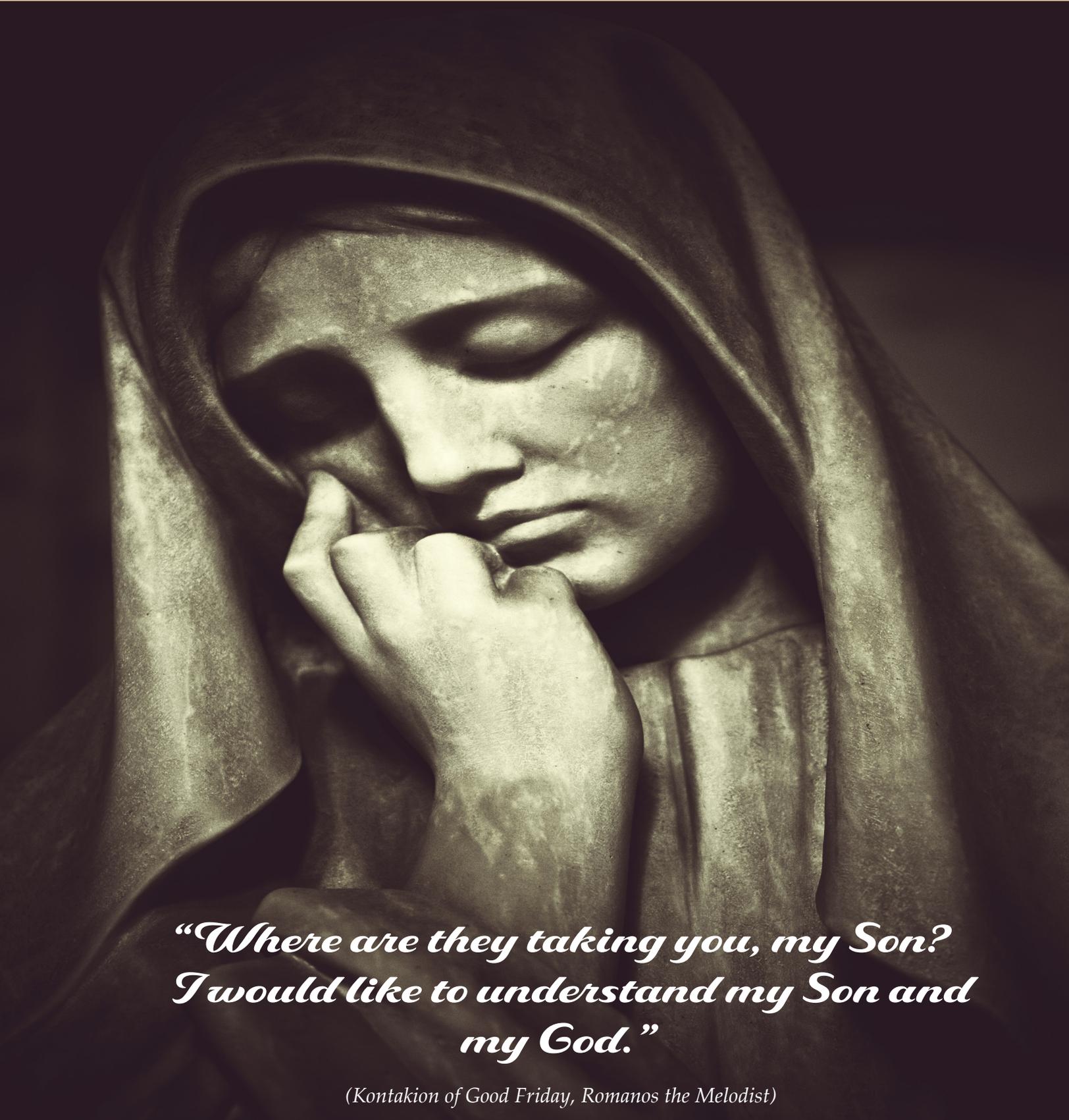


echoes

FROM LOURDES

March-April, 2020
Vol. 11 No. 4

A PUBLICATION OF THE LOURDES CENTER ♦ MARIST FATHERS AND BROTHERS



*“Where are they taking you, my Son?
I would like to understand my Son and
my God.”*

(Kontakion of Good Friday, Romanos the Melodist)



FR. GEORGE SZAL, S.M.

THE DIRECTOR'S LETTER

Kisses from the Cross

“For God so loved the world that He gave His Only Begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him might not perish, but might have Eternal Life.” (John 3:16)

Why did Jesus die? The common explanation for this is called “penal substitutionary atonement.” According to this theology of our redemption, God loves us and wants us to live with Him forever in heaven, but since the sin of Adam and Eve and the sins of all of their descendants (that’s us) is a rejection of God’s plan for us, infinite penance and satisfaction have to be made. God is an infinite person and even if we did billions of good works or suffered and died a million times for our sins, we could never make up for a single sin against the honor and glory of God. Someone who is Himself infinite must make reparation. God Himself, Jesus Christ, is the only One who makes the perfect sacrifice that will appease the wrath of our Infinite God. Whew!

The problem with this explanation of the redemption is that it makes God into a monster, a judge who demands the blood of his Son in reparation for even the smallest of our sins. Understandably, it was

developed by St. Anselm of Canterbury (d. 1109) during the age of feudalism when the “honor” of the lords and ladies of the land reigned supreme. Offenses against the honor of the royalty were considered treason and were punished by torture and death! In those days Catholics could understand this explanation for how Jesus’ blood satisfies for our sins.

This perspective on the Cross is true in the sense that God has to reach out to us. There is no way that we creatures of dust can earn God’s love or make satisfaction for our sinful insult to the immensity of it. However, penal substitutionary atonement seems to contradict the story of Jesus’ merciful forgiveness of the woman caught in adultery without her even repenting (John 8:1-11), forgiving the sins of a paralyzed man and healing him because of the faith of his friends (Mark 2:3-12), or Jesus’ parable of the king who forgave the immense debt of his cheating business manager without any reparation on the thief’s part, except that he behave the same towards others who were in debt to him (Matt. 18:21-35).

A retelling of the parable of the Prodigal Son once helped me to put together the need for God’s action to restore our relationship with Him and His immense mercy (Luke 15:11-32). Suppose that after the younger son insults his Father by demanding his share of the inheritance before his Father dies, the Father turns to the older brother and says: “Please, go after your little brother and beg him to come back. His false friends only



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Director's Letter

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want to use him and his money for their own selfish pleasure until he is destitute and dying. Those wicked ones will persecute you and may even kill you for coming between them and your brother. Will you do it for love of me and your brother?" Suppose then, the older brother says "Of course I do, Father, even if it means great suffering for me, and even death." So, the older brother goes to plead with his brother to return, and as the Father foretold, he is persecuted and killed." Filled with remorse and compunction, the younger brother runs home to make amends for his brother's murder, which he can never do. Once home, not only does he find a feast prepared for him, but his Father and his brother risen from the dead, welcoming him with open arms and a loving kiss!!! The cross and the Eucharist are God's reaching out to us and begging us to come home...and inviting us to bring others with us.

What has this got to do with Lourdes? In her first apparition on February 11, 1858, the Blessed Virgin Mary appeared in her glory and St. Bernadette in her rags. The only thing they had in common was the rosary. Mary made the sign of the Cross on herself with a crucifix that was about 4 inches long while Bernadette could not even lift her arms. It was as if the Blessed Virgin Mary was disappearing behind Jesus and putting

Him between Bernadette and herself. In this gesture she was also saying who she was, that is, the first and most perfect fruit of the cross. In 17 more catecheses in the Grotto, Mary would teach Bernadette how to be a disciple of Christ like herself.

Making the sign of the Cross is the most beautiful thing we can do. It recalls the violence and death in which we are all involved, but it also announces the tremendous love of God revealed in the life and death of Jesus Christ who laid down His life for us, not to condemn us, but to give us Eternal Life. For those of us who might be afraid of God, Jesus sends

His Mother. She invites us to experience God's tremendous love revealed for us in the Cross, humbly repent of our rebellious pride ("penance, penance, penance" she told St. Bernadette,) and participate in God's saving action by works of mercy and justice. May this Lenten season be a "kick-start" to help us enter more deeply into our faith through deeper prayer, fasting and acts of charity. May God give you a blessed Lent.

Fr. George Szal, S.M.

Director



Readers Write

Thank you for the article, “Out of the Darkness: Living a Holy Life in Unholy Times,” (Nov/Dec 2019). It is true, we are living a time when people are pagans again. I just had surgery two weeks ago to remove skin cancer from a lower eyelid. It came out in one piece, no need for skin grafting. The stitches come out tomorrow. I drank Lourdes Water before and after the surgery. Reconstruction has gone just fine. Enclosed is a donation towards the window replacements at this time. Thanks to Our Lady of Lourdes! Please pray for my family. **KM**

Dear Fr. Szal,

I am a priest of the Anglican Diocese of the Holy Cross and a hospice chaplain. I have been meaning to write you since reading your article, “We’ve Been Here Before” in the July/August Echoes. Thank you for it. You did a fine job in relatively few words of stating the problem and the solution. I join you in praying that the Holy Spirit will come upon us to bring renewal and revival. I live in the city of the Holy Faith (Santa Fe, ed.) where we see paganism and false religions abounding. Fortunately there are many faithful Catholics in Northern New Mexico, but their ranks are aging. So many of my hospice patients love having the Lourdes Water. Thank you for making it available. **HM**

I gave generously to the Boston Catholic TV Marathon. It’s only fair. They provide me with daily Mass, the Rosary and the Divine Mercy Chaplet. Luckily

I was able to write them a check for \$1,000.00. Just the other day I scored a thousand dollars on a scratch ticket. I was able to glean a few more bucks on that which, happily, makes it possible for me to help you with your hefty bills with a check in the amount of a thousand dollars. I hope the enclosed check, added to others that you may receive from equally grateful members of the Lourdes Center will put a big dent in your debts. **IF**

We have had many words of encouragement from you in the “Echoes of Lourdes”. Even now God is working His miracle through my sick brother who has been away from the sacraments for many years. Yesterday he completely broke down and openly confessed his negligence towards God and asked for prayers and help. He has T.B. so please pray for him and have his name taken on the Pilgrimage for the Sick to Lourdes. **NJ**

I enjoy reading your “Echoes of Lourdes”. When I become disgusted with everything I start to read the paper, then I begin to pray for other people who are worse off than I. I pray that Our Lord and the Blessed Mother and St. Joseph give us the health we need each day to carry on. **IA**

Enclosed is my offering in Thanksgiving to Our Lady of Lourdes in answer to our prayers that the sight of my left eye would be all right. It has been

a year since I had it operated on for cataract. I have been using Lourdes water and know that it has helped. **IL**

One day when I walked into my blind son’s room at the hospital I found a bottle of Lourdes Water on his table. It was given to him by a visitor. To my surprise I read the label and discovered that it was obtained in the United States. Will you please inform me of how I may obtain a few bottles for my family and friends? **NY**

Please send me some Lourdes Water. I am glad to report that Our Lady of Lourdes has helped me to recover from a badly fractured elbow. It had to be operated on and no one can understand how quickly it mended. As you see, I can even write a letter! **CA**

(Since 1950 Lourdes Water is sent to us directly from the Sanctuary of Lourdes and is bottled and sent free of charge, except for postage and handling, to anyone who requests it. The Lourdes Center is supported solely by Divine Providence, the prayers of the Blessed Virgin Mary and the generosity of our friends and donors. We are grateful to the Lord and to them. If you have received any benefit from the use of Lourdes Water, please write to us. It will be an encouragement to us and to those who put their faith in God and his Holy Mother.)

A Lenten Reflection

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

There are three categories of prayers of petition. Those who:

1. Do not ask and receive.
2. Ask and receive.
3. Ask and receive what it takes to cope. With which one do you most identify?

1. Do Not Ask and Receive

I am sure you will find this one very much to your liking. You only have to read this to agree:

“It is vain for you to rise early and put off your rest at night, To eat bread earned by hard toil. All this God give to his beloved in sleep.” (Psalm 127, 2).

It is very appealing to be one of God’s favorites “beloved in

sleep” who does not have to labor, no heavy lifting, yet there is an income somehow! All of us, at some time or other, have been favored and received from the largess of our all loving God. St. Paul gives us a reminder, “What have you that you have not received” (1 Cor. 4,7).

REFLECTION: Now is the time to spend a few minutes to think of your gifts, talents and blessings, giving God praise and thanks. End in silence while placing yourself in God’s presence.

2. Those Who Ask and Receive

You must have heard the Lord speaking with sweeping words and a broad brush,

“...ask and you shall receive; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you” (Luke 11,9).

REFLECTION: From your personal experience think how the above rings true for you or how you must go on trusting in the Lord’s love for you. End in silence in His presence.

3. Those Who Ask and Receive What it Takes to Cope

The model of this category is Jesus himself. He prayed in the Garden of Gethsemane just prior to his arrest and subsequent torturous ordeal ending in crucifixion. His prayer, “Abba, Father, all things are possible to you. Take

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A Lenten Reflection

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this cup away from me but not what I will but what you will” (Mark 14, 36). This prayer was repeated three times indicating the intensity of the anguish needing to be relieved. A close reading tells us that Jesus was strengthened to shoulder what was not to escape him. His readiness to do his Father’s will is caught in the words addressed to his slumbering apostles, “Get up, let us go. See, my betrayer is at hand” (Mark 14, 42).

Jesus Does What He asks of us

The answer to Jesus’ prayer took the form of grace of strength proportionate to confront the ordeal that brought about the salvation of the world. Jesus does not ask us to do something that he would not do himself. We have such words

that speak with unmitigated clarity, “Whoever does not carry his own cross daily and come after me cannot be my disciple” (Luke, 14, 25).

St. Paul, Cross Bearer

St. Paul serves as an example of imitating Jesus in bearing his cross with the strength provided by God that is uniquely commensurate with the weight of his cross. You perhaps recall the story. Paul complains to the Lord about a certain problem. We are not informed of the particulars but he calls it, “The thorn of Satan.” He prays three times that he be relieved of his burden. Jesus replies, “My grace is sufficient for you, for power is made perfect in weakness” (2 Cor. 12, 8-9).

The cross is no stranger to Jesus. He lived in its shadow during his

entire life. Is it no wonder that Jesus exhorts us Christians, “Whoever does not carry his own cross daily and come after me cannot be my disciple” (Luke 14, 25). St. Paul learned this lesson well because we read these words spoken later in his life, “I can do all things in him who strengthens me” (Philippians 4, 13). The lesson taught here is evident: Jesus does not expect us to always be problem free. In his wisdom, he has his reasons. And we can be sure that our spiritual good is at stake.

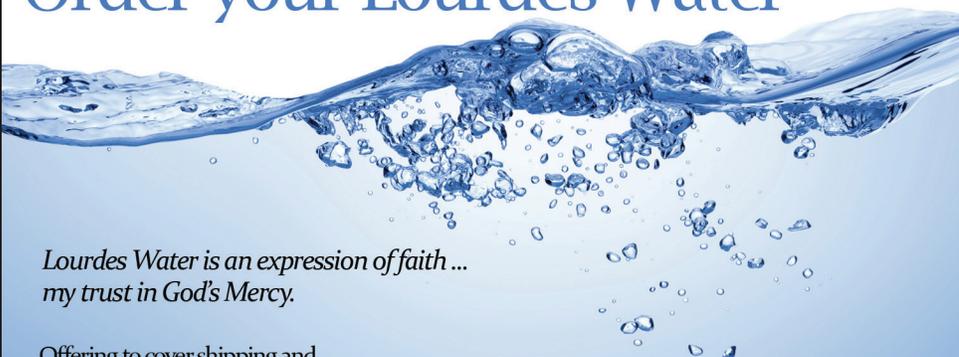
REFLECTION: Choose the words you find most attractive:

- “Not my will but thine be done.”
- “My grace is sufficient for you.”
- “I can do all things in him who strengthens me.”

Repeat slowly for some time. End in silence in God’s presence.

May your Lent be fruitful.

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 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

Please allow 3-6 weeks for delivery

A Gift from You...

Give someone you care about a FREE SUBSCRIPTION to Echoes from Lourdes!

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____ Zip _____

Name _____

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City _____

State _____ Zip _____

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.

LUCILLE J. PANALSEK, WY
 JERRY BRENNEN, NH
 MARGARET L. GORSKI, IL
 MARY KOCH
 AL DERANGER, TX
 JOANNE VRANCHES, OH
 ROBERT M. MCCORMACK, MA
 LUCILLE SZMANDA, WI
 ARLENE HOFFMAN, OH
 RICHARD DISILVESTRO, TX
 DIANE GIALLORETO, PA
 DELORES OHMANN, AZ
 KAREN ROSE, LA
 JANE BROUSSARD, LA

LETTY MERCADER, CANADA
 JOANNE DONNELLY
 FLORENCE VIOLA, PA
 JUNE CHARTIER, ME
 JOHN SONNIER, TX
 LEE MINETZ, IL
 MARGE RIZZO, OH
 ESTHER NOSKE, MN
 LOUIS NOSKE, MN
 CATHERINE MILLER, CA
 JO ANNE LANDERS, IL
 JEROME KORENEK, TX
 MARY A. MUNDY, FL
 EDWARD PINTO, NV
 ROBERT. T. REUTLINGER, NY
 PATSY JANSSEN, PA
 ROGER PITTS, IA
 SR. MARIE NEFF, B.V.M., IA
 ROBERT MCCABE, PA
 SR. CATHERINE COINER, OK
 PETER VANDERCOOK, WI
 MARIA BETTENCOURT, MA

GEORGE AND ROSE FASS, AZ
 MARIE L. STOY, PA
 PHILIP T. CROTTY, MA
 PETER ARAMBULA, TX
 ROSE MARIE GUNTER, MO
 ERNEST TRONCELLITI, PA
 CARMEL FERNICOLA, PA
 EDNA DRASBA, NC
 ANITA RAMIREZ, MN
 JOHN L. AMES, M.D., FL

Our Gift Center



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

- 2020 Wall Calendar (Limited Supply).... \$10.00
- OUR LADY OF LOURDES MEDAL.....\$5.00
IN GROTTTO
- BROWN SCAPULAR.....\$2.00
- GREEN SCAPULAR.....\$2.00
- 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: \$20.00 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, March 13 and Friday, March 27
and Friday, April 10 and Friday, April 24,
The Marist Fathers and Brothers of the Lourdes Center
will be praying for you.

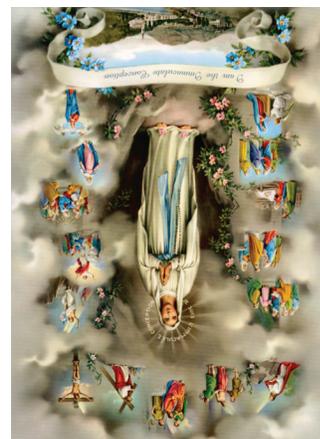
*You can count on it, on the second and the fourth Friday of every month, we hold a special prayer day
when we say special prayers and offer Mass at our chapel for our extended Lourdes family
... including you.*

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

Published bi-monthly to promote devotion
to Our Lady and interest in her shrine at
Lourdes.
Director: Rev. George Szal, S.M.
Printed with Ecclesiastical Approval

Lourdes Echoes



**Lourdes Center
Marist Fathers
Lourdes Bureau
P.O. Box 15575
698 Beacon Street
Boston, MA 02215-2594
www.lourdescenter.org
OurLady@LourdesCenter.org**

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