRIPLE 'MUNUS'

VATICAN CITY, APR 2, 2004 (VIS) – Bishops from the ecclesiastical provinces of Atlanta and Miami in the United States, in Rome on their “ad limina” visit, were welcomed today by the Holy Father who said that in meetings with them and their brothers bishops in coming months he will “offer a series of reflections on the exercise of the episcopal office in the light of the threefold munus of sanctifying, teaching, and governing.”

“Our meetings,” the Pope said, “are taking place at a difficult time in the history of the Church in the United States. Many of you have already spoken to me of the pain caused by the sexual abuse scandal of the past two years and the urgent need for rebuilding confidence and promoting healing between Bishops, priests and the laity in your country. I am confident that the willingness which you have shown in acknowledging and addressing past mistakes and failures, while at the same time seeking to learn from them, will contribute greatly to this work of reconciliation and renewal.”

He added that “the history of the Church demonstrates that there can be no effective reform without interior renewal” for individuals, groups and institutions. For a bishop, “the challenge of interior renewal must involve an integral understanding of his service as ‘pastor gregis’.” To be effective, the Bishop’s “apostolic authority must be seen first and foremost as a religious witness to the Risen Lord, to the truth of the Gospel and to the mystery of salvation present and at work in the Church. ... The renewal of the Church is thus closely linked to the renewal of the episcopal office. The Bishop ... must be the first to

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conform his life to Christ in holiness and constant conversion.”

“Dear Brothers,” continued John Paul, “I wish to reaffirm my confidence in the Church in America, my appreciation of the deep faith of America’s Catholics and my gratitude for their many contributions to American society and to the life of the Church throughout the world. Viewed with the eyes of faith, the present moment of difficulty is also a moment of hope, that hope which ‘does not disappoint’ (Rom 5:5), because it is rooted in the Holy Spirit, who constantly raises up new energies, callings and missions within the Body of Christ.”

“The Special Assembly of the Synod of Bishops, celebrated in the wake of the epochal events of September 11, 2001, rightly noted that the Bishop is called to be a prophet, witness and servant of hope to the world ... because he makes that hope present through his pastoral ministry, centered as it is on the three ‘munera’ of sanctifying, teaching and governing. The exercise of this prophetic witness in contemporary American society has, as many of you have pointed out, been made increasingly difficult by the aftermath of the recent scandal and the outspoken hostility to the Gospel in certain sectors of public opinion, yet it cannot be evaded or delegated to others. Precisely because American society is confronted by a disturbing loss of the sense of the transcendent and the affirmation of a culture of the material and the ephemeral, it desperately needs such a witness of hope.”

“For this reason,” the Holy Father concluded, “I pray that our meetings will not only strengthen the hierarchical communion which unites the Successor of Peter with his Brother Bishops in the United States, but will bear abundant fruit for the growth of your own local Churches in unity and in missionary zeal

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If you know someone who would enjoy the **“The PILGRIM,”** please ask them to contact us at the address printed in the box on page 5 or near the mailing label on the last page.

for the spread of the Gospel.”

(VIS, 14th YEAR - N. 63, ENGLISH, FRIDAY, APRIL
2, 2004, AC/AD LIMINA/USA VIS 040402 (600))

IS GOD A BAD DIRECTOR?

What if someone were to say to you, “I don’t believe in the existence of good movie directors, because all the movies I see are lousy”? That’s a somewhat logical argument, right?

The argument implies that good movies are possible. Therefore, the argument is actually something like this: “Since I believe that good movies are possible, and since all the movies I see are lousy, I don’t think there are any good movie directors.”

That’s just the sort of argument that’s often used to discount the existence of God. People will say, “I don’t believe in a God, because this world is so awful.” The implication, whether the person realizes it or not, is that a good world is possible.

So, how do we arrive at that good world? Through evolution? In an evolutionary model, we are supposed to be improving. Maybe, if we evolve long enough, we will finally have a good movie. But if we are improving, why do we have more wars, more crime, more injustice, more divorce, more abuse? In a way, our movie seems to be getting worse, not better.

Maybe that’s the truth we don’t like to face. We can’t usher in a good world, because we are bad movie directors. We are flawed, sinful beings. Greater intelligence and technology do not solve the problems of crime and greed and deceit. The human heart is the problem, no matter how much we “evolve.” We are self-centered and self-promoting -- which evolution (survival of the fittest) actually encourages.

One question to ask is, is this world pleasing to God? The Bible tells us that “all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life, is not from the Father, but is from the world” (1John 2:16). The world runs on lust of the flesh (“I need that”), lust of the eyes (“I want that”), and the boastful pride of life (“I deserve that”). Isn’t it possible that these three attitudes are the cause of most of the problems in our world? And isn’t it possible that these things are not pleasing to God?

A second question to ask is, is God fully running the show? The Bible says yes and no. God is sovereign, but he also gives us freedom to make choices. He’s not policing our every thought and action. This freedom of choice can lead to a bad movie. Add to this that, while God is “the King of all the earth” (Psalm 47:7), for some reason the Bible still calls the devil “the ruler of this world” (John 12:31, 14:30,

16:11; 1John 5:19). So we see again that while God is sovereign, he allows for free will among beings.

A third question to ask is, is this world God’s kingdom? The Bible says no. Jesus said, “My kingdom is not of this world” (John 18:36). At this moment in time, God’s kingdom is invisible and spiritual. Even though he is King over all of us, not all of us have allowed him to be the King in our hearts and lives. Those who have are part of His invisible kingdom (even if they live in the world, which is not his kingdom).

So God’s actual movie hasn’t been shown yet. But there will come a day when “The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord, and of His Christ” (Rev. 11:15). In that day, we’ll see a much better movie, for a better director will be manning the helm. God has plans for a better world, and it won’t look anything like this one. He is a good movie director. Here’s a sneak preview:

“Now the dwelling of God is with men, and he will live with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God. He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away.” (Revelation 21:3-4)

The “old order of things” is the world we live in now. It has problems. Those problems, the Bible says, are caused by our lusts, which the Bible calls the lusts of the world (1John 2:17). They are the cause of our death, mourning, crying and pain.

If this world is not pleasing to God in its present state, and if he’s not fully running the show, and if this world isn’t his kingdom, then how can we blame him if we’re seeing a bad movie?

The reason we shouldn’t blame God for the condition of this world is because we have, in a sense, kicked him out of it. Humanity has asked him to kindly step aside. Who hasn’t, though not audibly, nonetheless said something like this in his or her heart: “God, I appreciate the offer, but I can handle this by myself. I’d just as soon you weren’t around. I want to live my life separate from you, apart from your authority and intervention. Do you mind coming back later, say in about a hundred years or so?”

And there’s the irony. We blame God for a world which we did more to fashion than he did. Yes, he made all the working parts, but then we determined how it would run. We said, in effect, we’ll run it ourselves. The Bible says that, “All of us like sheep have gone astray, Each of us has turned to his own way” (Isaiah 53:6). The result is that, lo and behold, we’ve made a lousy movie.

God has a better plan for a better movie, and he wants you in it. He can make a huge difference in your life today, and he has a much better world planned for the future -- a perfect world that he will share with those who know him.

(AUTHOR UNKNOWN)

BASICS for CHURCHGOERS

1. Don't get into the habit of being late for Holy Mass. A moment of preparation before Holy Mass may be the means of opening the soul to many graces.
2. Don't be content with a seat in the last pew. Show the same interest in securing a front seat in Church as you do at any other place that draws your interest.
3. Don't go to Holy Mass without either a prayer book or a rosary, unless you wish distraction and not devotion to occupy your mind.
4. Don't talk in Church without necessity. Talk with God, Whom you may not have visited in His Temple, since last Sunday; you will have plenty of time to talk with your neighbor after Holy Mass.
5. Don't criticize the sermon or the manner of delivery. It is a message from God bearing some fruit to you. Heed the instruction and profit by it; it has something for you to learn.
6. Don't go to sleep or read your prayer book during the sermon.
7. Don't leave the Church till the Priest has left the Sanctuary. Take a moment to thank God for the graces of the Holy Mass. Remember: "Judas was the first one to leave Holy Mass early!"
8. Don't talk in the aisles going out. Remember you are in the presence of God in His Holy Sacrament. Your gossip will keep till you reach the street.
9. Don't forget to bend your right knee to the floor as you enter and leave your seat. This is an act of adoration to the Real Presence. Do it with faith and reverence facing the Altar.
10. Don't fail to see the holy water font and the collection plate. Take a few drops from the one and drop a worthy gift into the other.
11. Don't acquire the reputation of being the "last in church and first to leave it."
12. Dress according to the dress code of the Church: always with modesty; always in your Sunday best! Remember, you are visiting GOD! Suits

(sport coats) and ties for men, white shirts, black pants and ties for boys, appropriate dresses for women and girls. Blue jeans are for picnics.

13. Never depart from Holy Mass during the Consecration or while the Blessed Sacrament is exposed on the Altar.
14. Small children should never be removed from Holy Mass. If discipline is needed, they should be removed for discipline and then immediately brought back into Holy Mass.
15. The Priest is the "Spiritual Father" of the family. It is your responsibility to make sure his needs are met. He is there for you -- you need to be there for him.

(**"The Maryfaithful" September / October 2003**)

MARTHA and MARY: BALANCING PRAYER and WORKS

There are many lessons we can glean from the gospel story of Martha and Mary. The one most often presented is how Jesus preferred Mary's prayerfulness over Martha's activity.

"Mary has chosen the better part," Jesus said in the tenth chapter of Luke, which establishes the pre-eminence of prayer and the interior life.

There's more to this lesson. Martha and Mary were sisters, which might seem like a minor point, but it's important. Being sisters, they were both the fruit of the same tree, as are prayer and active works. Jesus expects us to develop a combination of both, with prayer ranking ahead of works because it is more powerful.

In the classic 19th century book, "The Soul of the Apostolate," Dom Jean-Baptiste Chautard, O.C.S.O. the Abbot of Notre Dame de Sept-Fons, writes that prayer will often do more to bring about a result "because he who prays in is touch with the First Cause. He acts directly upon it."

We can reach just about anywhere in prayer, but this isn't true with physical activity, where we remain limited by time and space.

"The active life is concerned with men, the contemplative life introduces us into the realm of the highest truth. Being more sublime, it has a much more extensive horizon and field of action." Mary's prayer actually accomplishes more --- and in many more places --- than Martha's activity could ever manage.

This was the thinking behind the comment made by a Bishop of Cochin-China to the Governor of Saigon:

“Ten Carmelite nuns praying will be of greater help to me than 20 missionaries preaching.”

The astonishing capability of prayer works the same no matter where we apply it, in a religious or a lay environment.

Chautard tells the story of Saint Louis, the King of France, who devoted many hours a day to prayer, which was the secret behind his adroit handling of affairs of state.

He tells another story of a frustrated statesman who wondered how his bishop could handle so many pressing duties in a single day and yet always seem so serene and joyful.

The Bishop responded, “ My dear friend, to all your occupations, add half an hour to meditation every morning. Not only will you get through all your business, but you’ll find time for still more.”

Our church history contains a long list of other priests, religious and lay faithful who achieved extraordinary success in life by fueling their active life with a strong prayer life. Saint John Bosco, Blessed Anne-Marie Taigi, Saint Theresa of Avila, St Catherine of Siena, Saint Francis De Sales, Saint Bernard and the Cure of Ars, all produced an incredible amount of work despite ill-health and hours a day spent in prayer.

No matter what our occupation, the strength of our interior life will determine the success of our activities. Otherwise, we run the risk of becoming mindless robots rushing through the routines of life.

By engaging in excessive activity, we might be accomplishing more, but we’re also exposing ourselves to more problems. Aside from being nerve-wracking, over-activity scatters our energy and keeps our minds burdened with troubles. The more our occupations multiply, the more our energy is dissipated.

Anyone can fall into this trap. Chautard documents the retreat notes of Bishop Dupanloup of Orleans who wrote: “My activities are so crushing that they ruin my health, disturb my piety and yet teach me nothing new. I have got to control them.

“God has given me the grace to recognize that the big obstacle to my acquiring a peaceful and fruitful interior life is my natural activity, and my tendency to be carried away by my work I have recognized, besides, that this lack of interior life is the source of all my faults , all my troubles, my dryness, my fits of disgust and my bad health.”

The Bishop decided to commence a new program to restore his spiritual and physical health.

First, ‘I will always take more time than is necessary to do everything. This is the way to avoid being in a hurry and getting excited.’”

Second, “Since I have more things to do than time in which to do them, and this prospect... gets me all worked up, I will cease to think about all that I have to do and only consider the time I have at my disposal. I will make use of that time...beginning with the most important duties; and as regards those that may or may not get done, I shall not worry about them.

Saint Teresa of Avila often condemned those spiritual persons, who selfishly clung to the sweet peace and silence of the cloister while leaving the Lord’s work to others. She saw a “ very subtle self-love mixed in here. This self love does not allow one to understand what it is to want to please God rather than ourselves.” Time spent in prayer is never wasted--- unless we’re excessive and unreasonable about it. Becoming too Mary-ish is as much a fault as being too Martha-ish.

When we advance into those higher places, God’s agenda gradually replaces our own and we begin to understand that authentic Christian living is supposed to be fruitful for Christ, not just ourselves.

In order to accomplish this, we must acquire the ability to combine the right amount of prayer with the right amount of work. As Saint Thomas Aquinas explained, Martha’s activity and Mary’s prayer, “far from excluding one another, depend on one another, presuppose one another, mingle and complete one another.”

A good place to start is to meditate on the advice of Dom Chautard and consider ways to apply it to our own lives, no matter what our work for Christ may be: “By contemplation the soul is fed; by the apostolate it gives itself away.”

(by Susan Brinkmann “The Catholic Standard and Times” (CS&T) Correspondent, CS&T Vol. 109 No.4 – Thursday, August 21, 2003)

PRAYER of SAINT PADRE PIO to BLESS YOUR HOME

We praise you, Lord because You allowed Your Son made man to belong to a human family and share its joys and pains by growing up in the family environment.

Look down on the family of this house for whom we invoke Your help. Protect us and preserve us always through the intercession of Saint Pio of Pietrelcina, so that sustained by Your grace we may live in

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prosperity and harmony and bear witness in the world to Your glory by word and action in Your holy name.

We ask this through Christ our Lord. AMEN

(from P. Pio, Letters IV)

“SPIRITUS ET SPONSA” MARKS ANNIVERSARY of COUNCIL DOCUMENT

VATICAN CITY, Apr 2, 2004 (VIS) – Today in the Holy See Press Office, Cardinal Francis Arinze, prefect of the Congregation for Divine Worship and Discipline of the Sacraments, presented “*Spiritus et Sponsa*,” Acts of the Commemorative Day of the 40th Anniversary of the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy “*Sacrosanctum concilium*” that took place in Rome on December 4, 2003. Joining him were Archbishop Domenico Sorrentino, congregation secretary, Father Juan Javier Flores Arcas, director of the Pontifical Liturgical Institute of Saint Anselm (Rome), and Msgr. Giuseppe Liberto, choir master of the Pontifical Musical Chorus.

Cardinal Arinze said that, given that “the liturgy is the highest expression of the mysterious reality of the Church,” the very first fruit of Vatican Council II was the document on the sacred liturgy, “*Sacrosanctum concilium*,” which was then followed by 15 other conciliar documents. He added that it was to be expected that the congregation he leads would commemorate the 40th anniversary of that first council document.

“*Spiritus et Sponsa*” is divided into two parts. The first consists of two documents of John Paul II: the Apostolic Letter “*Spiritus et Sponsa*,” from which the new book takes its title, and a Chirograph dated November 22, 2003 which commemorates the centenary of Saint Pius X’s *Motu Proprio* “*Tra le sollecitudini*,” on sacred music. The second part, said the cardinal, “moves in three directions,” offering a retrospective look at the past 40 years, reflections on the liturgy in the pontificate of John Paul II and a section dedicated entirely to sacred music.

This volume, stated Cardinal Arinze, “wishes to testify to the validity of the directives of Vatican Council II on the sacred liturgy” and “we also hope that this is a small step in promoting the liturgical and pastoral formation of the clergy, consecrated persons and all the lay faithful, in line with duties assigned them in ‘*Pastor bonus*’.”

(VIS, 14th YEAR - N. 63, ENGLISH, FRIDAY, APRIL 2, 2004, OP / LITURGY: SPIRITUS ET SPONSA / ARINZE VIS 040402 (320))

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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, or

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

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.

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

PRIESTS FAITHFUL to THEIR VOCATION, EXAMPLE for YOUNG PEOPLE

VATICAN CITY, APR 6, 2004 (VIS) – This morning Cardinal Dario Castrillon Hoyos and Archbishop Csaba Ternyak, prefect and secretary respectively of the Congregation for the Clergy, presented the Holy Father's Letter to Priests on the occasion of Holy Thursday, 2004.

Cardinal Castrillon emphasized three aspects of the letter: "First of all, the intimate connection of the sacrament of the Eucharist with the ordained priesthood. ... In the second place, John Paul stresses its sacred character and therefore the irreplaceable nature of the ordained ministry." In this sense, he indicated that "the faith allows us to discover that Christ is present in priests so that the world may understand that reconciliation obtained through the Holy Cross, whose fruit is the Eucharist, is not an act confined to a specific time or place, but transcends the categories of life on earth and extends continually in time until Christ will come at the end of the world."

The third aspect, said the cardinal, is "vocational pastoral" care. Prayer for vocations "must be accompanied by pastoral care with the purpose of understanding life is a vocation and that God calls some of us to follow Him more closely in communion with Him and in self-giving. Therefore, Christian families have an important and invaluable mission and a responsibility for vocations, especially through the parish, to help them to correspond in a generous and conscious way."

Archbishop Ternyak referred to the total number of clergy in the world (including bishops and deacons) which at the end of 2001 numbered 439,850, whereas in 1961 the clergy numbered 406,509. Fourteen percent of parishes today (216,736 at the end of 2001) were created in the last thirty years.

"It is necessary," he said, "to speak to young people directly in order to show them the beauty of Catholic priesthood, lived out with a heart full of love for God and for others, and by men who happily consecrate themselves and their freedom to the service of their brothers and sisters. One of the fundamental tools of vocational pastoral care is the priest himself, with fidelity to his vocation and enthusiasm in the exercise

of the ministry. (The Church needs) men in love with the Eucharist who can help young people to discover their devotion for a vocation of ontological identification with Christ who offers Himself for the salvation of all and who becomes a gift in the Eucharist."

At the end of the press conference, Cardinal Castrillon announced that next October there will be a world congress in Malta on the theme "Priests, forgers of saints in the third millennium."

**(VIS, 14th YEAR - N. 65, ENGLISH, TUESDAY,
APRIL 6, 2004, .../ LETTER PRIESTS /
CASTRILLON: TERNYAK VIS 040406 (410))**

THE 41ST WORLD DAY of PRAYER for VOCATIONS MAY 2, 2004 - REFLECTIONS on the CONTINENTAL CONGRESS on VOCATIONS REPORT

Perhaps it is because I am a celibate woman consecrated to religious life and focused on vocation work, but I find myself keenly observing children's propensity for all things spiritual. Friends of mine have two young children aged five and seven. Mary, the seven year old, has accompanied her father to Mass for the past three years. At first I thought she did so because there was the promise of donuts (a favorite food of hers) after Mass. This may well have been the case in the beginning but her father countered my observation by pointing out that she was very attentive during Mass-it wasn't simply a time to be endured until donut hour. Subsequently, she enrolled in religious education. He reports that she has been very diligent in her religious preparation and is eagerly awaiting her First Communion this spring. Joey, the five year old, has shown no interest in attending church (even though donuts are a favorite food of his and would be an attraction.) He is quite content to stay at home and play on Sunday morning.

Some might say that Joey isn't interested in church because he is a boy or because he is younger. This does not square with my observations. Some young boys are much attuned to church. Children of all ages and both genders seem capable of making profound statements. One three year old once told me, "I want a Church where God doesn't have to die." Indeed, would that salvation could be won without that terrible sacrifice. Some children seem more naturally disposed to religious practice than others. I don't know why this is so. I am certain that all children, like all adults, are called to holiness.

Before you stop reading...let me define holiness. It is not some sort of heroic virtue that only a few can hope to attain. It is the fundamental awareness of God's presence in our lives and the readiness to respond to God with love, to live a life of personal integrity, and to be committed to justice. This response happens in the everyday, mundane actions of our lives as well as religious activities. Some seem to find it easy to identify and articulate God's call in their life. Others struggle to hear God's call or to make a response. I believe we are all seeking to live holy lives and I am convinced that prayer is essential to our finding our path of holiness.

Two years ago Pope John Paul II gathered men and women from across North America to meet in Rome for the Third Continental Congress on Vocations. My Congregation, the Adorers of the Blood of Christ, were represented at the gathering in Montreal, Canada. Now as a follow-up to the Vocation Congress the National Conference of Bishops has published a plan on how to implement the recommendations of the Vocational Congress.

It was no surprise that prayer was identified as the first of five priorities for pastoral action related to vocations. Many Churchgoers are familiar with prayers for vocations. Parishes are more and more frequently praying for an increase in vocations to priesthood and religious life. This is a very good thing. More fundamentally, parishes need to become "schools for prayer". By permeating the environment of our young people with prayer (of all kinds-both formal and informal, in Church and at home) we can help them realize that they are holy people that they are open to God's love and to seek to do the good to which they are called.

One of the many great insights that came from the Congress was articulated by Rev. Ronald Rohlheiser OMI who said we need models of holiness "who can give their whole lives over in such a way that they have the power and the permission and the right to ask people to give their lives over." If we expect young people to give their lives to God then they need to see their elders doing it. For some of us, like little Mary, the call to relationship with God may come easily. We are very comfortable in our spiritual life and can readily exhibit outward signs of our relationship with God, especially in prayer. For others we may feel unsure of the validity or desirability of our spiritual life and are hesitant to make it known. Whether you are at ease or in a struggle in your spiritual life I know that you have a central role to play in forming the vocations of our young people. It is the responsibility of the whole Church to do

everything possible to make God's call heard and to support every response to that call.

The 41st World Day of Prayer for Vocations is May 2, 2004. Our Holy Father, Pope John Paul II in his message for the day of prayer quotes from his Apostolic Letter, *Novo Millennio Inuente* saying, "in today's world, despite widespread secularization, there is a widespread demand for spirituality, a demand which expresses itself in large part as a renewed need for prayer." Our young people are generous. They wish to have a meaningful life. One of the greatest gifts we can give our young people is a rich spiritual environment, making it a land of prayer that leads them to their heart's desire.

The Adorers have more than 425 sisters, 371 associates, 150 volunteers, and 229 employees serving Adorer ministries in spiritual enrichment, health care, education, long-term care and social justice here and abroad. The Adorers' United States Province has headquarters in Saint Louis and centers in Ruma, Illinois; Wichita, Kansas; and Columbia, Pennsylvania.

(Sister Diana, Vocation Director for the Adorers of the Blood of Christ US Province. Phone: 1-877-236-7377 rawlingsd@adorers.org April 19, 2004, Wichita, Kansas)

WINDSHIELD MESSAGE from a CHILD

One rainy afternoon a father was driving along one of the main streets of town, taking those extra precautions necessary when the roads are wet and slick. Suddenly, his daughter, Aspen, spoke up from her relaxed position in her seat. "Dad, I'm thinking of something." This announcement usually meant she had been pondering some fact for a while, and was now ready to expound all that her six-year-old mind had discovered. He was eager to hear.

"What are you thinking?" he asked. "The rain," she began, "is like sin, and the windshield wipers are like God wiping our sins away." After the chill bumps raced up his arms he was able to respond. "That's really good, Aspen." Then his curiosity broke in. How far would this little girl take this revelation? So he asked. "Do you notice how the rain keeps on coming? What does that tell you?"

Aspen didn't hesitate one moment with her answer: "We keep on sinning, and God just keeps on forgiving us."

He will always remember this whenever he turns the wipers on.

(Dottie Lyons)

MESSAGE of 4/25/2004 via Maria Pavlovic Lunetti

Dear Children! Also today, I call you to live my messages even more strongly in humility and love so that the Holy Spirit may fill you with His grace and strength. Only in this way will you be witnesses of peace and forgiveness. 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 4/25/2004

LIVE MY MESSAGES in HUMILITY and LOVE

The Virgin Mary is coming to us for 22 years and 10 months now. With a motherly heart, she is addressing her messages to us. Through her messages, she wants to lead us on the way of conversion and of holiness. Throughout these years, many children of Mary began to believe and encountered the vivifying force of her presence here, among us. The treasure of Heaven that is coming to us can remain undiscovered. This precious pearl can remain hidden and not found. Those who find it are able to give everything: their time, their love and their life. The Gospel is teaching us: *“For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.”* (Mt 6,21) Mary wants that our treasure is in God, in spiritual values, and not in things and corruptible treasures of this world *“that moth or rust corrupt”*. (Cf.: Mt 6,20) Those who discover this treasure will not remain at the edge of the shore, attached to the banks of this world that is imprisoning us, but will dare to row to the open sea, where Jesus is calling us.

In the simplicity of the words of Our Lady is hidden the power of Heaven, the power of the Mother who is able to give a new beginning to our lives. In this message, she is calling us: *“Live my messages even more strongly”*. Our God is a God of humility and of simplicity. Simple motherly words that she is addressing to us are able to create in us a new mentality, the mentality of the Gospel, of the life of God that wants to blossom in us.

It is only in humility and in love that we can know God and recognize the messages of Our Lady as messages of the Gospel, as messages of the Kingdom of God that wants to begin to live in us, and through us in this world. In Jesus, God has humbled himself, he stooped down to us so that we can understand him and listen to him. During the Last Supper, Jesus washes the feet of his disciples. He – who is God – stoops down to his disciples to wash their feet. The washing of the feet is a task of a servant or of a slave. It is possible to wash somebody’s feet only if one

bends down or goes on one’s knees in front of somebody. One must be at the feet of somebody. This is precisely what Jesus is doing. He is on his knees in front of his disciples, he is looking at them from down upwards, like a little child that – since it is small – is looking at the adults from down upwards, as if it wanted to ask: Do you accept me? God speaks to man from down upwards, his Word resounds in humility. However, one would expect to hear the Word of God coming from another direction – and this is why God is not heard.

One could say that, in this place, Gospa also is speaking to us from down upwards. She is using the words of a child that each one can understand, and she is asking us: Will you accept me, will you listen to me, so that the life according to the Holy Spirit can flower in you, so that you can become the witness of what we need most: peace and forgiveness.

Let us listen to the Mother who is speaking to us and we will be happy in this world already.

(Father Ljubo Kurtovic, Medjugorje, April 26, 2004)

PRESS BULLETIN 197, 4/26/2004

WHY ART THOU CAST DOWN, O MY SOUL?

At the threshold of death, a nine-year-old girl revived the wavering faith of her mother... This mom had always prayed with her children, she took them for mass, she spoke to them about Jesus and about eternity. And yet: when her daughter was seriously ill and at the threshold of death, the mother was only able to groan, and she even doubt about the eternity. At this point, the girl challenged her mother: “Mom, why are you crying, since you know that we will be again joined together in eternity? Didn’t you tell me that, after death, we all go to heaven, to God, where one is much better than here on earth?” By hearing these words, the mother remained silent...

We have just celebrated Easter, the day of victory and the beginning of eternity for those who believe. Can we remain indifferent in front of such an event? Can we retain our emotions and prevent ourselves from exclaiming: “Thank you, Lord and Savior! Live Jesus

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the champion! You are our salvation! In you is the source of life, in your light we see the light!"

As Christians, we should not weaken when the burden of life weighs too heavily upon us, or when we are undergoing a hard trial. Faith, which Jesus is asking from us, must be stronger than passing adversities of this life. Jesus remains faithful to his Father until the end, and Mary, his Mother, does not back off from the way of the cross of her Son. The day of Resurrection is the luminous way, which always leads us on our way. We should never doubt the joy that is promised to us in eternity, at the end of the combat. We must live in our real life the victory of Jesus over death, and we must give an authentic witness to it.

In our life, we will undoubtedly know moments when we fall under the weight of the cross, without force and determination to get up again; we perhaps already experienced them. The sin makes us fall, and prevents us from getting up. If this is the case, let us remember that Jesus died for us; let us remember that his resurrection can be an inspiration for us. If we want to follow Jesus, a fall does not mean the end. To stand up and to continue on the way: this is the task of those who believe that - with Jesus - they can arrive to eternity. On this way, Mary walks with us. Through her apparitions, she shows how much she cares that nobody becomes discouraged, but that all live in the light of the victory of her Son. In everything, it is faith that is most important. As the faith of that small girl, who was not discouraged at the threshold of death.

Father Mario Knezovic

COMMUNIONS and CONCELEBRANTS

During the month of March, 58,000 received Holy Communion and 1185 priests from this country and abroad concelebrated Holy Mass in Medjugorje.

EASTER IN MEDJUGORJE

During the entire Holy Week and for Easter, numerous groups of pilgrims arrived in Medjugorje, desiring to prepare themselves for Easter and to celebrate the greatest Christian feast here. For Easter itself, there were several thousand pilgrims from all over the world, but the most numerous were Austrians and Germans. Also very numerous were Croatian pilgrims, and those coming from neighboring parishes, who wanted to make their Easter confession here. Every evening, during the three-hour prayer program, there were about 30 priests hearing confessions.

The Holy Triduum was celebrated in deep recollection and prayer. The liturgical celebrations of Holy Thursday and Good Friday (as well as the Way **The PILGRIM, Volume 15, Number 5 – May 2004**

of the Cross on Cross Mountain), and the Liturgy of the Word in view of the Easter Vigil, were celebrated in 12 languages.

AN ARGENTINEAN RETIRED BISHOP IN MEDJUGORJE

Monsignor Bernardo Witte, Oblate of the Immaculate Virgin Mary, retired bishop of Concepcion (Argentina), spent the Holy Week in Medjugorje.

He came on pilgrimage with a group from Germany, because he is a German himself. He was presiding the morning Mass for German speaking pilgrims, he was praying and hearing confessions. He said :

"In 1984, after my stay in Rome, I went to Vienna to visit a friend of mine, a priest. He spoke to me about Medjugorje and I believed at once. Since then, I have the desire to come to Medjugorje. Now, as I am retired, I have more time than before, so I came to spend the Holy Week in Medjugorje. I want to see, to know, to pray.

Father Mathuni, who spoke to me about Medjugorje, was present during one apparition. He saw the

Where The Master Reigns (WTMR) AM – 800 – Catholic Radio

From *1 PM to 6 PM, Monday thru Friday*, unless otherwise indicated, ministries supportive of the Roman Catholic faith offer Catholic Radio most of it with call-in opportunities.

Listen and support the ministries who have stepped out in faith to buy radio time.

Call in to **WTMR** using *(856) 962-8178*.

1 PM: Our Lady of Fatima with **Betty Fyke**

1:30 PM: Rosary from Saint John Neumann Shrine

1:45 PM – 2 PM (Wednesday): "Divine Mercy of My Soul" with **Rudy Valentino** and Friends.

2 PM – 2:45 PM (Monday thru Thursday): "Help Wake Up AMERICA!" with **Dom Lettieri** and others from *In His Sign (IHS) Ministries*.

2 PM – 2:45 PM (Friday): "God the Father" with **Rudy Valentino** and Friends.

2:45 PM – 4 PM: "Voices of the Holy Souls" with **Joe Veltri** and Friends. *"Live Stations of the Cross"* begin each program.

4 PM – 5 PM: "As the Spirit Leads" with **Drew Mariani, Barbaranne Marion**, and others from *Marian Communications*.

5 PM – 6 PM: "Putting It On The Line" with Dom Lettieri from *In His Sign (IHS) Ministries*.

sincerity of the children and the intensity of prayer of those who were present. Since then, I keep an eye on the events of Medjugorje, and in past 20 years, I have been convinced that they are true. They convey a message of faith and a message of hope, which the Church is conveying, while calling to prayer, to fasting and to conversion.

This intensity is rather surprising, but this is how I interpret it: morality and ethics in the world are in great danger. In an extreme danger for the world, for the Church and for souls, extreme measures are needed. I admire and I rejoice! Each apparition is a new hope and a new challenge. Also to this question, I have the same answer: in a great danger of the civilization of death, these apparitions promote a civilization of life.

I have the impression that everything is happening in a harmonious way: these apparitions, the pontificate of John-Paul II who encourages the renewal of the pastoral life in the Church, and many bishops who consciously give a Marian orientation to their episcopate. To resume, I would repeat the words of Our Lady in Fatima: "At the end, my Immaculate Heart shall triumph!" I think that both, the apparitions of Fatima and of Medjugorje, signify a call to the renewal of Europe. In Medjugorje, the communist East has begun to collapse. Medjugorje is a carrier of joy, of hope and of trust."

RADIO "MIR" MEDJUGORJE IS BROADCASTING 24 HOURS A DAY

Since March 25, 2004 - feast of the Annunciation - Radio "Mir" Medjugorje is broadcasting its program 24 hours a day. Our radio, which can be heard in Bosnia-Herzegovina and in a great part of Croatia, as well as (through satellite) in Europe, in the Middle East and in the Northern Africa, broadcast until now 12 hours a day. The new 24-hours scheme is enriched with new and various contents, that are also adapted to the needs of our listeners all over the world.

These days, we are finishing the work on the improvement of the listening to our Radio "Mir" Medjugorje through Internet. The access to our Web site is also improved now, because we have increased the speed of our link. As you are using different operating systems and programs for audio and video reproduction, see the link <http://www.medjugorje.hr/uputeaudiovideohr.htm>, which can help you to resolve eventual problems.

SEMINARS IN "DOMUS PACIS"

In the house of prayer "Domus Pacis", there were four "Prayer and Fasting" seminars for pilgrims from

Ukraine, Austria, Italy and Germany. Father Ljubo Kurtovic led these seminars.

There was a recollection for the members of the Franciscan Youth Fraternity from Herzegovina.

Franciscan School Sisters led a seminar for 33 young girls.

THE 9TH INTERNATIONAL MEETING FOR PRIESTS

The 9th International meeting for priests will take place in Medjugorje from July 5 to 10, 2004. The theme of the meeting is "The Identity of the Priest".

You may make reservations by e-mail: seminar.marija@medjugorje.hr, at the Information Office personally, or by phone: +387-36-651-988 (for Marija Dugandzic), fax +387-36-651-999.

We ask all priests who have arranged their own accommodation with a family in Medjugorje to note in their application the name and the phone number of the family where they will be staying. We will arrange accommodation for all the priests who have no direct contacts and have not arranged their own accommodation. (Please note in your application if you wish us to arrange accommodation for you.)

Instead of a monetary payment, we ask you to kindly celebrate five Mass intentions.

It is necessary to bring with you: your celebret given by your superior, an alb and stole, a Bible, a small FM radio with headphones (for simultaneous translation).

Many priests who do not have access to Internet may not have been informed about the existence of this international meeting in Medjugorje. Therefore, we kindly ask all Organizers of pilgrimages, Prayer Groups and Centers for Peace to publish this information as widely as possible by all means at their disposal, so that as many priests as possible may participate. In as much as it is possible, we also kindly ask you to financially assist the priests who would like to come but do not have the necessary funds for such a journey. We thank you in advance and pray for God's blessing and the blessing of the Queen of Peace upon you and your work.

THE 5TH INTERNATIONAL MEETING FOR MARRIED COUPLES

The 5th International Meeting for Married Couples will take place in Medjugorje in the New Hall from November 3 to 6, 2004.

The theme of the seminar is,

"How to heal the marriage and the family?"

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[More information on the Program is available on the **Internet** or at the **PFMC**.]

SUMMER SCHEDULE AT THE SHRINE

The summer prayer program schedule at the Shrine of the Queen of Peace in Medjugorje begins on May 1st.

Prayer of the Rosary in the parish church will begin at 6 PM. Holy Mass will be at 7 PM, followed by the blessings and the third part of the rosary. Eucharistic adoration on Thursday will be after the evening Holy Mass and on Wednesday and Saturday from 10-11 PM. Veneration of the cross will be on Friday after the evening Holy Mass.

Rosary on Apparition Hill and the Way of the Cross on Krizevac will begin at 4 PM. You can make your confession every evening during the evening prayer program.

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

POPE JOHN PAUL II - LETTER to PRIESTS for HOLY THURSDAY 2004

VATICAN CITY, APR 6, 2004 (VIS) – Pope John Paul’s Letter to Priests for Holy Thursday 2004 was published today in Italian, English, French, Spanish, German, Portuguese and Polish. It was signed on March 28, the fifth Sunday of Lent

“Our annual encounter through this Letter,” the Pope writes, “is a particularly fraternal one, thanks to our common sharing in the Priesthood of Christ, and it takes place in the liturgical setting of this holy day marked by two significant celebrations; the Morning Christ Mass, and the evening Mass ‘in cena Domini’.”

The Holy Father reflects on Holy Thursday, saying it is the day “we were born as priests,” and also the day the Eucharist was established. He writes of the “apostolicity of the Eucharist,” this sacrament which was “entrusted by Christ to the Apostles and has been passed down by them and their successors in every generation.” He states that “the Eucharist, like the priesthood, is a gift from God ‘which radically transcends the power of the assembly’. ... The assembly of the faithful, ... even though it is the place where Christ ‘is present in His Church, especially in her liturgical celebrations, is not by itself able to celebrate the Eucharist or to provide the ordained minister’.”

Pope John Paul asks the faithful to pray “that priests will never be lacking in the Church,” noting that in

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some parts of the world there is a shortage of priests while in others, “thank God, we see a promising springtime of vocations.” He says that the fidelity of priests, their commitment to Christ, their love for the Eucharist, their Christ-like behavior will all help bring “new workers to the vineyard.”

The Pope asks priests to, “among other initiatives, show special care for altar servers, who represent a kind of ‘garden’ of priestly vocations. The group of altar servers, under your guidance as part of the parish community, can be given a valuable experience of Christian education and become a kind of pre-seminary. Help the parish, as a family made up of families, to look upon altar servers as their own children, like ‘olive shoots around the table’ of Jesus Christ, the Bread of Life.”

“With the help of the families most involved and catechists, be particularly concerned for the group of servers so that, through their service at the altar, each of them will learn to grow in love for the Lord Jesus, to recognize Him truly present in the Eucharist and to experience the beauty of the liturgy. Initiatives for altar servers on the diocesan or local level should be promoted and encouraged, with attention to the different age groups.”

“Never forget,” John Paul II urges priests, “that you yourselves are the first ‘Apostles’ of Jesus the High Priest. Your own witness counts more than anything else. Altar servers see you at the regular Sunday and weekday celebrations, in your hands they see the Eucharist ‘take ‘place’, on your face they see its mystery reflected, and in your heart they sense the summons of a greater love. May you be for them fathers, teachers and witnesses of Eucharistic piety and holiness of life!”

[VIS sent the complete letter as an attachment to their electronic delivery of the VIS news. A copy is available at the **PFMC** for review.]

(VIS, 14th YEAR - N. 65, ENGLISH, TUESDAY, APRIL 6, 2004, JPII-LETTER TO PRIESTS/HOLY THURSDAY 2004/... VIS 040406 (550))

THEOLOGY of the BODY and PURITY of HEART

In one of the more renowned nights of revelry, the Greek playwright Aristophanes used his turn to speak about eros to illustrate how sexual differentiation was the result of human arrogance. There used to be a type of human person, he recounted, “made up of both male and female. These beings were great in strength and power and had

heavenly ambitions. They made an attempt on the gods . . . So Zeus and the other gods and goddesses met to discuss what had to be done. They could not just strike the humans with thunderbolts and wipe them off the face of the earth, because that would eliminate the worship and sacrifices they receive . . . Zeus spoke up with an idea: ‘I have a plan that would save the humans but also stop their misbehaving, they will give up their misdeeds and lose their strength against us. I shall cut each of them in two.’” With one clever stroke, Zeus thus enervated humanity’s rebellious nature as well as doubled the sacrifices offered to Olympus! Instead of worrying about the things of heaven, “humans now longed for their other half, throwing their arms around each other . . . seeking the other half that matches.”¹ Unlike Genesis 1:27, “God created man in his image, in the divine image he created him; male and female he created them,” the Greeks saw “male and female” as the consequence of hubris, a result of impiety.

Hans Urs von Balthasar once argued that, “Because of her unique structure, the Catholic Church is perhaps humanity’s last bulwark of genuine appreciation of the difference between the sexes.”² In the following article, I would like to show how this “genuine appreciation” for the human person as male and female finds a splendid voice in John Paul’s reflections on the human person. His theology of the body represents a Christian anthropology aimed against much of contemporary culture’s disavowal of the goodness of gender. As John Paul sees it, male and female are God’s intended “ways of ‘being a body . . . which complete each other. They are two complementary dimensions of self-consciousness and self-determination and, at the same time, two complementary ways of being conscious of the meaning of the body.’”³ The pope’s metaphysics of the human person has clear ethical implications. If true communion is made possible only through the beloved’s otherness, lust discards this otherness and reduces the “beloved” to an object to be used solely for one’s interests. Lust, on the other hand, echoes Aristophanes’ myth in that disordered sexual desires and consequent acts arise when fallen sexual libido sees the other solely as an extension of self; the lustful man seeks not a wholly other but a way merely to slake his own self. The gift of purity of heart is thus needed to restore the original communion intended for humanity. Thus the first part of this essay will examine what John Paul means by a theology of the body and, second, how his thinking has shaped recent teaching on the virtue of purity. The 21st century no doubt holds many battles but perhaps none more important than the purity of heart to which John Paul implores all people of good will.

John Paul’s Theology of the Body

Surely more than an interesting historical footnote, John Paul II chose to dedicate the first years of his pontificate to deepening the Church’s understanding of the human body. From 1979 to 1984, he used the Wednesday Address to reflect on the human incarnation as evidenced in Genesis.⁴ With von Balthasar, John Paul realized early on that the Church was swiftly becoming the “last bulwark” in defending the goodness and irreducibility of male and female against those who maintain that there are no objective natures, only capricious names given to things by those with the power to do so. In other words, to use the distinction first expressed by Plato in his critique of the self-seeking sophists who wandered through Athens separating reality from concept and thereby making the “weaker argument the stronger,” there is no reality independent of the human mind (*physis*), only labels imposed by the cunning of those who control language (*nomos*). This distinction is evident throughout much of today’s academic jargon, especially when it comes to discussion of gender and human sexuality. Take, for example, feminist author Julia Kristeva’s statement that “Woman is a valid concept politically, but not philosophically. There are still many goals which women can achieve: freedom of abortion and contraception, daycare centers for children, equality on the job, etc. Therefore we must use ‘we are women’ as an advertisement or slogan for our demands. On a deeper level, however, a woman cannot ‘be.’”⁵ That is, “woman” may in fact prove to be a convenient moniker in the political sphere (*nomos*) but reflects nothing in nature (*physis*). Against this type of reductionism, John Paul offers the world a view of human embodiment that sees male and female as complementary and irreducible gifts from which human dignity and freedom spring.

He accordingly opened his pontificate by searching the first pages of Genesis because there, he believes, are found the truths every human carries within. The drama depicted in Genesis is replayed in every human life and, as such, is not some story describing a past event but an ongoing narrative expressing the deepest realities of each human person [TB 85]. Let us likewise turn to Genesis where John Paul sees three original experiences of the human person: solitude, unity, and nakedness.

Adam, made in God’s image, finds himself alone and thus experiences a unique solitude hitherto unknown. Despite the obvious goodness of the Creator and the expressed goodness of the rest of creation, Adam is not yet secure; ironic, even in Eden Adam is not fully at home. A spirit like God but embodied like the other animals, Adam finds himself singularly isolated.

Paradoxically, the one God made to be like him (Gen. 1:27) is not satisfied with him. What sense does one make of the fact that the man made flesh experiences a certain “lack” in his spiritual relationship with God: “It is not good for man to be alone” (Gen. 2:18)? This original solitude, stresses the Holy Father, is not one “caused by the lack of woman” [TB 35] and as such, is not dependent on gender; both men and woman, each and every human person, experiences this solitude in Adam.

This isolation from the rest of reality is due to the human person’s unique status as a border creature between heaven and earth: a person, and thus spiritual and hence capable of thought and deep interpersonal communion like God; but also carnal and embodied, “formed out of the ground” (Gen. 2:19) like the other animals over which he has been given stewardship. Adam’s loneliness is due not to his spiritual nature, for God and the angels could in no way ever said to be lonely; nor is his loneliness due to his carnal flesh, for the other animalia around him are apparently unable to know such profound solitude. Only as an embodied spirit, can Adam be “in search of his own entity. It could be said he is in search of the definition of himself” [TB 36]. In this desire for wholeness, Adam first comes to realize that his longing for completion arises out of a prior self-determination and self-possession.

Adam experiences that only he wants and that no one else can search for him. In this search for wholeness, Adam realizes that he is the “highest expression of the divine gift, because he bears within him the interior dimension of the gift. With it he brings into the world his particular likeness to God, with which he transcends and dominates also his ‘visibility’ in the world, his corporality, his masculinity or femininity, or nakedness. A reflection of this likeness is also the primordial awareness of the nuptial meaning of the body, pervaded by original innocence” [TB 76]. Adam’s interiority is realized as an inviolability. He comes to realize that everything he names and rules can be used for another’s benefit, but that as embodied subject, as the enfleshed imago Dei, he is solely “made for himself” and can thus never be used as an object.⁶ In his solitude Adam comes to see that, in the words of a younger Cardinal Wojtya, the human person is an alter incommunicabilis, that is, “not capable of transmission, not transferableThe incommunicable, the inalienable, in a person is intrinsic to that person’s inner-self, to the power of self-determination, free will.”⁷ This experience of the solitary self prepares Adam to love Eve and not to use her, as he had been using the rest of creation before her arrival; his solitude readies him to receive Eve as another subject [TB 36]. In his search, Adam comes

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to see that the part of himself that distinguishes him from the rest of creation, his longing to share who he is (communicatio), is completed only by another like him (communio).

From within his solitude, Adam realizes an insecurity, manifested in a desire to give himself fully, to give himself in both body and soul. He realizes that he, “willed by the Creator in this way from ‘the beginning,’ can find himself only in the disinterested giving of himself” [TB 64]. With Eve, then, the second original experience is inaugurated: unity. To show Adam how and for whom he is made, God creates another embodied person from within his search. Or, as Kenneth Schmitz has put so well, “God breaks open the original solitude, not from without, as the parade of animals had failed to do, but from within humanity itself The solitude that distinguishes man from other creatures remains, but man will receive appropriate filling from within that solitude. And so, God forms another being who possesses that same mark of solitude which bears the image and likeness of God: He fashions Woman.”⁸ It is thus through and with this woman that Adam comes to understand that the “I” he realized in his solitude is consummated only through another.

This is why John Paul insists that the human person is made for marriage [TB 75]. That is, the human person finds true fulfillment only in the other, in the *communio personarum* for which Adam’s search

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 was **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!!

yearned: “at last, this one is bone of my bones and the flesh of my flesh” (Gen. 2:23). Adam now sees what his solitude was for, what imaging the Tri-Personal God truly means: communion. Henceforth, “finding of oneself in giving oneself becomes the source of a new giving of oneself” [TB 71]. As this reciprocal other, Eve is not only the answer to Adam’s solitude, it is she, through her femininity, who also shows him the meaning of his masculinity.

Genesis depicts this distinguishing of humanity into male and female as the only distinction among the first humans originally willed by God. Why? Through John Paul’s eyes, Scripture shows a deepening awareness in its new term for Adam after the arrival of Eve. He is no longer merely Adam, the human person, but he now understands himself as ‘is, man, and she as ‘issah, woman [TB 43]. It is Eve, the other enfleshed person, which brings Adam to this new awareness: “The body which expresses femininity manifests the reciprocity and communion of persons. It expresses it by means of the gift as the fundamental characteristic of personal existence. This is the body — a witness to creation as a fundamental gift, and so a witness to Love as the source from which this same giving springs. Masculinity and femininity — namely, sex — is the original sign of a creative donation and an awareness on the part of man, male-female, of a gift lived in an original way” [TB 61-62]. Gender distinction is thus the way God originally provided for humanity to enjoy the deepest, most intimate relationship knowable. It is in this way that the original experience of unity is inextricably linked to God’s first commandment to humanity, “Be fertile and multiply,” as well as to his second, “and fill the earth and subdue it” (Gen. 1:28). Adam and Eve’s *communio* has a teleological significance outside of themselves: pure love is intended to point to the begetting of new others, of new loves. The communion of persons is intended not only for procreation but will also prove to be the basis upon which a civilization of love is built.

This first human love is realized in a complete self-giving and transparency between persons. John Paul sees this deferential love represented by the first couple’s nakedness, the mark of original innocence and the third original experience: “The man and his wife were both naked, yet they felt no shame” (Gen. 2:25). The absence of shame indicates that in their nakedness, Adam and Eve see each other precisely as enfleshed others worthy of nothing other than love. They see each other as integral harmonies between body and soul and in no way desire to separate the two. John Paul calls this the “pure value” of the body and sex. This purity allows one to intuit the nuptial meaning of the human body and live in a state free

from shame which “does not know an interior rupture and opposition between what is spiritual and what is sensible. It does not know a rupture and opposition between what constitutes the person humanly and what in man is determined by sex — what is male and female” [TB 57]. Without the clouds of sin, the human person sees the other as he or she is: an incarnate subject exacting a response of love.

The nakedness of Adam and Eve represent humanity as it is intended to be: two incarnate manifestations of the divine image. Adam and Eve are unashamed of their mutual openness and vulnerability because they know they are not being reduced to an object in the other’s eyes. They know that their bodies are not seen as something to be used and they, in this confidence, are thus able to share all they are with the other. This is how the incommunicability Adam knew in his solitude is now realized communally. In their communion, Adam and Eve not only maintain their otherness, they fulfill their individuality. Bodily sex is what marks the other precisely as other and it is this irreducible difference between “male” and “female” which makes original unity, communion, possible. Adam and Eve are able to see each other as “other” because lust had not yet corrupted them to see one another as a mere object.

But how did the loss of purity destroy this *communio personarum*? With these three original experiences in mind, one can more easily see the deleterious effects of lust. It will thus be valuable to conclude by examining how lust disordered our original innocence and, more importantly, to see how the virtue of purity seeks to restore harmony between the sexes. Our first parents knew an original purity recoverable only in the Second Adam and Eve and it is here that all Catholic teaching on the human body tends.

Purity of heart and lust as the denial of the other

Corresponding to the three original experiences outlined above are three primary effects of lust. The first is found in the Catechism of the Catholic Church’s stress on lust’s opposition to the incommunicability Adam comes to experience in his search for self-identity. The Catechism treats “The Purification of the Heart” primarily under the Ninth Commandment [CCC 2514-33] and sums up purity this way: “Purity of heart requires the modesty which is patience, decency, and discretion. Modesty protects the intimate center of the person” [CCC 2533]. After the fall, modesty is required to “protect” that untransferable “center” of the human person, that place of deep awareness and intimacy with God which Adam realized in his solitude. Purity of heart enables the human person to see the other as

inalienable; it allows a man to see his beloved as “made for herself” and not only for him.

Lust, on the other hand, destroys the beloved’s “otherness” and, like Aristophanes’ primal hermaphrodite, sees the other person as a mere extension of itself. Or as John Paul states, lust forces the other to become “only an object of appropriation, and not a gift” [TB 128]. How so? Lust literally denies the other status as a unique individual in that it desires not what it can do for “the other” but what can be done for itself. It disorders the mind in such a way that male and female are no longer irreducible natures to which one’s desires must properly correspond in love, but convenient objects for one’s sexual wants [TB 151]. Profaning and sweeping the intended beloved away, lust becomes an end unto itself. C.S. Lewis describes this disorder bluntly: “We use a most unfortunate idiom when we say, of a lustful man prowling the streets, that he ‘wants a woman.’ Strictly speaking, a woman is just what he does not want. He wants a pleasure for which a woman happens to be the necessary piece of apparatus.”⁹ Only pure love can want “the other” with all of his or her desires, hopes, dreams, fears and fragility.

It is in this way that lust is moribund and thus opposed to the life-giving unity intended for human love, the second original experience. Unlike true love which seeks nothing for itself (1 Cor.13:5a), lust seeks only itself; lust seeks no end other than its own insatiable cravings. Against the divine command to order all sexual activity toward a mutuality open to new life, lust wants nothing but its own self. Coming out of the same phenomenological tradition as the Holy Father, the French philosopher, Emmanuel Levinas, treats lust as a voluptuosity which “does not come to gratify desire; it is this desire itself. This is why voluptuosity is not only impatient, but is impatience itself, breathes impatience and chokes with impatience, surprised by its end, for it goes without going to an end.”¹⁰ This is what the Catechism means when it defines lust as the “disordered desire for or inordinate enjoyment of sexual pleasure. Sexual pleasure is morally disordered when sought for itself, isolated from its procreative and unitive purposes” [CCC 2351]. It soon becomes obvious how purity of heart’s protection of the inalienability of the other is intimately related to its ability to see the true nature of sexual union.

Only purity of heart is able to recapture and respect humanity’s original unity. Refusing to reduce the other to a mere extension of its own wants, purity recovers the nuptial meaning of the body. The pure of heart see original unity as “closely bound up with the blessing of fertility” [TB 78]. In *Familiaris Consortio*,

for example, John Paul situates the sin of artificial birth control here: “Thus the innate language that expresses the total reciprocal self-giving of husband and wife is overlaid, through contraception, by an objectively contradictory language, namely, that of not giving oneself totally to the other. This leads not only to a positive refusal to be open to life, but also to a falsification of the inner truth of conjugal love, which is called to give itself in personal totality” (§32). Thus one way to understand lust is any sexual act that reduces the other to an object and thereby separates sexual pleasure from sexual procreation. Is this not exactly how the Catechism treats offenses against purity: the seeking of sexual satisfaction apart from the nuptial, fecund, nature of sexual activity? After all, this is what lustful eyes, masturbation, fornication, pornography, homosexual sex, and artificial contraception [CCC 2351-59] all have in common: intending to or not, the persons involved destroy the true meaning of the body and thus of male and female by seeing sexual activity in terms of their own disordered pleasure and not in terms of a mutual, life-giving gift between embodied subjects [CCC 2337]. In denying the intended “otherness” of sexual relations, the sterility of these actions becomes obvious. Lust implodes, thereby destroying the nuptial meaning of the human body, exploiting the “other” by reducing him or her to a mere extension of a self-centered libido.

Finally, it is obvious how lust thus sees in human nakedness, not an incarnation of personhood, but an opportunity for its own satisfaction. Nakedness is no longer a sign of self-giving and complete transparency between husband and wife but an occasion of fear and shame. Lust first manifests itself as a distrust pitting human persons, originally made for each other, against each other. Contrast the purity of Genesis 2:24-25: “. . . and the two become one body. The man and his wife were both naked, yet they felt no shame” with the understanding of nakedness after the Fall: “I heard you in the garden; but I was afraid, because I was naked, so I hid myself” (Gen. 3:10). Whereas lust distorts human vision so as to see the body apart from its intended role as the spirit’s manifestation, purity allows us to see “according to God, to accept others as ‘neighbors’; it lets us perceive the human body — ours and our neighbor’s — as a temple of the Holy Spirit, a manifestation of divine beauty” [CCC 2519]. Whereas lust sees in nakedness an outlet for its own pleasure, purity sees the “flesh” and the “person” as one. The pure of heart see the flesh for what it is intended to be: a sign of the spirit (TB 335). As a gift of the Holy Spirit, purity allows us to see as God sees: to see others not as objects to be used but as sons and daughters of God.

André Malraux, de Gaulle's Ministère de la Culture, is reported to have anticipated that, "The 21st century will be religious, or it will not be at all," and purity of heart is proving to be the needed virtue of this century.¹¹ Whether it be as private as the Internet or as public as the Oval Office or the United Nations, this century will witness further attempts to erode human dignity as well as concentrated legal efforts to redefine gender, sexuality, and marriage, by destroying the vital meaning of the human body. With a sterile sex based on selfish cravings slowly becoming the accepted norm, the true meaning of the human person and human sexuality must be renewed and defended. This has to be done in a variety of ways but it is clear that this task to purify and safeguard the social climate [CCC 2525] falls primarily to all parents, as well as to intellectuals, religious, priests, and anyone who labors on behalf of human life.

Alone, the self is sterile. Only in communion is life encountered: from the Trinity to the human, it is only in mutual self-giving that persons know goodness and love. Thus the foundation of the moral life consists in the ability to see enfleshed subjects as others and to respect this otherness and incommunicability of the human person. Lust seeks to destroy this dignity, reducing the other to a commodity whose value is appropriated by my interests and desires; it is this kind of lust, Aquinas knew, that "above all debauches the human mind."¹² Lust is unable to see the other for who he or she truly is; it denies the hetero, the otherness, constitutive of true communion.

John Paul II has bequeathed us a rich and profound understanding of human love. Fortunately this vision has taken root in many encyclicals as well as in the Catechism, the guiding lights for Christian thought in the upcoming centuries. His theology of the body seeks to recover what was lost through human lust, presenting purity as the way to rediscover true meaning of human sexuality and the *communio personarum* intended from the beginning. Purity of heart thus enables the human person to see as God sees, to become one with Him in thought and deed. All great thought has maintained that temperance in the area of sexual impulse and desire is the foundation upon which the other virtues are developed; as such, it may not be the greatest virtue but it is necessary for building the others. As Plato in the Republic knew, without self-mastery, the proper understanding and use of food, drink, and sex — but, above all, sex (449d) — as its foundation, a city and the people therein will no doubt crumble. We must build the foundations of the moral life not on the shifting sand of accepted trends but on rock (Luke 6:46-49). As the rock of this New Millennium, the Holy Father invites

us to look at the original experiences of the first Adam and Eve to understand not only who human persons and human communion were intended to be, but what is now attainable in the New Adam and the New Eve.

(By David Vincent Meconi

<http://www.catholic.net/rcc/Periodicals/Homiletic/2001-04/meconi.html>)

DEEP BREATHING

How often during the day my mind and body need refreshment.

At these times I stop, become very still, and take a **God-break**.

I breathe in **God** and breathe out irritation;

I breathe in **God** and breathe out frustration;

I breathe in **God** and breathe out limitation.

My whole being responds.

I am renewed, restored, revitalized.

I am ready to begin again!

by **Elma N. Forshey**

REPORTS on IVAN'S VISIT to BERLIN, NJ on 3/23/04

Greetings Dearest Prayer Group:

I wanted to write to tell everyone about Ivan's Visit to my area. I was very blessed to be there with my wife, son, parents, and my best friends. There were 10 of us in a church filled to standing room only. First, let me say that I placed all our IIPG petitions, in the basket that was placed before our Lady. We had a beautiful night, which was different for each one of us, as we all were showered with graces.

We arrived at about ten to five for a 6 PM start. When we got there, the doors were not yet open and there was a line at the door. Once inside the evening started with the singing of songs and hymns of Mary. At about 6:20ish we began to say the Rosary. Ivan entered the church quietly and it was funny to see that not many people recognized that it was him. I could feel him when he walked past. I had experienced that one other time before and that was when I saw the Pope in Giants Stadium. I could feel the Pope enter the stadium before I saw him. I guess that it is the Spirit in them that shines so strong you can just sense it. I was sitting about five pews behind Ivan and had a great view of him during the night. As the time of 6:40 grew closer, I noticed Ivan, who remained motionless before, begin to fidget and move around in his seat. It was obvious that he could feel our Mother

coming closer. At 6:40 Mary appeared. There was silence in the church as Ivan knelt in prayer. I cannot tell you how long She was with us, because I did not look at my watch. It felt like about 5 or 6 minutes. I was too touched to think about time. When She departed, we resumed the Rosary and then celebrated Mass. Mass was celebrated by a wonderful priest assisted by the other equally wonderful priests and brothers present. After Mass Ivan spoke. I was much taken with Ivan, he is a very humble, shy man; but, when he began his talk you could see the Spirit strengthen him and he takes over the room. Ivan explained the history of the visions and went on to discuss the usual topics he discusses during his talk (consistent with the transcripts we have read as posted on the group site). Ivan was very funny, something that I did not know about him. It is very hard to gauge humor from transcripts. At the end of the talk Ivan told us what Mary was wearing: A gray gown, with a white veil, he described her as more beautiful than words with blue eyes, rosy cheeks, and dark hair. (This next part is not an exact quote of what he said but as close as my wife and I remember) He then told us that Mary arrived joyful. Ivan said that She prayed over us, but added, that She prayed over us for an unusually long amount of time. He said that She prayed for, and over the priests, the sick and the youth. He said She blessed us with her Motherly Blessing and blessed the objects that we brought with us. He said that there was not a message for us because She said, as we all know, the world will be getting a message in 2 days. With that Ivan ended his talk and the night ended. As we were leaving, my son wanted to see if Ivan would sign his prayer book. I was not sure if Ivan was going to hang around to greet people or leave right away. So, I told him just go right up to him and see if he will sign your book, but make sure you shake his hand. I had expected Ivan to leave quickly, but to my surprise, he stayed and talked with people for some time. My son ran up and Ivan signed his book. Ivan made my son's night. I was able to shake his hand, and then later on, as we were getting ready to leave, I saw that he was still staying and talking to people, but now he was posing with others for pictures. I could not pass up the opportunity so my wife, son and I approached and he took 2 pictures with us. That was the "icing on the cake" (American expression for a great treat on top of something good). Then, we departed and have been floating on clouds ever since. My wife and I now hope more than ever that we can go over there and see everything first hand. I want to thank everyone one again for the great messages you sent with your petitions. It was our pleasure to be able to bring them. We felt so lucky and blessed to be there.

God Bless All.

Jay, Marlton, NJ
(Thursday, March 25, 2004 10:03 PM,
jaykeesler@yahoo.com)

Yes you may use the post I sent to the IIPG. I would be honored. I just wanted to say that we have really enjoyed the programs that we have attended of the PFMC, and look forward to more. Keep up the good work!!!

Yours in Christ,

Jay Keesler
(Friday, April 16, 2004 12:06 PM
jaykeesler@yahoo.com)

Dear Keith, Thank you, and your wife, for responding to the call of the Blessed Mother and Our Dear Lord by witnessing and making these programs available for others. Somehow, I hadn't planned, but was inspired to take notes as Ivan spoke. I am so glad that I did, because people have really responded to the account and I, also, would have forgotten most of the wonderful messages! Here it is, and yes, you have my permission to print the account - I hope it touches many souls.

God bless you, Yours in Jesus & Mary,

Nadine Haines

(P.S. I am an attorney, State of New Jersey, but am currently staying home raising my children and volunteering within my children's schools and our Church.)

(Friday, April 16, 2004 12:31 PM
njchaines@comcast.net)

The following account comes from my notes taken after a special Rosary and Mass at Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church in Berlin, NJ on March 23, 2004.

The guest speaker, after Mass, was Ivan Dragicevic, the Medjugorje Visionary who still has daily apparitions from Our Blessed Mother. The service started at 6 PM.

We prayed the joyful mysteries followed by the sorrowful mysteries. Just after the second sorrowful mystery, the scourging at the pillar, Ivan, who had been seated with the crowd, left his seat and knelt down in front of the altar with his back to us. He was dressed in a dark suit and tie, and is now 39 years old. Everyone knelt, and silence filled the Church. It was very beautiful and reverent. It was especially beautiful to see numerous priests kneeling at the altar. It was all very reverent. Ivan later explained that Our Mother appears to him at 6:40 every evening following a Rosary. When he silently returned to his seat, we continued the rosary. Holy Mass followed.

After Mass, Ivan gave a brief history of the beginning of the events with Our Blessed Mother. He said he was a normal young, shy boy of 16 living with his parents and three brothers in a communist country. He and his brothers worked in the fields everyday, when not in school, helping grow and harvest tobacco and grapes. The kids looked forward to a day off so they could play.

Finally, he said, they got a day off for the Feast of Saint John the Baptist. It was June 24, 1981. He slept in until his parents awakened him for Holy Mass. He couldn't wait for Mass to be over so he could go play soccer. He played all afternoon. Then he went to watch a basketball game on television at a friend's home. He said only about 5 or 6 people had televisions in their homes. At half time, they left to go eat at his house intending to return and watch the rest of the game. He never did.

As they were walking back, he met Vicka who was very excited and told him to come quickly and see Our Lady on a nearby hill. He thought Vicka was acting crazy but decided to see what she was talking about. Ivan said when he got close to the hill, he looked up and there was Our Mother holding the baby Jesus in one arm and motioning to him to come closer.

Ivan said he came up to Mother and she put her hand his head (and on the other five children) and said: "My dear children, do not be afraid. I am your Mother, the Queen of Peace!" Ivan said he would look up at Our Lady and then look down and then look up again. He could not believe his eyes how beautiful Our Mother is and how beautiful Heaven looks.

After the Apparition, Ivan said he ran all the way home. Nobody was going to stop him. He locked his door and did not tell anybody what he had seen. He said if he had 16 locks, he would have put them all on his door. He was afraid - what would he do if she showed up in his room? He did not know what to think.

By morning, news spread throughout the village. His parents were waiting outside his door to question him. They were afraid to cause any attention since it was a Communist country and they might be sent to jail or something like that.

By nightfall, a crowd had gathered to see the children meet Our Lady. This has continued every evening for the past 23 years.

Ivan refers to Our Lady as "Mother" and says she always starts by calling them and everybody "My dear Children" because we are all her children regardless of our race, religion or background.

Ivan has asked her through the years, "Why me? Weren't there any better? Will I be able to do all that she asks?" She replied, I do not look for the best. Ivan said she chose him to be an instrument in her hands. He said it is tough to be with Our Lady every day. Being with Our Lady is like being in the light of Heaven. He sometimes finds it hard when he must return to the reality of this world after seeing Our Lady. Ivan said he and his family have been greatly blessed by this experience through the years, but understands that now he has a greater responsibility to serve Our Lord (this reminds me of the Bible passage which says, "to those whom much has been given, much will be required"). He needs to continue the process of conversion and persevere everyday in making the choice to leave evil and sin and grow in the spirit. We must all receive the Holy Spirit and grow in grace, accept Jesus and the Gospel and grow in holiness. What is Our Lady calling us to for 23 years? What does she want? We already have our Church and our sacraments, and the Bible. Ivan says she tells us nothing new. It is all in our Church tradition, but she asks and constantly reminds us, "Are you living your faith?" Maybe, he says, when we begin to live the messages and our faith, she will repeat herself less.

Ivan says the messages have several key themes over the past twenty-three years. Most importantly, she is calling us to 1. Peace 2. Daily conversion 3. Prayer of the heart 4. Penance 5. Fasting 6. Strong faith 7. Love 8. Forgiveness, and 9. Hope. These, Ivan says, are the most important messages. What is prayer of the heart? She teaches us that praying with the heart means to pray with love and out of love with your entire being so that prayer becomes a meeting with Jesus. Then we may rest in Jesus and we will receive answers to many questions we have during our prayer time.

She comes as the Queen of Peace. The world needs peace, families need peace, our youth need peace and our tired Church needs peace. Our Blessed Mother comes to help us and pull us out of this difficult time. She offers us hope through Jesus and His Church and its sacraments.

Our Lady says, dear children, today's greatest crisis is a crisis of faith in God because we are far from God. She tells us there is not enough prayer in families: parents need to pray together and pray with their children. So many children are so far from their parents, and there are so many abortions. Abortion is the quiet war destroying families. Where did it come from? It has been a while. She comes to lead us out of the darkness and into the light of hope and life.

The Blessed Mother says if a person or family does not have peace, peace cannot be in the world. She

asks us to live peace, live love, live the Gospel. Only a return to peace through prayer in the families can spiritually heal our families. The world is spiritually sick. Our Mother comes now to bring us divine medicine for our pain. She wants to heal us, console us, and give us courage. She wants to lift up sinful humanity. She worries about our salvation. She is with us because she wants to bring us peace, but she needs our help because only with our cooperation can she create peace.

Our Lady asks us to decide to follow and obey God. Decide for good and work against evil. She is just like a good mother who keeps repeating and reminding us to be good. She does not tire of it. Every mother repeats her words to teach and lead her children to good.

She comes as Our Mother of Hope. She does not come to bring fear or talk about the second coming or the end of the world. She wants to bring hope to our tired families, and our tired Church. She reminds us, if we are strong, the Church will be strong.

The Blessed Mother asks us to create prayer groups. She asks that priests help lead these groups. But first she wishes that each family become a prayer group. She urges us to pray with our families. She tells us that praying with our families is so important because with prayer we will return to peace, joy, harmony and togetherness in our families.

Blessed Mother invites us to attend Holy Mass. She says Holy Mass should be the center of our lives. She tells Ivan that if he had to decide whether to see her or go to Holy Mass, he should always choose Mass. She wants us, likewise, to meet Jesus in Holy Mass and give ourselves entirely to Him.

She asks us to go to monthly confession. She asks us to attend adoration of the Blessed Sacrament. She asks us to pray the Holy Rosary within our families. She asks us to read the Bible with our families. She asks us to place the Bible in a visible place in our home: not for decoration - but for our use! She asks us to love Jesus - live the Gospel. Jesus and the gospel are spiritual food for our journey.

Dear Children, she says, if you knew how much I love you, you would cry with joy. She always addresses us as her "dear children" because she is a mother to us and we are all important to her.

Our Lady asks us to open the doors of our hearts and pray. She tells us to pray with the heart - not the lips or mechanically. She tells us to go to the school of prayer. It is important for us to decide to pray and to decide for God. Enter into prayer - conversation with God so that we can offer Him everything and so we

can accept everything. We can not do this until we begin to pray.

If you go to the school of prayer you must know that there are no weekends: you go everyday. Because to pray better you need to pray more. It is a personal decision. To pray better is a grace given to those who pray more.

We have many excuses not to pray. We find no time for family prayer. Everything else comes first. Our Lady says the problem is not with time - it is with love. When you love God, you will always find time. Pray, she says. She wishes to wake us up out of our spiritual coma. She wants to strengthen our lives through prayer.

Ivan said that no words are beautiful enough to describe the appearance of Our Lady. He said he always prays the rosary first to prepare him for meeting her, and then she appears at about 6:40 every evening. He said that first a light appears and then Our Lady appears in the light. He said, when she appears, he does not see anything but her. He said she came joyfully, tonight, and greeted each one of us with, "Praise be Jesus, my dear children." He said, she prayed over all of us with extended arms for quite some time. She prayed over the priests present and blessed all of us and the things we brought with us to be blessed. Ivan recommended our needs and infirmities. She prayed especially for our youth and our families. She continued to pray and parted in an illuminated cross saying, "Go in peace, my dear children." On the 25th of March, she will give her message for the entire world as she does on the 25th of every month.

On March 18th, 2004, her message was, "Dear children! Today, also, 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, with a clean heart, you can 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."

Ivan said he sees Our Lady just as he sees and talks to us. He can touch her. He said her beauty is indescribable. He said she had on a gray gown and a white veil. He said she has blue eyes and dark hair and appears floating and wearing a crown of stars.

He once asked her why she was so beautiful. She replied, I am beautiful because I love. If you love, you will be beautiful, too. He said, Let us begin.

Ivan concluding saying he hoped we respond to Our Lady's messages and create a better world together. May tonight be a new beginning for our spiritual renewal. Start in your families with your children.

Decide for peace, and decide for good and decide for God. Only in God is our peace.

Yours in Christ,

Nadine

(Posted by Ana Shawl to the Internet International Prayer Group (IIPG) Monday, April 05, 2004 6:05 AM njchaines@comcast.net)

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-Herzegovina**, and other holy places or shrines worthy of pilgrimage.

Books, pamphlets, and religious articles brought back from pilgrimages were placed on display for others to view and acquire for themselves based on donations. Our 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 book rack where selections are made and donations offered based on value posted or received. Most of the other outlets are operating on a for profit basis. Your gifts from the **PFMC** may be a tax break for you.

The **PFMC** has items from inventory on display at **Epiphany House**. 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 display and 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, Keith, and the PFMC 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 pastors to post our Bulletin Notices. We are told

The PILGRIM, Volume 15, Number 5 – May 2004

that they get so many requests from outside the parish that they simply cannot respond to them all. They respond better 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 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. Full payment is due now.

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, 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>.

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

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 28.

CALENDARS:

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)*.

In *June* the Church celebrates the Solemnities of *HOLY TRINITY (6)*, *CORPUS CHRISTI (13)*, *SACRED HEART (18)* and *BIRTH of SAINT JOHN the BAPTIST (24)* and *SAINTS PETER and PAUL (29)*, the Memorials of *Saints Justin (1)*, *Charles Lwanga and Companions (3)*, *Boniface (5)*, *Barnabas, Apostle (11)*, *Aloysius Gonzaga (21)*, and *Irenaeus (28)*, and the Optional Memorials of *Saints Marcellinus and Peter (2)*, *Ephrem of Syria (9)*, *Paulinus of Nola (22)*, *John Fisher and Thomas More (22)*, *The First Martyrs of the Church of Rome (30)*, and *The Immaculate Heart of Mary (19)*. Church calendar recognizes *Fathers Day (20)*.

AROUND the **PFMC** AREA

Please review the announcements on pages 1 through 6, the enclosed color information sheets with reservation forms for a **Day of Recollection** on *5/22/04*, the *August 1-9, 2004* pilgrimage to **Lourdes** via **Paris**, and the *October 10-22, 2004* pilgrimage to

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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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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!"



Medjugorje via **Rome** as well as the **Bulletin Notices** on pages 22 through 23.

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 DISPLAY / PRESENTATION

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.

Display may be set up without presentation.

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