

# Lourdes

# Echoes

September-October 2017

Vol. 9 No. 2

A PUBLICATION OF THE LOURDES CENTER • THE MARIST FATHERS & BROTHERS



BERNADETTE STANDING BEFORE OUR BLESSED MOTHER



REV. GEORGE SZAL, S.M.

*“Quia cum parvuli placui Altissimo”*

That was the Latin inscription over the front entrance of St. Theresa of Lisieux Church in Methuen, Massachusetts where I was to be the new pastor on September 3, 1997. I was also going to be the last pastor. We Marists had founded St. Theresa’s 60 years before. However, we could no longer staff it and had to return it to the diocese. It seemed that there were only two possibilities for the future of the parish. Either St. Theresa’s would be clustered with a nearby parish, or be closed entirely. The Archdiocese itself had no priests to send to replace us. We Marists loved those parishioners and they loved us. Leaving that wonderful community of faith after 60 years was not something any of us wanted to do. But someone had to manage the change and I accepted the mission with a kind of nervous reluctance.

One day early on after arriving there I noticed the inscription over St. Theresa’s doors. I thought that perhaps it contained a message for me and for all of us. So, I asked Fr. Leo Bourdeau, S.M., (see his column on p. 3) whose Latin was much better than mine, to translate it for me. “Sure,” he said, “It means, ‘Whenever I desired to become a little child I was pleasing to the Most High.’” “Great!” I thought to myself, “that’s the answer for us all to succeed in this changeover – to come to God as children, unable to do much of anything for ourselves and trusting completely in God’s help.” Later on I got more help understanding it by reading *The Story of a Soul*, St. Theresa’s autobiography. In it she writes, “Jesus has shown me the only path that

## Getting little again

leads to the divine furnace of His love – it is the complete abandonment of a baby sleeping without fear in its father’s arms.”

After that, whenever I awoke in the middle of the night worried and unable to sleep, I got up and prayed. I would read a bit of a psalm, tell God my fears, and sit quietly for a while. Sometimes, after about 30 minutes, I would get so excited at the realization of the presence of God, Mary and the saints that I couldn’t even get back to sleep. I knew that there would be a lot of hurt and sorrow for the parishioners and myself, but I also had confidence that by His cross and resurrection Jesus had destroyed death. I realized that weakness was a way for me to rely on the power of God, and not on my own plan for my life. It also came to me, based on the Scriptures, that God is an expert at pulling life out of death and that He works miracles for us weak and wounded souls if only we trust Him.

By the way, I should tell you that at that time I had two great examples of faith in the two priests who became my “assistants” at St. Theresa’s. There was Fr. Leo, 78 years old and Fr. Irene, 93 years old. Fr. Leo had very bad knees, but every day he bandaged them up and slowly walked to visit our parishioners. Fr. Irene had been nailed to a wheelchair for seven years or more, but countless young and old people, touched by his compassion, came to the rectory to visit and for confession. Both priests were always cheerful, despite their infirmities. In their weakness and littleness they helped to bind the whole parish together in faith and love. They made my mission, although often heartbreaking, an opportunity for us all to grow in faith.

Now I find myself at the beginning of a new mission as director of the Lourdes

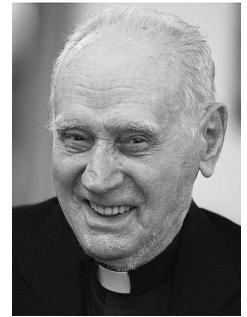
Center. It makes me a little nervous. However, based on my past experience, and many others since, I have begun to learn the secret of the saints like Therese. Among them I now have another model for this new mission at the Lourdes center, St. Bernadette. For instance, when the pastor of her parish asked why the Virgin Mary had not appeared to someone more educated and important than her, Bernadette replied with confidence and humility, “Because God could not find anyone littler or weaker than I.” She was only repeating what St. Paul had said over a thousand years before, “God chose those who by human standards are fools to shame the wise; He chose those who by human standards are weak to shame the strong, those who by human standards are common and contemptible – indeed those who count for nothing – to reduce to nothing all those that do count for something, so that no human being might feel boastful before God.” (1 Cor. 1:27-28)

Please help me with your prayers. Our staff here at the Lourdes Center prays for you and yours daily. We especially ask Mary to intercede for us with her Son that God will help us in our weakness to do great things for Him and for our brothers and sisters all over the world. With the help of the Blessed Virgin Mary, St. Joseph, our Angel Guardians and all the saints we cannot fail. (By the way, St. Theresa’s Church was successfully joined with St. Augustine’s only one mile away to make one new parish which they named “Our Lady of Good Counsel”... a wise choice, don’t you think?).

Peace and Blessings,

*Fr. George*

*Fr. Bourdeau prepared this column for the readers of this publication prior to his death on October 31, 2009.*



REV. LEO BOURDEAU, S.M.

# Mary and the Real Freedom

By Rev. Leo Bourdeau, S.M.

**W**e are all called to real freedom, but many people have the wrong notion of real freedom. They think that freedom is doing what we feel like doing. Thinking this way can easily lead to selfishness, narrowmindedness, laziness, sin, slavery and even damnation. Real freedom is doing what I should be doing, and doing it willingly, enthusiastically and perseveringly. Real freedom is not based on feeling, on personal preferences, on comfort, on popularity, on Hollywood or television. It is based on the truth of Jesus Christ who said, “I am the Truth, the Way and the Life.” It is based on a Faith that is lived. Jesus adds “My Truth will make you free. Jesus was free. He said “I come to do the will of My Heavenly Father.” At Bethlehem, in Egypt, at Nazareth, in His public ministry and on Calvary, Jesus did the Father’s will willingly, enthusiastically and perseveringly.

Mary was free. She expressed at the Annunciation the blueprint of her entire life. “Behold the handmaid of the Lord, be it done to me as You will.” She lived that from the crib to the Cross. She always gave God top priority and did it willingly, enthusiastically and perseveringly. She was free. She was convinced that every human is on earth to know God, to love God, to serve God, and to render loving service to people in need. Mary had one goal in her life...to do

“Mary  
always accepted  
peacefully  
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because they both  
came from God.”

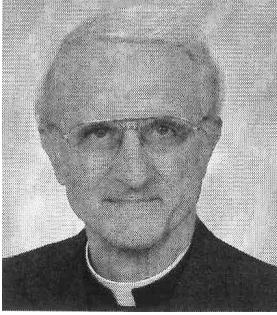
God’s will. She was God-centered and not self-centered. She focused on God and the common good. She was never a slave to her own opinions or preferences. She never imposed them on anyone. She was not proud, she never sought applause or popularity. She was never envious or jealous. She rejoiced with those who were comfortable. She shared generously with the poor. It was not by spurts, it was constant; it was a way of life.

Her decisions were never based on feelings, but on faith. She was never moody when things did not go according to her plans, or when there were unforeseen interruptions. She always accepted peacefully sunshine or showers, because they both came from God. Being full of grace, full of faith, Mary had an unshakable trust in Divine Providence. God knows all, He can do all, and he will always help us do what is best for His glory, for the salvation of mankind and

for our individual sanctification. With this trust she was free of many worries, of many frustrations, of many discouragements and of much loneliness. She always remembered that God died for her out of love. If God is with us, why should we fear? She had no fear of the present, because she did her best and left the rest to God. She had no fear of the future, because she believed that the best preparation for our tomorrows is to have done our best in our yesterdays.

Mary loved others as God loves them. He knows their difficulties, their temptations, their strength, their weakness and their fears. God helps them to become better. Mary loves everyone without prejudice or discrimination based on difference of race, color, language, culture or belief. They are all God’s children. She prayed for her enemies, she prayed for those who hurt her. She forgave them. This freed her of coldness or bitterness toward anyone, or any nurtured grudges, or any planned revenge. She loved them all as they were and helped them become what they should be.

If we want to experience the real freedom that Mary experienced, we must do what she did. We must maintain and increase in our lives the real Christian balance of prayers, work and loving service to those in need. But we need help, and so we pray: “Father, Son, Holy Spirit and Mary, Our Mother, give us that help.”



REV. FRANK GRISPINO, S.M.

## The Catholic Imagination

By Rev. Frank Grispino, S.M.

**T**he title needs explaining. It is based on faith that God became man in Jesus Christ on Christmas Day. The invisible became visible. Life inaccessible became accessible through the humanity of Jesus. The door to heaven was opened to us.

### Jesus, the Master Copy

One step in faith through the threshold and we see beyond the human and the things of this world to the spiritual and to God. The humanity of Jesus becomes the key to the divine. In the words of St. John, the Evangelist:

*“What we have heard, seen with our eyes, looked upon and touched with our hands, concerns the Word of life, that was with the Father was made visible to us” (John 1, 1-3.)*

Jesus is our icon informing us that God and the world beyond is within our reach. We can also say that the divine presence made visible in Jesus, the Christ-King, has made it possible that all in nature opens a pathway to the divine.

“Jesus  
is our icon  
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our reach.”

### Ennoblement of Man and His World

The enfleshment of God in Jesus has made it possible that not only is man ennobled, but all things at man’s disposal can become mediums for the beyond. Did not Jesus use water as a means of spiritual rebirth in John 3, 5-7? Was not oil used as a conduit for healing in James 5, 14-15? Was not a cloth that touched St. Paul used to bring healing to the sick in Acts 19, 11-27? Was not bread and wine used at the institution of the Eucharist in Matthew 26, 26-28?

### A Bit of Heaven and Earth

Once we enter the physical structure

we call church and the door is closed behind us, we find ourselves in a new kind of environment unlike any other. The furnishings become pointers to the beyond. Welcoming us are the friends of God and ours too: the statues of the saints, angels, the stained-glass windows give emphasis to the atmosphere that envelops us. And let us not forget our Blessed Mother, Queen of Heaven and Earth! They compete for our attention and open a path to us to the heavenly kingdom. They seem to beckon us away from the weary and worn world prompting us to soar up and away to a welcoming radiant realm.

### The Liturgy of Heaven and Earth

The dress of the priest blends with the surroundings and aids to transport the worshippers into the beyond. While the music gives free reign to the heart to space unknown, the incense overpowers the smell of the flowers and its rising cloud like our prayers reach up to the throne on high. (Revelation 8, 1-4.) In the Mass the earthly congregation is united to the heavenly choirs of angels and saints – all giving

*Continued on page 5*

# Fr. Grispino

*Continued from page 4*

praise to our Creator, through our Redeemer in the power of the Holy Spirit. In such surroundings of quiet peace and holy joy we sense from the depths of our believing heart the soft whisper, "God is here. God is here." Where else do you genuflect upon leaving a Presence?

## Using the Imagination

Divine faith comes into its own in church with the celebration of hearing God's word and the Mass. But earth connects with heaven apart from the holy sites and sacred rites. We can see ordinary daily life in an extraordinary way. Seeing a child can prompt thoughts of the creator, beauty in nature turns us to the awesomeness of God, the approaching beggar reminds us of the love Jesus has for the poor. All we need to do is to see persons, places, things as launching pads to the things of heaven.

Try it Practice the Catholic imagination. And heed St. Paul's advice, "Think of what is above, not what is of earth." (Colossians 3, 2.)

*Note: See the short poem by Elizabeth Barret Browning immediately below this column. You should have no problem connecting the dots.*



"Earth is crammed with heaven,  
 And every common bush  
 afire with God,  
 But only he who sees  
 takes off his shoes;  
 The rest sit around  
 and pluck blackberries."  
*From 'Aurora Leigh'*  
*By Elizabeth Barrett Browning (1806-1861)*

## Gift Center

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

### Order from The Lourdes Center

- Our Lady of Lourdes Medal in Grotto.....\$5.00
- Brown Scapular.....\$2.00
- Green Scapular.....\$2.00
- St. Bernadette pins.....\$3.50
- Our Lady of Lourdes pins.....\$3.50
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by Fr. John Lynch, S.M.....\$4.00



Lourdes Center Chapel, Boston

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

# Purgatorials for the Deceased

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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.

# 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.*

FRANK FERGUSON, MA  
 WILLIAM D. MATTIO, MA  
 JAMES WENDLAND, MD  
 BILL J. GUNTER, KS  
 SALLY DERINS, FL  
 JOSE DA SILVA, MA  
 KATHY CAMILLERI, MI  
 SR. M. ROSALINE KAROLAK, PA  
 MARGARET FABICH, PA  
 MARGARET DOCKENDORF, MN  
 ELAINE MAGNASCO, GA  
 MARY CARNEY, CO  
 GERALDINE YANNELL, HI  
 MARGARET CATALANO, NY  
 MARY R. LEARIE, PA  
 KATHY MUNCH, LA  
 CATHERINE CONNELLY, MA  
 MAINE KAPULE, WA  
 JESSIE HART, NY  
 MARILYN ADAMITIS, WI  
 MARTIN SOMMERS, NY  
 JOSEPH & ROSEMARIE REARDON, WI  
 MILDRED JEN LIPAROTO, GA  
 PATRICIA MEROLO, FL  
 REV. JOSEPH WISEMAN, NY  
 MARIE GEORGE, AK  
 ELLA TULIK, AK  
 FRANCES VEZINA, AZ  
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 GEORGINNE SULLIVAN, NJ  
 THOMAS P. MCCAULY, IL  
 FR. VINCENT MONACO, RI  
 MARY MADSON, MA  
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 EUGENE TWITE, WI  
 ST. PHILIP MARIA FUHS, KY  
 THERESA LA BRIE, NH  
 VERNE AND RITA TRIPP, LA  
 JOHN AND FRANCES CAPARDO, NY  
 ANN MAGNUSON, PA  
 LUCILLE HELLERS, KY  
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 MARGARET M. MCHUGH, FL  
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 ELLEN RAGARI, PA  
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 REV. ADRIAN PELLETIER, S.M., MA  
 ETHELEEN FLORES, LA  
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*Send their names and addresses. Use a separate sheet if necessary.*

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E-mail the information to: [ourlady@lourdescenter.org](mailto:ourlady@lourdescenter.org)  
 MAIL it to:  
 Lourdes Center  
 P.O. Box 15575  
 698 Beacon Street, Boston, MA 02215-2594

## Readers Write

**N.B.** Thank you very much for the work you do. I have a friend who had an inoperable tumor in his throat with only a 10 percent airway left. The doctor decided to go down his throat with a scope. My friend drank Lourdes water prior to this. The tumor literally peeled off of the wall of his throat and was removed. Thank God. He still needs to go through radiation and chemotherapy. He drinks some Lourdes water before each treatment, and has eight weeks to go. I am confident he will be fine, but would appreciate prayers for him. Enclosed is my order for more Lourdes water. Our Mother does wonderful work through this. **IL**

**P.R.** The enclosed donation is in appreciation to Our Lady of Lourdes for helping my 12 – year – old grandson to recover from a serious and dangerous eye infection. I made a promise for this donation if she would answer my prayers and heal him with no lasting effects of the infection. I believe that my prayers were indeed answered. However, he is now recovering from a tonsillectomy for which he developed problems. So please remember him in your daily prayers and ask Our Lady of Lourdes to help him in her care and continue to heal him. Our Lady has done so much for my family and me and we are forever grateful for her intercession. **NV**

**T.B.** I just finished being cross with my husband of 65 years and you send me a picture of Mother Therese. You sure know how to

hurt an old lady. **GA**

**E.C.** One Sunday morning at breakfast I took some vitamins and one got stuck in my throat (and it hurt). I was rather upset because I was afraid I would not be able to go to Communion. I had a good idea – I sipped some Lourdes Water and on my way to Mass – everything was fine – it did not hurt anymore! I owe all this to Our Lady and I thank you for the miracle my Mother. **NJ**



**Our email address is:**  
**ourlady@lourdescenter.org**  
**lourdescenter@yahoo.com**

**Our website is:**  
**www.lourdescenter.org**

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my trust in God's  
mercy.**

Offering to cover shipping &  
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N.B. A donation of \$3.00 per  
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our expenses. When the offer-  
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multiples thereof and for  
unusual numbers requested,  
we reserve the right to send  
what is both just and feasible.

**Please send \_\_\_\_\_ bottles of the  
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Name \_\_\_\_\_

(Please Print Clearly)

Address \_\_\_\_\_

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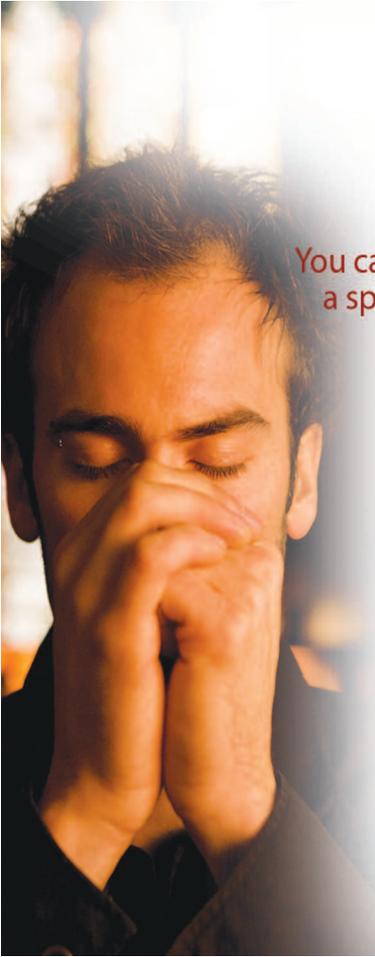
Does this person receive Lourdes Echoes?

Yes  No

If not, should we send Lourdes Echoes to them?

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You can count on it, on the second and the fourth Friday of every month, we hold  
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for our extended Lourdes family ... including you.

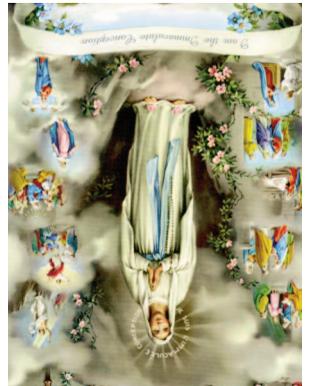
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