

St. Joseph Marian Center

The Albany Diocesan Division of
THE BLUE ARMY OF OUR LADY OF FATIMA

Winter Issue, 2005



*"Holy Family of
Nazareth, Pray for Us"*

100 Million Prayers Sent to Heaven on Worldwide "Sanctity of Life Day"

Prayerful people of all faiths joined together on October 2, in a worldwide campaign to pray for the sanctity of life, raising more than 100 million prayers to heaven. In the largest day of organized prayer the world has ever seen, the "Worldwide Fatima Sanctity of Life Day" rallied people from more than 40 countries around the globe to invoke the power of prayer against the evils of war, abortion, terrorism, genocide, child slavery, assisted suicide, euthanasia and the culture of death.

"It was indeed a glorious day," said Michael La Corte, Executive Director of Worldwide Fatima USA. "Hard work coupled with the power of prayer will lead to the ultimate triumph – peace on earth! We know that our heavenly Father listens and responds to our needs. People from around the world raised their hearts to heaven in humility, and asked for help from above to battle to atrocities which plague our world."

In Fatima, Portugal, over 170,000 gathered to pray, while in the U.S. thousands more convened at prayer sites in New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Massachusetts, Vermont, Illinois, Kansas, Colorado,



Oregon, and in other states. The day of prayer attracted people of all ages, including children and teens, and crossed the lines of religious denominations.

The event, which took more than a year to plan, will take place annually, and is set for October 1 in 2006. For more information, visit www.bluearmy.com.

"The world finally has a unified voice for the Sanctity of Life and a unified approach through hard work and prayer," said Mr. LaCorte. "We will continue to storm heaven with our prayers."



EXPRESS TIMES PHOTOS/SUE BEYER

Donations Needed: Please Remember Our Newsletter



If you enjoy the St. Joseph Marian Center's quarterly newsletter, please consider making a donation to help defray the costs of printing and mailing.

St. Joseph Marian Center, Inc., is a non-profit organization which relies on volunteer support and public donations to stay in operation. Our newsletter is one of many services provided to the public free-of-charge in order to spread the

messages of Our Lady of Fatima and bring the world back to God through the intercession of Her Immaculate Heart and through prayer and

reparation. The newsletter is designed to inform readers and inspire them to follow the Blessed Mother's call to holiness.

Please be generous and mail your donation to the St. Joseph Marian Center, Inc., P.O. Box 472, Altamont, New York, 12009. Thank you!

New Catholic Gift Shop Opens its Doors



Our Lady of Grace Gift Shop plans to open its doors in mid-November. The store will be located in Carpenter Plaza, 2568 Western Avenue in Guilderland.

The new proprietor says she is busy filling the shop with Catholic bibles, books, rosaries, statues and many more spiritual and gift items, just in time for Christmas shoppers. Please watch for store's opening and be sure to support this new business.

Our Mission

St. Joseph Marian Center represents the Albany Diocesan Division of The Blue Army, the worldwide apostolate of the faithful, responding to the requests of Our Lady of Fatima. The Mother of Jesus appeared to three shepherd children in Fatima, Portugal in 1917 and asked for prayers, penance and reparation for sins, giving us the means to change the world and to turn the hearts of men and women back to God, particularly through daily recitation of the rosary, Eucharistic adoration and a generous acceptance of the duties of our state in life.

St. Joseph Marian Center promotes the lessons of Fatima and the spread of devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus and the Immaculate Heart of Mary through home enthronements, family consecrations and visitations of the Pilgrim Virgin Statue of Our Lady of Fatima to homes, schools and parishes.

Contact Us

For information, to make a donation, or to request a visit from the Pilgrim Virgin Statue, please contact us:

St. Joseph Marian Center, Inc.

Edward Breitenbach, President
P.O. Box 472, Altamont, New York 12009
Phone & Fax: 518.861.6979

The Blue Army Albany Diocesan Division

Rev. Walter F. Baniak, Spiritual Director
Edward Breitenbach, President
Joseph Bonville, Home Visitation of the
Pilgrim Virgin statue. 518.785.4483.

Newsletter

All articles written by Doreen M.
Truesdell, Editor.

Mother of the Eucharist, Pray for Us

As the Year of the Eucharist, proclaimed by John Paul II, comes to an end, many faithful Catholics will continue to deepen their devotion to the Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity of Christ in the Sacrament of the Altar. They will take for their model Mary, Mother of the Eucharist.

Our Lady conceived the Saviour of the World in her heart before she conceived Him in her womb. Without the stain of sin, Mary spent her young life in constant adoration of the One, True God, and in constant expectation of the Messiah. She lived with an eternal perspective that animated her every moment and every action. No wonder then, when the call from God came, she was unhesitatingly ready to say "Yes." No wonder Our Lord was so pleased to begin His Humanity within her loving womb. Once there, Mary adored Jesus in the Flesh as well as in the Spirit; her blood flowed through His veins and her heart beat in unison with His.

Being the first and most perfect Tabernacle,



Our Lady is the natural mediatrix for our journey ever closer to the Eucharist. *"The Church, which looks to Mary as a model, is also called to imitate her in her relationship with this most holy mystery,"* writes John Paul II in his encyclical letter on the Eucharist, *Ecclesia De Eucharistia*. *"Mary can guide us towards this most holy sacrament because she herself has a profound relationship with it... Experiencing the memorial of Christ's death in the Eucharist also means continually receiving this gift. It means accepting, like John, the one who is given to us anew as our Mother. It also means taking on a commitment to be conformed to*

Christ, putting ourselves in the school of His mother and allowing her to (lead) us..."

As Mary showed the world Emmanuel in the cave at Bethlehem, she continues to show Him incarnated at the Sacrament of the Altar. As we move closer to the Eucharistic Christ, it is Mary who whispers, "Do whatever He tells you." It is then that our true conversion begins.

"Mary, The 21st Century Woman" by Mildred Breitenbach

"...I was scheduled to debate a woman professor at Hudson Valley Community College (on the proposal of the women's Equal Rights Amendment). I wondered how I ever got the courage to agree to such a debate...I was just a simple homemaker and business woman. I picked up the Bible and I opened randomly to a page where, to my surprise, I read, 'Be not afraid what you will say. When the time comes the Holy Spirit will give you the words.'

"On my way to the college, I considered my sweaty hands and the butterflies in my stomach as being a bit like the Agony in the Garden. When I entered the auditorium, I was reminded of the Roman Coliseum where Christians were devoured. Sure enough, in the front row sat angry-looking feminists.

"Then something happened. I felt a calm come over me and I was filled with Mary's courage. I knew I had the truth, so what was there to fear? And when I arose to speak, defending family and motherhood, the Holy Spirit gave me the words. It was one of the most

fantastic experiences of my life! A few days later...I found out that another female professor who heard the debate had changed her mind about supporting the ERA. I knew I could not take the credit for this conversion; it was Mary and the Holy Spirit working through (me)."

The inspiring story above is contained in the book **"Mary, the 21st Century Woman,"** written by Mildred Breitenbach, a co-founder of the St. Joseph Marian Center. In her book, Mildred recalls a life spent striving to imitate Mary and the many ways that her deep relationship with the Blessed Mother changed her life and brought her closer to Christ. The personal account has been published by her husband, Ed, and is now available for purchase. The cost is \$8.50, including shipping. Please send a check or money order to Saint Joseph Marian Center, P.O. Box 472, Altamont, NY, 12009. This book makes an excellent gift for Christmas, birthdays and other events!

Spiritual Energizers & Truths to Ponder



“What is happening in the western world is that we are trying to maintain the fruit, but have forsaken the roots.”
Archbishop Fulton Sheen

“The Church stands and falls with the Liturgy. When the adoration of the divine Trinity declines, when the faith no longer appears in its fullness in the Liturgy of the

Church...then faith will have lost the place where it is expressed and where it dwells. For that reason, the true celebration of the Sacred Liturgy is the center of any renewal of the Church whatever.”

Pope Benedict VI

“Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament is an inner pilgrimage.”

Fr. Joseph Wolf, MFVA

“Ever since the origin of the parents of the human race, every time a human being is conceived, God directly and immediately creates a human soul. The parents provide the body; but only God can create--make out of nothing--the soul which is to animate the body and make it a human person.”

Fr. John Hardon, S.J.

“We must be willing to do the ridiculous, so that Christ can do the miraculous.”

Mother M. Angelica, founder, EWTN

“The most important thing about the (warning) is that everybody in the whole world will see a sign, a grace or a punishment within themselves. They will find themselves all alone in the world...alone with their consciences right before God. They will then see all their sins and the damage their sins have caused.”

Conchita Gonzalez, Garabandal visionary

Where Have I Heard That Before?

Religious Oddities & the English Language

Many of the words and expressions, particularly those that deal with customs and superstitions, come from either our Catholic past or the turbulent times of the Reformation. Once you know their origins, you might want to be careful about using them in your language. Here are some of the more common phrases and their origins:

Touch wood: What has become a superstitious notion was originally an expression referring to a pilgrim touching a relic of the True Cross (the wood or rod) in order to gain a blessing and protection before setting out on a pilgrimage.

To kick the bucket: Refers to the bucket of Holy Water placed at the foot of a deceased person's bed when he is laid out for the funeral wake. Mourners would pay their respects by praying and sprinkling the deceased with Holy Water. The kicking is strictly metaphorical.

Hocus pocus: A blasphemous corruption of the words of consecration “*Hoc est enim corpus meum.*” 16th century Protestants used this insulting jugglers' phrase to discredit belief in the Real Presence.

Jack-in-the-box: What seems like a harmless child's toy is in fact another blasphemy. “Jack” is in reference to Our Lord, and the box is meant to represent the elevation of the Host at Holy Mass.

Short shrift: Comes from the old English word for confession, “Shrive.” The “Short” relates to the short time given to criminals to confess their sins before execution.

Breakfast: Literally means to “Break” a “Fast.” Fasting from midnight onward was required of Catholics in order to receive Holy Communion at morning Mass.

Reprinted from Oratory Magazine, June 2003

“Yes, Virginia, There is a Purgatory”

The Joy of Praying for Sinners & Holy Souls

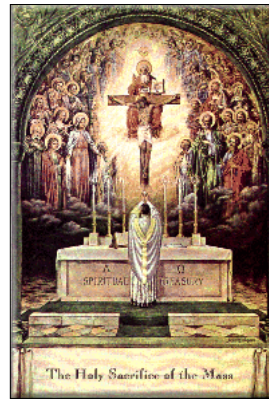
There’s a wonderful story about St. Pio, the much-beloved Capuchin Franciscan of Pietrelcina, Italy. He was a priest known for his wry humor and his ability to verbally strike at people’s hearts with surgical precision. A parishioner once told St. Pio, “I don’t believe in hell.” The friar’s brief, full answer was, “You will when you get there.”

The same could be said for purgatory. There’s a dangerous rumor out there that the Roman Catholic Church has “done away” with its theology on purgatory, a doctrine of faith formulated especially at the Councils of Florence and Trent. As with most evil rumors, it has spread like wildfire during the past few decades, no doubt by Catholics hoping the rules have finally been relaxed. But the truth doesn’t change. It is eternal.

Purgatory is actually the best news the human race has had since God promised Adam and Eve He would send a Saviour to conquer sin. As Father John Corapi, SOLT, often says, “You have to be **perfect** to get into heaven.” That rules out the lion’s share of humans. If we can’t rely on purgatory as a mercy of God, there must be a lot of empty rooms in heaven.

“All who die in God’s grace and friendship, but still imperfectly purified, are indeed assured of their eternal salvation; but after death they undergo purification, so as to achieve the holiness necessary to enter the joy of heaven,” according to the Catechism of the Catholic Church. In the Book of Maccabees we find the Hebrews of the Old Testament also believed in the power of intercessory prayer for the dead, so they might reach the presence of God after being purified. As my young son once told me, “You can’t go before God with a dirty face. So first you take a bath.”

The Holy Souls in Purgatory are among our most faithful allies in our earthly journey. As we pray for them, they pray for us, with an intimate knowledge of how hard it is to stay faithful, to be perfect. They have all of the sympathy and understanding that we could hope for because they once shared in the human condition. At this time of year, when Catholics celebrate the days of All Souls and All Saints, and dedicate the month of November to the



Holy Souls, we are reminded of human mortality--our own and those who have passed before us. Souls in heaven don’t need our prayers; they are in paradise. Those in hell are unreachable. Without purgatory, what are we praying for?

But plenty of people *are* praying, both for sinners and for the souls of the departed. There’s a new book titled, “Get Us Out of Here!,” which details the history of purgatorial knowledge, and there’s an actual organization called “The Mission to Empty Purgatory,” whose primary purpose is to say one prayer of St. Gertrude the Great for every thousand souls who have ever lived--an estimated 106 billion. If you think it sounds silly, consider what Padre Pio said: *“We must empty purgatory! The Holy Souls are eager for prayers...their intercession is powerful. Pray unceasingly!”* Consider also what St. John Vianney, Cure of Ars said: *“Yet how quickly we could empty purgatory if we but really wished to.”*

In the 19th century Pope Pius IX declared the following prayer, recited five times on a Friday, would release five souls from purgatory; 38 souls if recited on Good Friday. It must be prayed with a contrite heart and ideally before a Crucifix:

I adore you, O glorious Cross, which was adorned with the Heart and Body of my Savior Jesus Christ, stained and covered with Blood. I adore you, O Holy Cross, out of love for Him, Jesus, who is my Savior and my God.

Praying for the Holy Souls, and for sinners here on earth, allows us to enter into the mystery of Christ’s salvific work. It raises our dignity; it’s part of what makes us “a priestly people, set apart.” Jesus paid the price of salvation, once for all, but in His great love for us He allows us to share in the ongoing mission of saving His people, as members of the One Body: the Church on earth, in purgatory and in heaven.



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P.O. Box 472, Altamont, New York 12009
Phone & Fax: 518.861.6979
President: Edward Breitenbach
Spiritual Director: Rev. Walter F. Baniak
Writer/Editor: Doreen M. Truesdell

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Words of Wisdom & Truth

A Message from Fr. Walter F. Baniak, Spiritual Director, St. Joseph Marian Center



The Blessed Mother made it clear to the three children of Fatima that they were to pray and offer sacrifices to save the souls of sinners "...for many souls go to hell for not having someone to pray and make sacrifices for them." The children took Mary at Her word and began making acts of sacrifice, first small ones and later substantial ones, such as fasting, and personal, often painful, mortifications. These little children "...trained their minds to discover new ways of suffering for the conversion of sinners," according to authoritative accounts. They

also hid their sacrifices lest others would misunderstand their motives and keep them from their mission to save souls. They would go for days without drinking while alone in the fields watching the sheep. They would give their lunches away to poorer children. They tied rough, thick ropes around their waists, painfully tight, wearing them day and night. They spent hours prostrate on the ground in the gully of Cabeco, where the Angel had first appeared to them, repeating the prayer he had taught them: "My God, I believe, I adore, I hope and I love You. I beg pardon of You for those who do not believe, do not adore, do not hope and do not love You.." Why such extremes? Because the words of Mary were deeply embedded in their minds and hearts. Their one, united longing was to close the gates of hell so that no souls could go there. We are all called to such belief and such faithfulness. We are all called to make sacrifices, as best we can in our stations in life, to bring about the eternal salvation of every soul.