

echoes

FROM LOURDES

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THE DIRECTOR'S LETTER

FR. GEORGE SZAL, S.M.

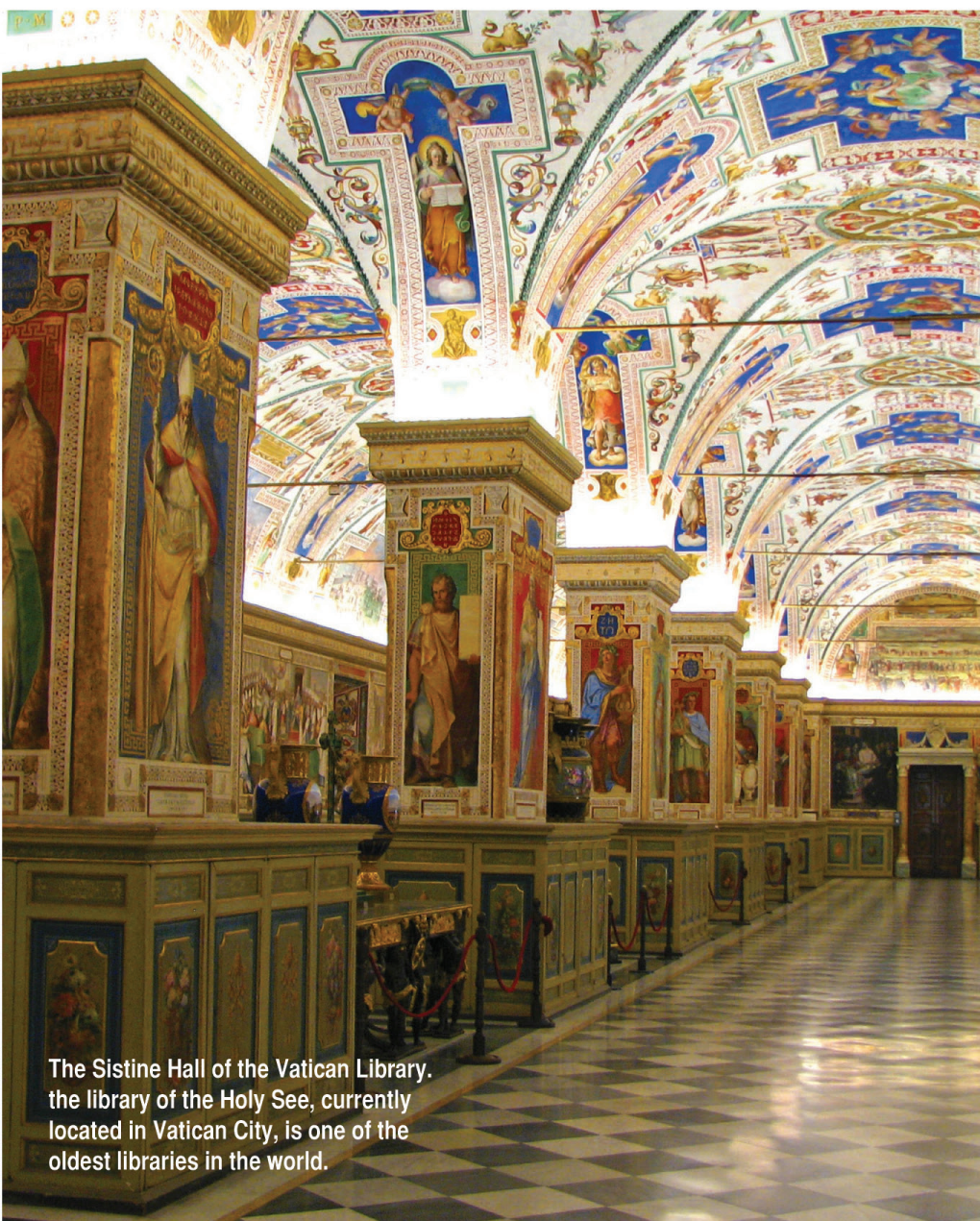
Mary's Victory ... and Ours

*"Who is this that shines forth
like the dawn, fair as the moon,
bright as the sun, terrible as an
army in battle array?"*

(Song of Songs, 6:10)

The Sistine Chapel is located in the heart of the Vatican Palace. Various papal ceremonies are celebrated there, and it is especially known as the Chapel where the cardinals gather to elect a new pope. As you walk into the Chapel the first thing that strikes your eye is an enormous fresco of the Last Judgment, with the Risen Christ seated in glory, angels and saints above and Satan and the damned below. On the walls all around are scenes from the Old and New Testaments, our Salvation History, from the Creation and Fall of Man to the life of Christ. These reminders of the most important events in the history of the universe and of our destiny as human beings make it an appropriate space for making important announcements relating to our faith and mission. That's why I was amazed to find

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The Sistine Hall of the Vatican Library, the library of the Holy See, currently located in Vatican City, is one of the oldest libraries in the world.

Mary's Victory ... and Ours

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a Rosary painted almost in the middle of the Last Judgment scene.

Just below the figure of the Risen Christ and a little to the left, one of the figures holds a rosary in his left hand and is using it to pull up to heaven a man and a woman in danger of falling into hell. In his right hand he seems to be holding a scapular. So, in this solemn room where the meaning of human life and our destiny is painted, we find our Blessed Mother concerned for our salvation and helping us to gain it. The Holy Rosary is so important that in many of her apparitions Our Lady is holding it. In her very first apparition to Bernadette the Blessed Virgin Mary is holding the Rosary and prays with her. As St. Bernadette relates:

“Without thinking of what I was doing, I took my Rosary in my hands and went on my knees. The Lady made with her head a sign of approval and herself took into her hands a Rosary which hung on her right arm. When I attempted to begin the Rosary and tried to lift my hand to my forehead, my arm remained paralyzed, and it was only after the Lady had signed herself that I could do the same. The Lady left me to pray all alone. She passed

the beads of her Rosary between Her fingers but she said nothing. Only at the end of each decade did she say the ‘Gloria’ with me.”

I underline the last two sentences to emphasize that although Bernadette did not at that point know who the “lady” was, the only prayer the Blessed Mother said with her was the “Glory be to the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.” Naturally, Mary wouldn’t be saying a prayer to herself, and she didn’t need to say the Apostles’ Creed or the Our Father because she lives now in the heart of the Blessed Trinity. However, with Bernadette she could do what happens eternally in heaven, that is, give praise to God.

Why is the Rosary so important? Because it is a meditation and an entrance into the history of our salvation. Think about it. If we aren’t able to read the Bible we can pray it: Joyful Mysteries about the coming of Christ, Luminous Mysteries about his mission and ministry, Sorrowful Mysteries about the outpouring of His loving mercy on sinners, and Glorious Mysteries about his victory over death – His and ours! The poorest among us can get to heaven. The “Hail Mary” itself is meditation on the moment God took flesh in the womb of the Virgin Mary so that we could take on God’s divinity! So all we need to become saints is fervent prayer and frequent reception of the

sacraments, especially Confession and the Holy Eucharist. That’s how St. Bernadette did it. So can we.

Peace,

Fr. George



Your true self is showing

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

I believe it was the late Bishop Sheen who once said: We show our true colors, - who we really are - by the way we respond to the unexpected.

Not to Help

This incident is about a married couple out on a Sunday afternoon drive. Going down a countryside lane they suddenly come upon a car smashed against a stone wall. The driver's door is open and his bloodied head inches off the ground. Our Sunday driver slows down, eyes the situation, and abruptly speeds away. The wife, surprised, asked, "Aren't you going to help?" His response, "Let's not get involved." The wife recalls how she was left dumbfounded. "You see, I always thought my husband to be a 'takeover' kind of a man."

Close Calls

I recall the gentleman who was speaking about having close calls by way of car accidents in a very short space of time. He asked me if God was trying to tell him something. I answered, "Yes, try to find out what it is." When we meander away from the straight and narrow God sees our need for help. By having a close call, God may be extending an invitation to make a reality check, an examination of conscience. Something is awry. Our moral compass may be in need of fine tuning - again! Close calls may be that realignment is in order and that one's true self needs adjustment.

Serious Health Problems

We now arrive at the delicate part: not wanting to receive help for one's own good. This is where some people may not see suffering or an illness as a

means for help of the spiritual kind. An illness may be a blessing in disguise, a sign of God's helping hand. Help may come by way of allotting time to put one's spiritual life in order. Is not this a grace as contrasted with someone who dies unexpectedly without warning? It is not without reason that the ancient Christians had a short invocation: From an untimely death, deliver me, O Lord! We do hear people say that when they go, they wish to go quickly. In charity, we must believe that such people are speaking from a lifetime of preparation for the inevitable. Otherwise we would have to conclude that there is a blight on what is expected of the Christian of the "true self" kind.

Aging with Grace

I took notice of this parishioner
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Your true self is showing

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for the first time. He caught my attention because he was the only one in the back pew. The rest left following the Sunday Mass. I spoke to him and heard words of a soul resigned to bid farewell to this world, “I am 87 years old. I had a good life. I am now a widower. My children are all married and living on their own. I was holding back after Mass thinking along these lines and was telling the Lord, I am ready any time He wants to take me.” Who would deny that the man’s “true self” is beginning to show?

Beating the Odds

The story of the criminal hanging on the cross, the right side of Jesus, beat the odds. He converted at the last minute. All contrary to the saying: As one lives so shall he die. To live on the presumption that you will receive the grace to hear the words, “This day you will be with me in paradise” (Luke 23, 42,) is ill advised. It is called the sin of presumption. It is far better to follow a surer path as shown in the story that follows.

While Time Lasts

How will you react find-



ing yourself on the edge of life tottering between this life and the one to come? Will it be like the man who told me that while in the hospital his concern was not the food, nor whether the nurses were attentive to his needs, nor who came to visit, who did not. His dominant thought was: what is my relationship to Jesus? It was the beginning of a profitable preparation for the inevitable.

The Five P’s

Prior preparation prevents poor performance. There is no time like the present time to prepare for the end time. It will not

come to you entirely as a surprise. You will be ready. Your true colors, the kind of person you really are, and always wanted to be, will be showing.

Forecasting the New You

The end will not be like the seemingly despairing kind, the criminal on the left (Luke 23, 39,) much less like the seemingly presumptive kind, the criminal on the right (Luke 23, 40-43,) but like Jesus in their midst. His true colors and voice resounds to this day bestowing upon us his strengthening trust, “Father, into your hands I commend my spirit.” (Luke 23, 42.)

Readers Write

Dear Fathers,

A number of years ago I read an article about letters. In it the author spoke of how uplifting it is to arrive home at the end of a day and find "an honest to goodness letter – that is hand written" when the most that people usually get are bills and ads and catalogues. And...if the day has been especially difficult it (the letter) can revive the spirit. How true! So your little note and the prayer that you composed and sent served as a little "pick me up." I have tried to keep alive in myself that idea of letter writ-

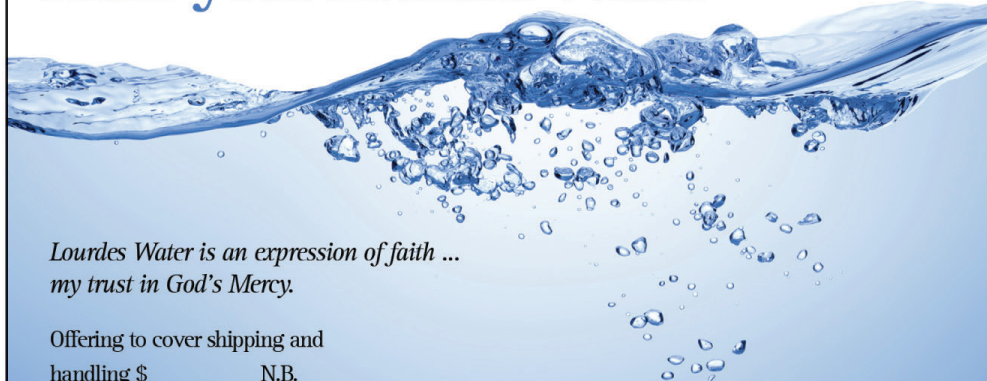
ing. It seems to give me as much pleasure as I always hope that it enkindles in the recipient. Such little things seem to have suffered a terrible blow in our tech society. And the greatest technology in the world will never be able to replace the simple human touch. God bless! T.B.

Dear Fathers,

When I had a physical and x-rays before my knee replacement surgery, they found a mass on my lung. When I went to the doctor, he checked the PET scan and told me to come back in four months

after another CT scan. I promised I would send a check for \$25.00 and also drink Lourdes water. The second CT scan showed that it is better and I don't have to go back for 6 months. Praise and thank God and Jesus. D.D.

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handling \$ _____ N.B.

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*Please allow 3-6 weeks
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Does this person receive this newsletter? ☐ Yes ☐ No
If not, should we send Echoes from Lourdes to them?
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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.

GEORGE MURIEL, RI
RICHARD M. BILOWOS, IL
CHUCK MILLER, IL
ANNIE MACAULEY, MA
DIANA B. DEHAHN, WI
LINDA A. MARSHALL, CA
SILAS BRUCE, LA
JAMES BRUCE, LA
ALBERTA STEVE, AK
MEL MCGONNIGLE, FL
FRANCES SCHECTER
MARY LOU KRAMER, IN
MARY E. BOCCHI, CA
HELEN RAMELOT, CA
GERTRUDE KOPPENHEFFER, PA
MARY KEOUGH, MA
REV. EUGENE SIMON, MI
MAGDALEN BUCCIARELLI, PA
THOMAS BUCCIARELLI, PA
JOY LANDER, IL
TOM LANDER, IL
JANET GUIDRY, LA
JANET HUAERE, MI
ALMA REAHR, MO
MARY ANTHONIS, MO
DONNA SIMMS, WV

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CLAIRE G. LEIBROCK, PA
DENIS DODD, MN
ARLYS, DODD, MN
MARY MCFADZEAN, UT
FR. PATRICK KENNEDY, LA
EDITH MILLS, NJ
SYDNEY B. CLEMENT, VA
DONNA HOLED, OH
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EDWARD F. GREGA, SR., PA
MARGARET M. GREGA, PA
MARIE M. BEAGHAN, MI
GEORGE P. READ, JR., PA

CORRECTION: IN THE JANUARY-FEBRUARY 2019 EDITION OF ECHOES FROM LOURDES, WE MISTAKENLY LISTED SR. KAY KAY, S.S.S. ON OUR DECEASED LIST. WE APOLOGIZE FOR THE OVERSIGHT.

Purgatorials for the Deceased

Name of Deceased _____

Please send Purgatorial to:

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Address _____

City _____

State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____

Requested by: _____

Suggested offering: \$20.00 perpetual.

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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.

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IN GROTTO

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GREEN SCAPULAR.....\$2.00

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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*

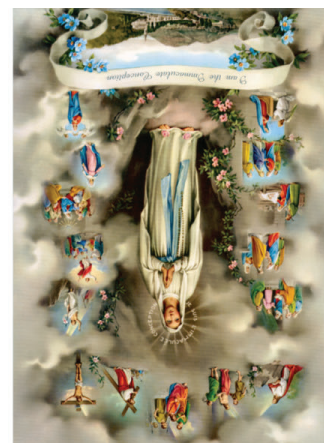
On Friday, May 10 and Friday, May 24
and Friday, June 14 and Friday, June 28,
The Marist Fathers and Brothers of the Lourdes Center
will be praying for you.

*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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