

echoes

FROM LOURDES

A PUBLICATION OF THE LOURDES CENTER ♦ MARIST FATHERS AND BROTHERS

November-December, 2018

Vol. 9 No. 8



*"I was nothing,
and of this nothing
God made something
great."
Bernadette Soubirous*



THE DIRECTOR'S LETTER

FR. GEORGE SZAL, S.M.

Moral Miracles

In 1944, when World War II was coming to an end, the prime minister of England, Winston Churchill, was trying to convince Joseph Stalin that the Allies considered him an equal in the effort to defeat Adolph Hitler's armies. He pointed out that Poland was a Catholic country and that they needed to have relations with the Vatican. Stalin, who had massive armies behind him and thought himself indestructible, arrogantly interrupted Churchill and in a sarcastic tone asked, "The Pope? How many divisions does he have?" Little did he know that without firing a shot, Polish Pope St. John Paul II would visit his homeland in 1979 and start an avalanche of renewed faith that would bring down communism not only in Poland but in the former Soviet Union itself 12 years later. By the power of God, the help of the Blessed Virgin Mary and the moral strength of the Holy Father and many Catholics an evil empire and the power of Satan were overthrown.

In 1858 the faith of a poor peasant girl named Bernadette Soubirous and the faith of the thousands of Catholics who believed in her visions of the Blessed Virgin Mary



Pope St. Paul VI

Canonized in Rome, October 14, 2018

at Lourdes brought millions back to the Church in anti-Catholic France. It is true, as Stalin sarcastically commented, the Catholic Church has no military divisions. However, it does have tremendous moral authority when its members really be-

lieve and practice their faith, that is, when Christ begins to live in us and we start becoming the saints God made us to be.

In our recent history, however, that moral power has been eroded by the sin of a few, very few, Catholic priests and bishops. Actually this was foreseen by Pope Saint Paul VI. In 1968 he published an encyclical entitled "On Human Life" reconfirming the Catholic Church's orthodox teaching regarding the sanctity of human life and calling people to living a virtuous moral life. He predicted that disrespect for the purpose of sex (uniting a couple in love and openness to having children) would lead to many evils. These, he predicted, would include infidelity and moral decline, including a growing disrespect for women, the acceptance of abortion and divorce, and the breakdown of family life among other things. This teaching was not well received by some Catholic bishops, priests and Catholic faithful, and fifty years later we can see that Saint Pope Paul VI was right – in spades! When the moral life of Christians is weakened the smoke of Satan has entered the Church

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Crush your pride,
in all humility, admit your weaknesses and sin
and let God love you.

Moral Miracles

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through a crack and the whole world suffers.

Although Saint Bernadette Soubirous was sick, poor and uneducated and didn't even know her catechism well enough to be able to receive her First Holy Communion until she was 14 years old, she had the most important preparation of all. She was raised in a family that was rich in faith and in a parish that was shepherded by faithful and holy Catholic priests. Her virtue and strong faith were able to remain steadfast in the face of the doubt and even persecu-

tion by the civil and religious authorities that questioned her experience. Eventually it won them over. Of this experience she later said, "I was nothing, and of this nothing God made something great. In Holy Communion I am heart to heart with Jesus. How sublime is my destiny!" St. Bernadette might not have known much about Jesus, but much better, she knew Jesus through a personal and intimate faith.

The message that Our Lady gave St. Bernadette is for every one of us – Catholics and non-Catholics alike: "Penance, penance, penance!"

In other words: "Crush your pride, in all humility, admit your weakness and sin and let God love you. Let His love shine in you, and share this great gift with others." The real miracle is when hearts are changed and the infinite love of Christ is born within us. This is the Good News of Christmas. God enfleshed Himself in our dust, He became man that we might all share life in the family of the Holy Trinity and in the communion of saints forever. Joy to the World!

Fr. George

MARIST GUIDANCE

Honoring Mary

BY FR. FRANCIS A. GRISPINO, S.M.

Honoring Mary falls way short of adoring. But for outsiders “honoring” is a lot like “adoring”. And that is a turnoff for most non-Catholic Christians. On the other hand, addressing Mary as an intercessor stays clear of any semblance of adoration. After all, we are quick to enlist friends and neighbors to entreat divine favor from God for an ailing member of the family. Such intercessors, subordinate to the One Intercessor Jesus Christ, (1 Timothy 2,5) is common enough and easily acceptable – most of the time.

The Onlooker and the Bishop

In this story the onlooker graduates from being comfortable with Mary as intercessor to the realization that Catholics do in fact honor her! It was in a small town that the person in question becomes pleasantly surprised to see the locals processing, beads in hand, praying the rosary. In the vanguard is a truck, a flatbed, bearing the fes-

tooned statue of Mary, and, on a kneeler, the bishop leading the prayers facing the statue. The onlooker remarked to himself: Mary may be an intercessor to Catholics but she is far more – she is honored!

Honored or Worshipped?

Catholics do not adore or worship Mary. Here is where the confusion lies – for the most part. A worshipping service for many Christians consists mainly in: hymn singing, scripture reading, and a sermon. For Catholics, divine worship is following the Lord’s command when at the Last Supper he took bread and said, “This is my body that is for you. Do this in remembrance of me. This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this...in remembrance of me” (1 Corinthians 11, 24-25).

It is the celebration of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass in remembrance of the Lord’s Death and Resurrection, these mighty deeds, for the salvation of humankind. Such is the form of



divine worship to God the Father through the Son in the power of the Holy Spirit. Psalm 111, 1-5 could well reflect the heart of a worshipper at Mass:

*I will praise the Lord
with all my heart
in the assembled congregation
of the upright.
Great are the works of the
Lord,
to be treasured
for all their delights
Majestic and glorious
is your work,
your wise design endures
forever.
You won renown for
your wondrous deeds;
gracious and merciful is the
Lord,
You give food to those who
fear you,
mindful of your
covenant forever.”*

Blood Ties Run Deep

Family ties are strong. This was evident in the backlash reaching fever pitch when immigrant mothers were, for a time, separated from their children in

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Readers Write

Dear Father George,

Two dollars is not much, but if more people read this a brighter world this would be. I am up to my neck in medication costs. I have spent 5 weeks at the medical center here with acute heart failure, acute kidney disease, great loss of blood, etc. I was at death's door, but Our Father needed me here a bit longer. Pray for me, Father. My Cross has been heavy, but for six months I wondered if I would rise, but through the grace of God I have. Pray for me as I pray for your work." BF

[It has been said that if we had the chance to lay down our Cross and pick up someone else's, then we would probably pick up our own again since that is the one with which we are most familiar and know best how to carry. One of the reasons God allows crosses in our lives is to help us with our pride and to throw ourselves on His mercy and love. Another is to give us the opportunity, if we can accept it, to offer our sufferings for the salvation of souls, as St. Paul says in his letter to the Philippians, "Now I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake, and in my flesh I complete what is lacking in Christ's afflictions for the sake of His Body, that is the Church" (Colossians 1:24). It takes a lot of grace and prayer to accept this teaching, and that's we are praying for you and thank you for your prayers for us in our own sufferings. Fr. George]

Honoring Mary

From page 4

early July 2018. Was not the blood-tie between Mary and her son at least the same as any human mother and child? Would not belief in Jesus Christ, true God and true man, be suspect or even faulted if the human Son did not show respect and give honor to his own mother? Would Jesus disobey the biblical commandment: Honor your father and your mother, Exodus 20,4? Jesus Himself set the precedence of rendering honor to His Mother!

Mary and the Bible

There are more passages in the scriptures that support honor paid to Mary. The Angel Gabriel addresses May, "Hail favored one! The Lord is with you" (Luke 1, 28).

These congratulatory words prompted her to be concerned (Luke 1, 29). Elizabeth's words ring with deference, "Most blessed are you Mary among women...and how does this happen to me that the Mother of my Lord should come to me (Luke 1, 42-43)? Even John the Baptist in the womb of his mother Elizabeth chimes in out of reverence to the mother of the God-man with his "joyful leap" (Luke 1, 44).

MARIST GUIDANCE



Honor shown to Mary finds its true source in God as her song of thanksgiving demonstrates (Luke 1, 46-48):

*"My soul proclaims
the greatness of the Lord,
For he has looked upon his
handmaid's lowliness;
behold, from now on will all
ages call me blessed.
The Mighty One has done
great things for me..."*

Mary is intercessor and more! She is deserving of honor! Don't forget to give honor to Mary on the birth of her Son!

A voice awakens Sali: “GET UP AND GO TO LOURDES!”

From Lourdes News: The Diary of Graces, October 2018.

[Born in the Ivory Coast to a Muslim family, Sali never prayed. She could not read or write. Absolutely nothing prepared her for an encounter with Our Lady of Lourdes. She arrived in the Paris region of France in 1977. Barely educated, her four children converted to Catholicism. It was a fall on her way to work that would change her life.]

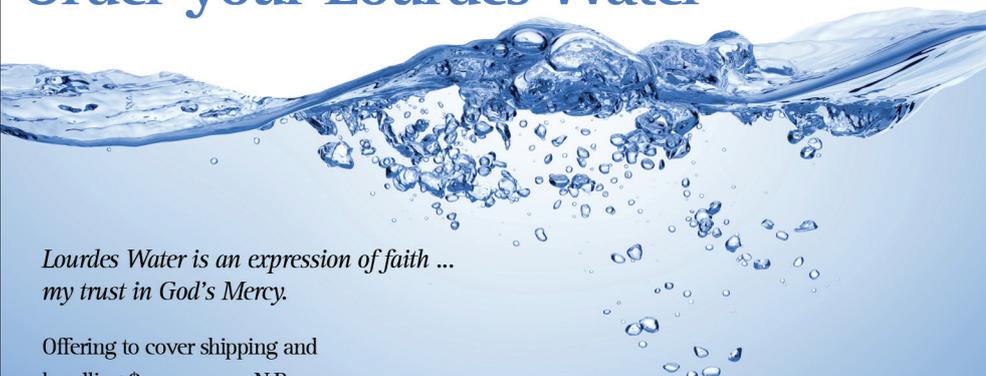
For three months I could not go back to work because I fell while I was out. One morning, at 4 am I was awakened by two taps on my thigh and a voice that said to me, “Get up! Go to Lourdes!” I did not know anything about Lourdes. While he was having a clear-out, my director had sug-

gested I choose a book. I do not know how to read. I chose one because of its cover. I asked my daughter... it was the story of Bernadette Soubirous! there I was faced with this mysterious invitation. One of my friends goes regularly to Lourdes. I asked her to accompany me. Providence gave us money for travel and accommodation. On the train to Lourdes I felt a reassuring presence enveloping me. In front of the Grotto I asked my friend, “What am I doing? I do not know how to pray.” She was annoyed. “Look, you woke me up at 6 am to come to Lourdes. Now that you’re here you can at least find something to say to Mary. Speak in your dialect.

Speak to her as you would to a person!” Words came to me and I prayed, “I do not know who brought me here. I put myself in your hands.” Then we went to the Baths. I was trembling. The hospitaliers prayed for me. As soon as I entered the water I felt released from my burdens. When I returned to the Paris region I started work again. I returned to Lourdes in the following years to give thanks. I have been there since my retirement. I was baptized surrounded by my whole family. I am involved in the Mouvement Marial Sacerdotal (The Marian Movement of Priests). I learned to read with “The Diary of Graces”. Thank you, Lourdes! Sali (France)

(We can learn two things from this witness: 1. Mary loves everyone of us, no matter our background and 2. Pray from where you are at! Fr. George)

Order your Lourdes Water



Lourdes Water is an expression of faith ... my trust in God's Mercy.

Offering to cover shipping and handling \$ _____ N.B.
 A donation of \$3.00 per bottle is suggested to cover our expenses.
 When the offering permits, we use Priority Mail. We will accept orders of 1-3-5-6 and 10 bottles. For multiples thereof and for unusual numbers requested, we reserve the right to send what is both just and feasible.

Please allow 3-6 weeks for delivery

Please send _____ bottles of water from the Shrine at Lourdes

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____

Requested by: _____

Does this person receive this newsletter? Yes No
 If not, should we send Echoes from Lourdes to them?
 Yes No

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Address _____

City _____

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Name _____

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USE SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

E-mail to: ourlady@lourdescenter.org

Postal mail to:
 LOURDES CENTER
 P.O. Box 15575
 698 Beacon Street
 Boston, MA 02215-2594

Our Deceased

We have been notified that the following friends of the Lourdes Center have passed away. Please join us in remembering them in your prayers.

MARY WESCHLER, PA
 HELEN DIKOVITSKY, NY
 STELLA DANIELE, NJ
 EDWARD LEUTHOLD, OH
 JOSEPH A. SCHENA, NH
 JOSEPH DYNAN, MA
 COLEEN STOLZE, AR
 PHILOMENA BROWN, MA
 PAT GERKE, IN
 ROBERT V. BASHAW, NY
 VIRGINIA ROGERS, OR
 ALAN BLACKWELL, FL
 ELAINE MOORE, GA
 NORA MORLEY, MA
 TARYN CAMPO, LA
 DOLORES SCHLAEFER, WI
 MARY BELMONTE, MA

JOHN DOCKERY, PA
 ELSIE STANZIOLA, NJ
 ROBERT. G. BELLAND, MN
 MADELINE DONAHUE, OH
 RUTH I. PADGETTE, OR
 HELEN J. MCLAREN, MI
 DOLORES CAMPBELL, PA
 SR. MARGARET KARAM, MI
 MILDRED L. CUBBAGE, OK
 VIRGINIA SAYLER, FL
 ROBERT SAYLER, FL
 JAMES A. BUCKLEY, III, MA
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 JANE MICUCCI RAINIS, NJ
 JACK DRISCOLL, MA
 NOELE RIZKALLAH, MA
 CONSTANCE RAMPINO, NY
 MARIE PIPP, PA
 BARBARA SANTARSIERO, PA
 HENRY BAZZOLI, NV
 EWEL MECHE, LA

IRENE VENABLE, LA
 SR. EVANGELITA SPECHTOLD, KY
 NORMA E. SMITH, MA
 MARY VETSCH, MN
 RICKEY CORBY, NY
 JOSEPH J. STALLONE, AZ
 BEV ANN SMITS, WI
 MARY A. WESCHLER, PA
 SOPHIE LISECKI, NJ

Our Gift Center



The following gift items are available for order from the Marist Lourdes Center in Boston.

- OUR LADY OF LOURDES MEDAL.....\$5.00
IN GROTTTO
- BROWN SCAPULAR.....\$2.00
- GREEN SCAPULAR.....\$2.00
- ST. BERNADETTE PINS.....\$3.50
- OUR LADY OF LOURDES PINS.....\$3.50
- BOOKLET: "LOURDES AND OUR LADY".....\$4.00
BY FR. JOHN LYNCH, S.M.

*Please send your order with payment to:
 P.O. Box 15575, 698 Beacon Street, Boston, MA 02215-2594*

Purgatorials for the Deceased

Name of Deceased _____

Please send Purgatorial to:

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____

Requested by: _____

Suggested offering: \$10.00 perpetual

Our Lady's Purgatorial Society

Each year, your enrolled deceased and loved ones are remembered during the 365 daily Masses celebrated by the Marist Fathers. An attractive certificate framed in a blue folder with a colorful picture of Our Lady is sent to the donor or recipient.

Please mail responses to: Marist Fathers, 698 Beacon St.
 P.O. Box 15575, Boston, MA 02215-0010

Affiliations

*Remembrance in 50 Masses Yearly
 and at our Weekly Perpetual Novena*

Requested by: _____

Phone Number: _____

Offering: 1 year \$2.00
 3 years, \$5.00, Lifetime, \$10.00

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____ Zip _____

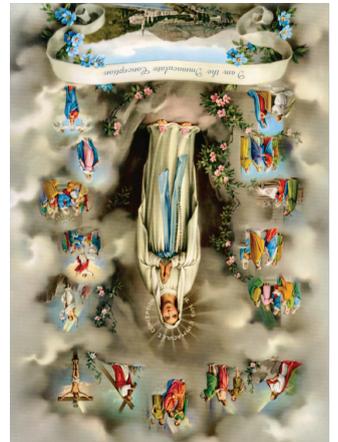
On Friday, November 9 and Friday, November 23
and Friday, December 14 and Friday, December 28,
The Marist Fathers and Brothers of the Lourdes Center
will be praying for you.

*You can count on it, on the second and the fourth Friday of every month, we hold a special prayer day
when we say special prayers and offer Mass at our chapel for our extended Lourdes family
... including you.*

Please send us your intentions: _____

Please direct your intentions, and any offering you'd like to send, to: Marist Fathers,
698 Beacon Street, P.O. Box 15575, Boston, MA 02215-0010

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