



Mother of God

Mediatrice of All Grace

Monthly Bulletin Vol.3 2nd February 2019 No 2.



CONTENTS

Editorial.....	1
The Immaculate Conception and the age of Mary.....	3
The Mary of Scripture and the Mary of Devotions.....	5
Our union with the souls in purgatory is anchored in the Mercy of Christ.....	7
Cultivating a sense of the sacred.....	10
Seek the Lord with all your heart.....	13

JOYFUL FAMILIES HAVE JOY-FILLED HOMES - By Annabelle Mendonca , www.thebatimmessage.com

One of the most important missions a family has is to simply live together joyfully as a family – resisting the lure of activities or programs designed for good but resulting in pulling family members in different directions. The mission of a family is to create bonds that stretch enough to allow individual members to explore and become who they are meant to be, but are also strong enough to pull them back to that place called home where they will be valued, appreciated, and encouraged.

What is a family? It can take many forms, of course, but a family is primarily a group of individuals who are related to one another by marriage, birth, or adoption. While a balanced family provides a place for us to love and grow, a family that is out of balance may reveal individuals with a sense of selfishness and lack of respect for other family members. Neglect can occur when someone in the family, especially a parent, begins living as if the family does not matter. To the other extreme, the sin of idolatry is present when one makes the family his or her entire identity.

“Families these days tend to be child-centered -- everything revolves around the children,” writes John MacArthur. “The child’s activities, their relationships and their interests tend to set the family agenda. But God’s design for family is that it be first Christ-centered, and then marriage-centered, with the husband-wife relationship taking priority over all other relationships in the home and the parents, not the children, determining the family agenda.”

“Every home in the world is exposed to a thousand dangers. Enemies seek to destroy it, to desecrate its holy beauty and to carry away its sacred treasures. The very institution itself is assailed by the apostles of infidelity and licentiousness. Countless social influences tend to disintegrate the home, to rob it of its sanctity, to break down its sacred barriers and to sully its purity. Nothing but the cross of Christ will save it. Those who are setting up a home, their hearts full of precious hopes of happiness and blessing, should consecrate it at once by erecting the altar of God in the midst of it.” – J. R. Miller. The altar he suggests is not only a physical one of course, but also the attitude and willingness of our hearts to make God, His Word, His commandments, His love, center of our home life.

How do we do this? One way is to consciously model to our children the spiritual disciplines that draw us closer to Jesus Christ. Disciplines like: prayer/worship, service, study, meditation/solitude, even fasting – if not from food, then from T.V. or other activities that prevent God from being the family altar. Children may first be aware of their parents observing a spiritual discipline when they see their parents having a “quiet time”.

When children see parents making time for God and for one another, and making sacrifices for the good of the family, they realize that their parents really believe what they teach about values and what matters most in life. Sometimes the sacrifice takes the form of turning down a higher paying job, a position with more prestige, or a promotion requiring more time away from home -- self-worth is not determined by how much money you make or how well known you are.

The Holy Family is a great model for all families to follow. Jesus, Mary and Joseph sanctified family life. Jesus the eternal Word, who took flesh and dwelt in a human family, humbly submitted to his parents, Mary and Joseph. He must have helped Joseph in his carpentry work, besides spending time in silence, meditating and contemplating about His future ministry, leading a hidden life up to the age of 30. Mary the sinless virgin must have been a great mother and wife, doing her ordinary household chores, after accepting the Word who was very much present with her. What a privilege it must have been for her to have Jesus in her family. Joseph, descendant of the royal line of David, was a caring and humble husband providing for the family through his carpentry work, which may have not been that easy. He also protected his foster son Jesus and wife Mary from all harm, especially from Herod’s fury.

Contd on Pg.12

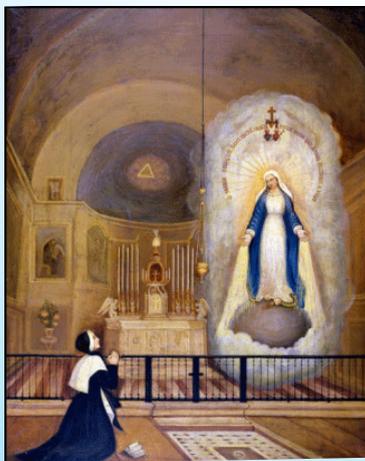
The Immaculate Conception and the age of Mary

By Donal Anthony Foley

The Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception on December 8 commemorates and celebrates the Catholic Tradition that the Blessed Virgin Mary was completely preserved from the stain of original sin, and was, therefore, immaculately conceived in the womb of her mother, St. Anne. Pope Pius IX proclaimed this as a dogma in 1854. The text of the dogmatic definition, *Ineffabilis Deus*, states that “the most Blessed Virgin Mary, in the first instance of her conception, by a singular grace and privilege granted by Almighty God, in view of the merits of Jesus Christ, the Savior of the human race, was preserved free from all stain of original sin.”

This belief in the Church is of great antiquity, but we can also see how it is a theme that developed in some of the major Marian apparitions leading up to Fatima in 1917.

When Our Lady appeared to St. Juan Diego in Mexico in 1531, the first apparition actually took place on Saturday, Dec. 9, 1531, as he was journeying to celebrate the feast of the Immaculate Conception, which at that time was held on that date, not on December 8. The Blessed Virgin appeared at Tepeyac Hill as the woman clothed with the sun and standing on the moon, one of the traditional iconographic representations of the Immaculate Conception. Hence, at Guadalupe, she was proclaiming in symbolic form the truth about her holy conception.



Three centuries later, in November 1830, Our Lady appeared to St. Catherine Labouré at the Rue du Bac convent in Paris, giving her the design of the Immaculate Conception medal, which became known as the “Miraculous Medal” because of its wonder-working properties. During the third apparition to St. Catherine, she saw the Blessed Virgin stretch out her arms, as an oval frame formed around her with golden lettering that read: O Mary, conceived without sin, pray for us who have recourse to thee. Mary then told her, “Have a medal struck after this model. All who wear it will receive great graces; they should wear it around the neck. Graces will

abound for persons who wear it with confidence.”

The vision then revolved and St. Catherine saw a large “M”

surmounted by a bar and cross with two hearts beneath it, one crowned with thorns, the other pierced with a sword, all encircled by 12 stars. This indicated the design for the reverse of the medal.

The apparitions to St. Catherine Labouré, the rapid spread of the Miraculous Medal and the growth of Marian devotion in the first half of the 19th century convinced Pope Pius IX that the time had come to dogmatically proclaim the Blessed Virgin's Immaculate Conception. In February 1849, he asked the Catholic bishops of the world for their views on this, which was already a solidly held belief within the Church. More than 90 percent of the 603 bishops who responded were in favor of the dogma, which the pope then declared on December 8, 1854. This began a century of ever-increasing devotion to Mary within the Church, culminating in Pope Pius XII's dogmatic declaration in 1950 of the Assumption of Mary into heaven.

*O Mary,
conceived without
sin, pray for us who
have recourse to thee*

St. Bernadette and the 'Immaculate Conception'.

Just four years after the proclamation made by Pius IX in 1854, Our Lady began to appear to St. Bernadette at Lourdes, France, from Feb. 11, 1858. On March 25, the feast of the Annunciation, after Bernadette had asked her several times to reveal her name, the Blessed Virgin extended her arms to assume the position shown on the Miraculous Medal before rejoining them at the breast. She looked up to heaven and said in the local patois, "Que soy era Immaculada Concepciou," or, "I am the Immaculate Conception."

Thus at Lourdes she revealed her inner essence, as it were, that she was immaculately conceived.

These various apparitions of Our Lady prepare the foundation for what she said and did at Fatima in 1917, when she appeared to the little shepherds and placed a focus on her Immaculate Heart — which was ultimately immaculate because of her Immaculate Conception. Our Lady told them that to save souls from hell, God wished to establish in the world devotion to her Immaculate Heart. She later gave details of this devotion to Sister Lucia, specifically the request for reparation to her Immaculate Heart in the First Saturday devotion. It is significant that Our Lord



Contd on Pg. 11

THE MARY OF SCRIPTURE AND THE MARY OF DEVOTIONS

-By Fr. Ron Rolheiser, OMI

There's an axiom that says: Roman Catholics tend to adore Mary while Protestants and Evangelicals tend to ignore Mary. Neither is ideal.

Mary, the Mother of Jesus, has, in effect, two histories within Christian tradition. We have the Mary of Scripture and we have the Mary of Devotions, and both offer something special for our Christian journey.

The Mary of Devotions is the more well-known, though mostly within Roman Catholic circles. This is the Mary invoked in the rosary, the Mary of popular shrines, the Sorrowful Mother of our litanies, the Mother with the soft heart through whom we can get the ear of God, the Mary of purity and chastity, the Mother who understands human suffering, the Mother who can soften the hearts of murderers, and the Mother we can always turn to.

And this Mary is pre-eminently the Mother of the poor. Karl Rahner once pointed out that when you look at all the apparitions of Mary that have been officially approved by the church you will notice that she has always appeared to a poor person – a child, an illiterate peasant, a group of children, someone without social standing. She's never appeared to a theologian in his study, to a pope, or to a millionaire banker. She's always been the person to whom the poor look. Marian devotion is a mysticism of the poor.

We see this, for example, very powerfully in the effect that Our Lady of Guadalupe has had on much of Latin America. In all of the Americas, most of the indigenous peoples are now Christian. However, in North America, while most of the indigenous peoples are Christian, Christianity itself is not seen as a native religion, but rather as a religion brought to the native peoples from elsewhere. In Latin America, in every place where Our Lady of Guadalupe is popular, Christianity is seen to be a native religion.



But piety and devotions also run the risk of theological sloppiness and unhealthy sentimentality. That's the case too with the Mary of Devotions. We've tended to elevate Mary to divine status (which is simply wrong) and we have far too often encrusted her in so much piety that she, the

Mary of Devotions, cannot possibly be the same person who wrote the Magnificat. The Mary of Devotions is often so enshrined in piety, oversimplicity, and asexuality that she needs to be protected from human complexity. Still, the Mary of Devotions offers us a lot vis-à-vis our spiritual journey. Much more ignored is the Mary of Scripture and the role the various Gospels assign to her.

In the Synoptic Gospels, Mary is presented as a model of discipleship. More simply, she's shown to us as the one person who gets it right from the beginning. But that isn't immediately evident. On the surface, the opposite sometimes seems to be the case. For example, on a couple of occasions as Jesus is speaking to a crowd he is interrupted and told that his mother and his family are outside wanting to speak to him. His response: "Who are my mother and who are my brothers and sisters? It's those who hear the word of God and keep it." In saying this, Jesus isn't distancing his mother from himself and his message, the opposite. Before this incident is recorded in the Gospels, the evangelists have been very careful to point out that Mary was the first person to hear the word of God and keep it. What happens here is that Jesus singles out his mother first of all for her faith, not for her biology. In the Synoptic Gospels, Mary is the paradigm for discipleship. She's the first to hear the word of God and keep it.

John's Gospel gives her a different role. Here she's not the paradigm of discipleship (a role John gives to the Beloved disciple and to Mary Magdala) but is presented as Eve, the mother of humanity, and the mother of each of us. Interestingly, John never gives us Mary's name, in his Gospel she is always referred to as "the Mother of Jesus". And in this role she does two things:

First, she gives voice to human finitude, as she does at the wedding feast of Cana when she tells her son (who is always divine in John's Gospel) that "they have no wine". In John's Gospel, this is not just a conversation between Mary and Jesus; but also a conversation between the Mother of Humanity and God. Secondly, as Eve, as universal mother, and as our mother, she stands in helplessness under human pain and within human pain when she stands under the cross. In this, she shows herself as universal mother but also as an example of how injustice must be handled, namely, by standing within it in a way that does not replicate its hatred and violence so as to give it back in kind.

Mary offers us a wonderful example, not to be adored or ignored.

*Used with permission of the author; Oblate Father Ron Rolheiser. Currently, Father Rolheiser is serving as President of the Oblate School of Theology in San Antonio Texas. He can be contacted through his website, www.ronrolheiser.com
Follow on Facebook www.facebook.com/ronrolheiser.*

Our union with the souls in purgatory is anchored in the mercy of Christ

By Father James Walling

A few years ago, when I was associate pastor in a parish in Kentucky, I visited a Protestant funeral service with a priest friend of mine. The deceased was a woman who used to practice the Catholic faith, but had recently joined that Christian community. The Protestant pastor, of course, knew about the woman's background and I'm pretty sure I saw him do a double-take at us when we arrived wearing our clerical shirts. Along with some sermonizing and eulogizing, the pastor said emphatically, "(B)ut, there is nothing we can do for her now!" He repeated it and looked straight at us as he said it so that every word of it became a flaming dart. I half wanted to stand up and shout: "Yes there is! '[Our] sufferings fill up in (our) flesh what is still lacking in the sufferings of Christ, for the sake of His body, which is the Church,' (cf Col. 1:24)" — but I didn't.

Have you ever noticed that during Mass, after the priest says the prayer over the gifts, everyone stands and actually does precisely what St. Paul's words above imply?

Priest: Pray brothers and sisters, that my sacrifice and yours may be acceptable to God, the almighty Father.

People: May the Lord accept the sacrifice at your hands for the praise and glory of His name, for our good and for the good of all His holy Church.

Jesus Christ: Priest and Victim

The Holy Sacrifice of the Mass is the most powerful prayer we can offer for the deceased. At the Mass, Jesus is both priest and victim. At the Mass, He demonstrates the charity He referred to when He said, "There is no greater love than for one to lay down his life for the sake of his friends" (Jn 15:13). Based on the belief in the communion of the saints,



our participation in the charity of Christ makes the Mass effective for us; and, through the priestly action of Christ, our prayers for the deceased add suffrages, or graces, to the soul for whom we are praying.

The Jewish people clearly believed that the sins of the dead could be atoned for by the living. In the Book of Maccabees (2 Mc 12:39-46), prayers for the deceased is a praiseworthy action. The Apostles would have known about this concept and carried it forward in the Tradition of the Church, for St. Peter said that charity covers a multitude of sins (1 Pt 4:8).

The Catechism states: "In full consciousness of this communion of the whole mystical body of Jesus Christ, the Church in its pilgrim members, from the very earliest days of the Christian religion, has honored with great respect the memory of the dead; and 'because it is a holy and a wholesome thought to pray for the dead that they may be loosed from their sins' she offers her suffrages for them." Our prayer for them is capable not only of helping them, but also of making their intercession for us effective. (CCC 958)

In other words, the souls in purgatory cannot increase their merit, but that doesn't mean they stop loving. They are very much engaged in acts of faith, hope and charity because God is the object of these supernatural virtues. Your deceased relatives are continuing to love you within the suffering Heart of Jesus and your prayers for them initiate the communication of certain spiritual goods.

Having Masses said for the deceased, and attending Mass on those days, is the primary way to help souls. Often people will send away for Masses to be said for the deceased, such as a novena of Masses, or enroll them in a Perpetual Mass Association, which is a beautiful way to honor the soul and bring comfort to the family (both of these options are offered at the Blue Army Shrine).

The Church encourages prayers for the dead by granting a plenary indulgence to the faithful who visit a cemetery on November 2, the feast of All Souls. Also, partial indulgences can be obtained through certain prayers said and works performed. A prayer most often invoked is after the meal prayer:

"Thus he made atonement for the dead
that they might be absolved
from their sin."

2 Maccabees 12:46

V. Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord.

R. And let the perpetual light shine upon them. Amen

And, may the souls of all the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen.

Understanding purgatory

The Catechism states that when a person dies wanting God's mercy but needing further purification, he or she will definitely go to heaven. "The Church gives the name purgatory to this final purification of the elect, which is entirely different from the punishment of the damned." (CCC 1030-1033)

St. Gregory the Great also gives us a compelling quote, based on Jesus' words: As for certain lesser faults, we must believe that, before the Final Judgment, there is a purifying fire. He who is truth says that whoever utters blasphemy against the Holy Spirit will be pardoned neither in this age nor in the age to come. From this sentence we understand that certain offenses can be forgiven in this age, but certain others in the age to come.

The development of the doctrine on purgatory stems from the understanding of God's profound attribute: MERCY. God's mercy provides the opportunity for total purification which satisfies God's justice. The good thief suffering with Jesus on Mount Calvary is a good example of what a purgation looks like within the context of mercy. The good thief says, "Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom." Jesus answers him, "Amen, I say to you, today you will be with me in paradise" (Lk 23:42-43). When we suffer something without Jesus, it is misery with no healing. But, when we suffer something with Jesus, it is mercy with profound healing.

My choice not to stand up and shout at the minister and his congregation, I think, was the right choice. Since what Jesus desires of us is not only that we know the truth and proclaim it to others, but also that we deliver the message in a manner imbued with His humility, which can never conflict with His charity.

Any good we accomplish for the deceased happens only because we and the departed have union with Jesus in the charity of His suffering — "I am the vine and you are the branches. Whoever remains in me and I in him will bear much fruit (purification), because without me you can do nothing" (Jn 15:5).

Taken from The SOUL Magazine, Fall 2018, World Apostolate of Fatima, USA (www.wafusa.org) Used with permission

"Your deceased relatives are continuing to love you within the suffering Heart of Jesus and your prayers for them initiate the communication of certain spiritual goods."

CULTIVATING A SENSE OF THE SACRED

Fr. Kit Cunningham

FAITH is the most important and lovely word in our language. It speaks to us both on a human level and on the divine.

Our faith speaks of love, of trust, of fidelity. It speaks of mighty emotions; great drama has been played, wonderful novels have been written, about faith in man and in God.

But we use the word faith in an everyday sense as well. When we stand at the bus stop or the railway station, we are showing a faith in the timetables, though some might think that this faith is totally misplaced. We realize that we couldn't live our lives in any organized sense. If we didn't have any faith in human beings and institutions.

We cannot possibly verify every single fact that we come across. We have to have trust, and we are often sadly disappointed. But it doesn't take away from the general sense of faith that we have. It might be said that some are more trusting than others. We do well to keep our faith in human beings and not be cynical. Confidence is a mark of maturity. Allegiance has about it a noble ring, and when we speak of good faith, we speak of sincerity of intention, and bad faith, and intention to deceive.

All this is on the human level, and very important it is. When we come to speak of faith in God, much that we have said already is very pertinent in the concept of faith. But with God there is a transcendent element, of more or less abandonment. We have faith in God; we believe in God, even though in the human sense, he is not knowable, in the spiritual sense, he is indeed knowable. This knowing God by faith is indeed God's gift to us. Left to ourselves, we would have little chance of knowing him.

When prospective converts come to me, I do not stress the intellectual knowledge of God. I stress the cultivation of a spiritual, of a sense of the presence of God in our lives. We come to know God through the sacraments, through prayer and the many devotional adjuncts to our faith. Obviously, it is important that we have a basic knowledge of God, which we know through the creed and through the reading of the Scriptures. We need to know the role of the Church as the means by which the knowledge of God is transmitted down the centuries. The Church is charged with the task of preserving that revelation through the ages, and to one is given the especial task: the successor of St Peter, the Pope.

Even in moments of spiritual dryness, when nothing in life seems to make sense, our faith is there to sustain us, to help us in the journey of life. At times, faith seems blind, but we hold on, knowing that almighty God will not desert us. What must it have been like in those dreadful death camps, where human life was so appallingly denigrated and despised. The Knowledge of and belief in eternal life must have sustained so many in their physical hell,

knowing that their bodies might be destroyed, but their souls were theirs and no one could take those from them. Eternal life would be theirs, and peace and happiness after this “vale of tears”.

Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.

- Heb 11:1

Think of the faith of the sick and the dying, and those with incurable diseases. They do not rant and rave. They accept their sufferings with faith and dignity.

Our faith is sustained by fidelity, by the practice of our religion, even though to us at a particular moment, it may not seem to make sense. Our very fidelity, which requires determination on our part, is its guarantor. We live in an age which wants to see results, quick, decisive and positive. But this is not life, for it is in the constant manifestation and acceptance of the occurrences of our life that we see God's will for us. Be brave and faithful.

Fr. Kit Cunningham's 'Reflections on faith' From the newspaper 'The Universe, Sunday April 1, 2001'

Contd from Pg.4

revealed to Sister Lucia that one of the five blasphemies against the Immaculate Heart of Mary concerned those who deny her Immaculate Conception.

We know that Our Lady's Heart will triumph in the end, because she told us. As such, we should rejoice on this solemnity, realizing that all the blessings that the Church and the world have received at Fatima, and more generally in the Church, have ultimately come from Our Lady's Immaculate Conception.

Donal Anthony Foley is the author of a number of books on Marian apparitions, including Marian Apparitions, the Bible, and the Modern World, and maintains a related website at www.theotokos.org.uk. He has also written two time-travel/adventure books for young people that are available in the gift shop.

Taken from The SOUL Magazine, Fall 2018, World Apostolate of Fatima, USA (www.wafusa.org) Used with permission

At Batim, Our Lady would often end her messages using the title 'Immaculate Conception.' As in a Message to Iveta on March 30th 2012: ***"I Am The Mother of God, I Am The Immaculate Conception, I Am The Woman clothed in The Sun, I Am the One, The Woman Who will crush the head of satan, I Am The Mediatrix of All Graces, I love you dearly only remember to entrust all to My Immaculate Heart, Amen."***



The Seven Sorrows of Our Lady:

- 1.The prophecy of Simeon.
- 2.The flight into Egypt.
- 3.The loss of the Child Jesus in the temple.
- 4.The meeting of Jesus and Mary on the Way of the Cross.
- 5.The Crucifixion.
- 6.The taking down of the Body of Jesus from the Cross.
- 7.The burial of Jesus

The Blessed Virgin Mary grants seven graces to the souls who honor her daily by saying seven

Hail Mary's and meditating on her tears and dolors. The devotion was passed on by Saint Bridget.

The Seven Graces

- 1.I will grant peace to their families.
- 2.They will be enlightened about the divine mysteries.
- 3.I will console them in their pains and I will accompany them in their work.
- 4.I will give them as much as they ask for as long as it does not oppose the adorable will of my divine Son or the sanctification of their souls.
- 5.I will defend them in their spiritual battles with the infernal enemy and I will protect them at every instant of their lives.
- 6.I will visibly help them at the moment of their death, they will see the face of their Mother.
- 7.I have obtained (This Grace) from my divine Son, that those who propagate this devotion to my tears and dolors, will be taken directly from this earthly life to eternal happiness since all their sins will be forgiven and my Son and I will be their eternal consolation and joy.

Contd from Pg. 2

In every family there has to be more than a little give and take, but in a healthy joyful family the needs of everyone will eventually be addressed and met if possible. Everyone in the family needs Christ, and a husband and wife need one another. Once those relationships are soundly established, it will be much more likely that the child's personal needs will be met. As we look at our earthly families and how they are running, we can be encouraged if we remember first and foremost that we are a part of God's family. Each one of us is already unconditionally loved, accepted, and valued in His eyes, because Jesus paid the price for our sins. Our attempts to create a home with a strong family mission will be less than perfect, but we have to keep trying because our efforts can lead our children to accept their place in God's blessed family. And then we all will have the best home of all. "I will be a Father to you, and you will be my sons and daughters, says the Lord Almighty" (2 Cor.6:18).

SEEK THE LORD WITH ALL YOUR HEART

-Anabelle Mendonca

Everyone has ambitions, both immediate and distant. The goal might be an education leading to a profession or a vocation or just the coming weekend. The human heart feeds on desire, but desire seldom feeds the heart unless it is or includes a desire for God, who alone is the answer to all of life's seeking. We seek God, but we often forget that He also seeks us, our love. When our desire for God and His desire for our love finally come together, we have found the answer to the meaning of life.

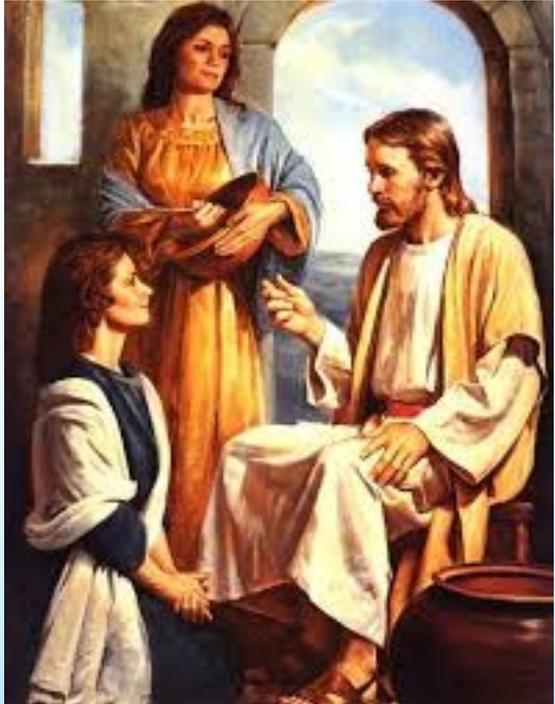
It is said that there is a great difference between *knowing* Christ and *knowing about* Christ. It is very important for us to *know* this Jesus with our minds and our hearts and try to learn His ways by reading the Word of God, for only then we can truly be called His disciples, especially when we follow the principles that have guided His whole life. **"Take these words of mine into your heart and soul. Bind them at your wrist as a sign."** God speaks to us now, as much as He spoke to the chosen people then. We hear the Lord's word Sunday after Sunday, and hopefully, we also have that divine word in Bibles in our homes. Unfortunately, too many of us, Catholics do not read, study, and reflect on the word of God. We don't really see God's word to us as an essential element in our religious practice. But God was speaking to us as much as to the Jews: **"Take these words of mine into your heart and soul."** Of course the Jews concentrated more on binding the Scriptures to their wrist than in following the precepts given, and that bothered Jesus. There is one attitude the Lord cannot stand. It is the external show of religion in people whose hearts are not in what they say or do when they stand before the Lord. Jesus said, **"None of those who cry out, 'Lord, Lord', will enter the kingdom of heaven but only the one who does the will of my Father in heaven"** (Mt. 7:21).

To search for Christ and discover the riches hidden in Him is not a choice for us Christians; it is an obligation by virtue of our baptism in Christ. We have been chosen by God not only to be coheirs to the riches in Christ, but also to share them with others. We are children of God with a special call and mission; we are **"the ones God chose especially long ago, and intended to become true images of his Son"** (Rom. 8:28). We need to realize the importance of getting our attention focused in the right place at the right time. We have just been through a period of fasting and self-examination last month. We have undoubtedly made an effort to change and mend our old ways. At times it is right to look within ourselves, but we should not spend too much time doing that. Someone put it like this: "If you look long at yourself, you will become discouraged. If you look long at others, you will be distracted. But if

you look long at Christ, you will take on His likeness". When we gaze at the face of Christ and make Him the center of our attention and love, then we are gradually and continuously changed into the likeness of Christ, the Spirit within us being the silent Artist who molds us into His image. **"Those who look to him are radiant" (Ps.34:5).**

We need to remind ourselves that God's words are addressed to a community of people. And it is to a people, of which we are members that God continues to speak today. A community is made up of individual members, each of whom is expected to make a personal acknowledgment of God's Lordship. The people, the parish, the religious community, together worship the Lord. The more whole-hearted and genuine the contribution of the individual members the more perfect the community worship of the whole community. Hence we need to gather **close around the altar** (not around the Church) every Sunday or Holy day, to thank and praise our Creator for the gift of His life and love. Let us preach our religion through word and deed.

There is a law in photography that says: "the angle of incidence equals the angle of reflection" in other words, if you want a full face reproduction, you must look full face into the camera so there is a law in life that causes us to become like that on which we gaze. If we look sideways on Christ, we get only a partial reflection. If we look fully at Him, we get full reflection. We become like Him in character and in countenance. Let us often sit at the feet of Jesus like Mary (Martha's sister) did, gazing lovingly at Him and listening to every word He uttered.



Let us seek to be like Him with all our heart and soul. Let His radiance beam into every darkened corner of our being and transform us totally into Himself now and forever.

THE FATIMA PRAYERS

PARDON PRAYER: My God, I believe, I adore, I hope and I love Thee! I beg pardon for those who do not believe, do not adore, do not hope and do not love Thee.

ANGEL'S PRAYER: O Most Holy Trinity, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, I adore Thee profoundly. I offer Thee the most precious Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity of Jesus Christ, present in all the tabernacles of the world, in reparation for the outrages, sacrileges and indifference by which He is offended. By the infinite merits of the Sacred Heart of Jesus and the Immaculate Heart of Mary, I beg the conversion of poor sinners.

EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER: Most Holy Trinity, I adore Thee! My God, my God, I love Thee in the Most Blessed Sacrament!

SACRIFICE PRAYER: O Jesus, it is for love of You, for the conversion of sinners, and in reparation for the sins committed against the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

DECADE PRAYER: O My Jesus, forgive us our sins, save us from the fires of hell. Lead all souls to Heaven, especially those most in need of Thy mercy.



‘God wishes to establish devotion to my Immaculate Heart in the world. If what I say is done, many souls will be saved and there will be peace.’

How Do I Start the First Saturdays?

On July 13, 1917, Our Lady appeared for the third time to the three children of Fatima and showed them the vision of hell. In this vision Our Lady said that *‘God wishes to establish in the world devotion’* to Her Immaculate Heart and that She would come to *ask for the Communion of Reparation on the First Saturdays...*

What Do I Have to Do?

The devotion of First Saturdays, as requested by Our Lady of Fatima, carries with it the assurance of salvation. However, to derive profit from such a great promise of Our Lady, the devotion must be properly understood and duly performed. The requirements as stipulated by Our Lady are as follows:

(1) Confession, (2) Communion, (3) Five decades of the Rosary, (4) Meditation on one or more of the Rosary Mysteries for fifteen minutes, (5) To do all these things in the spirit of reparation to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, and (6) To observe all these practices on the First Saturday of five consecutive months.

The idea of the Five First Saturdays is obviously to make us persevere in the devotional acts for these Saturdays and overcome initial difficulties. Once this is done, Our Lady knows that the person would become devoted to Her Immaculate Heart and persist in practicing such devotion on all First Saturdays, working thereby for personal self-reform and for the salvation of others. Our Lady has assured us that She will obtain salvation for all those who observe the First Saturdays for five consecutive months in accordance with Her conditions.

For more details please email: ourladybatim@gmail.com

Dates to Remember - February 2019

- 2nd: The Presentation of The Lord, Feast / First Saturday, Service at Batim.
- 5th: St Agatha.
- 11th: Our Lady of Lourdes.
- 14th: Sts. Cyril and Methodius.
- 22nd: St. Peter's Chair.
- 23rd: St Polycarp, Bishop.

PRAYER PETITIONS, TESTIMONIES & RELIGIOUS ARTICLES

- + Your prayer petitions may be submitted online at: thebatimessage.com These prayer requests will be placed at the feet of Our Lady of Fatima in the the Church of Sts Simon & Jude and offered during the First Saturday Mass at Batim.
- + Your testimonies may be submitted online at: ourladybatim5thdogma.com or emailed to: ourladybatim@gmail.com
- + Mediatrix of all Grace Medals, Scapulars and the Messages of Our Lady printed in a book are now available at: Star of David Tours, Ground floor, Gomes Classic Bldg, GS 7 Behind Rebello Hospital, Madel, Margao, Goa Ph:9309778931

FIRST SATURDAY DEVOTION IN HONOUR OF AND IN REPARATION TO THE IMMACULATE HEART OF MARY

Church of St Simon and St Jude, Batim, Tiswadi, Goa Velha, Goa 403 108 India.

- 1.00 pm:** +Stations of the Cross
- 2.00 pm:** +Holy Rosary, +Adoration of the Most Blessed Sacrament, +Divine Mercy Prayers, +Consecration to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, +Confessions.
- 3.30pm:** +Holy Mass.

Services are held in Konkani and English

CONTACT DETAILS FOR TRANSPORT BY BUS:

- Margao,** Petrol pump closest to Main Post Office 11am, Mob: 9420712310
- Panaji:** Caranzalem near Post Office at 11.45 am, near Don Bosco at 12pm, Tel: 08322456306
- Mapusa:** From St Joseph's Chapel, Near Police Station at 11.45 am, Mob: 9822167665
- Calangute:** From Calangute Church at 11.30 am, Mob: 9421241248

In conformity with the directives of Pope Urban VIII, we have no intention of anticipating the judgement of the Holy Apostolic See and of the Church on Apparitions, reported by us, but not yet recognized; indeed, we submit to, and accept; her final decision without reservation.

Printed and Published by The Batimessage.com

This newsletter is available online. A printed copy of this newsletter is also available FREE (except where otherwise indicated) at the Prayer Services in Batim, Goa. An archive of previous issues is available on the website: www.thebatimessage.com Your prayerful support and donations - however small - is greatly appreciated!

Editor: DR. CHRISTOPHER DIAS

www.thebatimessage.com

Asst Editor: ANNABELLE MENDONCA

www.ourladybatim5thdogma.com

Email: ourladybatim@gmail.com

For Private Circulation