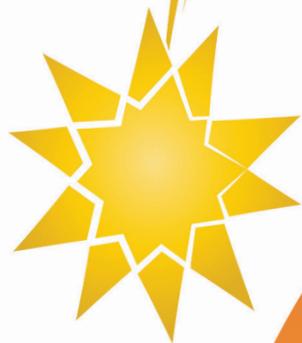


echoes FROM LOURDES

A PUBLICATION OF THE LOURDES CENTER ♦ MARIST FATHERS AND BROTHERS

November-December, 2019
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*Out of the Darkness...
A Child is Born*





THE DIRECTOR'S LETTER

FR. GEORGE SZAL, S.M.

Out of the darkness: Living a holy life in unholy times

“Your only Son, no sin to hide, but You have sent Him from Your side to walk upon this guilty sod and to become the Lamb of God... I was so lost, I should have died, but You have brought me to Your side to be led by your staff and rod and to be called a Lamb of God.”

(“Lamb of God” by Twila Paris)

If ever you want to know what the world would be like without God, leave home for the weekend and leave your teenage children in charge of things. Chaos! Or, watch a James Bond movie and see a very flat, purely horizontal world, ruled by very clever monkeys engaged in a constant struggle to survive by climbing over the backs of other chimps until in their weakness and death they fall to the bottom of the heap and others climb over them. This was the kind of world that St. Cyprian, bishop of Carthage and martyr (+Sept. 14, 251 AD) described in his conversion story:

“When I look back on the dark-

ness from which I have escaped, I can only praise and thank God for the love he has shown me. My heart is filled with pity for all the people still trapped in that living death. Our civilization has surely reached the lowest depths of infamy; robbery, violence, murder on every side, the whole world reeking in blood; cruelty and bloodlust at the games, parricide and incest on the stage, perversion in private life and corruption in the administration of the law. Public office is purchased by flattery, wealth gained by dishonesty. Men are in bondage to money and luxury, yet they obstinately cling to the possessions from which neither they nor their families derive any profit. The more exalted a person's station, the greater is his fear of losing it. A ruler who denies peace to his subjects can find none for himself. What a price the world exacts for the honors and dignities it bestows.”

(From *Darkness to Light: What it Meant to Become a Christian in the Early Church*, Anne Field O.S.B., Servant Books, 1978, p.191.

That's what the world everywhere

looked like before God entered into it, conceived in the womb of the Blessed Virgin Mary and born at Bethlehem 2019 years ago. Through His Body, the Catholic Church, a civilization of love began to be born in the West and was spread by missionaries to the entire world bringing social service, science, medical care, culture, art, philosophy, and a more just legal and political system into the world. Christianity was largely responsible for helping to abolish human sacrifice, contraception, abortion, infanticide, slavery, euthanasia, marital infidelity, divorce and incest. Certainly, Christians sinned and in many cases failed to live up to the life of virtue it proclaimed. Nevertheless, Christian values became embedded in the culture of Europe and led to progress and the improvement of human life wherever it spread. It was a culture of life and virtue that made it a little easier for souls to get to heaven.

However, since the emergence of

Continued on next page

Director's Letter

Continued from previous page

the “Enlightenment” about 500 years ago, pure human reason was exalted over Divine Revelation and natural law. God was thrown out of the picture and chaos entered into the West. Gradually a benevolent view of the human race and universal brotherhood was eroded and replaced with a philosophy of egotism, militarism and struggle between people and nations. The world continued to advance in technology, but without the grace of God those advances led to greater and more efficient means of destroying life. For instance, it is estimated that more people died from wars in the 20th century (over 100 million) than in all the previous 19 centuries combined.* Today we even face the prospect of total destruction of world through nuclear war. It seems that we are back to the culture of death that St. Cyprian described over 1,700 years ago – and worse.

But the gates of hell cannot withstand the power of God's love, embodied in His Body, the Church. Beginning 500 years ago, through nine apparitions of the Blessed Virgin Mary, God has been calling us to conversion and prayer (Guadeloupe, Mexico in 1531, Rue de Bac, Paris in 1830, LaSalette 1846, Lourdes 1858, Pontmain, France 1871, Knock, Ireland 1879, Fatima, Portugal 1917, Beauraing, Belgium 1932, Banneux, Belgium 1933). All of these apparitions

occurred before or during great crises in Western civilization, e.g. the Protestant Revolution, the rise of communism, Nazism, World Wars I and II. Mary is the Mother of our God who loved us so much that He humbled Himself, took on our flesh at Bethle-

**The Gates
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The Church.**

hem, and destroyed the power of death by His Cross and Resurrection.

St. Matthew writes that when Jesus saw the crowds that followed Him He had compassion for them, “because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd,” (9:36). St. Bernadette recounts that in one of her apparitions Mary looked out with sadness over the crowds gathered at the Grotto and gave Bernadette her mission: “Pray for sinners,” and “Penance, penance, penance!” In this holiday season let's help to bring the light of Christ into the world by praying for the conversion of hearts and the perseverance of the just. As brothers and sisters of Jesus and children of Mary we can do no less. May you and yours have a joyous Christmas and a Blessed, Happy and Healthy New Year!

Fr. George

P.S. Our mission here exists totally on the charity of our friends and donors. If you can help us out with a donation this Christmas we would appreciate it. We have just repaired some broken windows in our three-story building (\$1,500.00), put up some huge banners of Jesus and Mary on the outside of our building to make it look more Catholic (\$3,000.00), and have to decommission one of our elevators which is too expensive to maintain any longer (\$6,880.00).

Readers Write

Dear Marist Fathers,

I feel that I need to let you know about a miracle that I have received from using the Lourdes Water and the intercessions of Our Lady of Lourdes and Saint Bernadette. I have been on eye injections in my right eye for several years because of different problems behind behind my eye. When I started these injections my vision was 20/60. The doctor told me that it is now 20/30. He told me that something wonderful had happened. I say a miracle. I have kept the faith to reach 20/20 vision still using the Lourdes Water. I thank you Fathers for getting this Lourdes Water to those who ask and I pray that God's blessing may always be with you. I would like to order two more bottles for friends who are having eye problems. **SD**

[ed. Except for postage and handling, Lourdes water is sent free of charge to anyone in the US and Canada who requests it.]

Please accept the enclosed donation in thanksgiving for a favor received. Last spring I suffered a heart attack and promised public thank if I recovered. I used Lourdes Water and thanks to Our Blessed Lady, I am overcoming the fright that I have had ever since the attack. **VT**

Enclosed is a donation sent in thanksgiving to Our Lady of Lourdes for a great favor received. I had a lesion on my face and the specialist thought that it might be cancerous. My sister and I prayed to Our Lady of Lourdes and I used Lourdes Water daily. The repost came back negative. I cannot thank our dear Lady of Lourdes enough. A day never passes without my

praying to Our Lady of Lourdes and using Lourdes Water. **MA**

Dear Father, Life changing! That was my experience of making a pilgrimage to Lourdes. I have renewed my faith like never before. It was truly a rebirth. When diagnosed with Fibromyalgia and arthritis, one of my problems was not being able to fully turn my neck to the left and being in a lot of pain. At the Grotto Baths, while being helped out of the Holy Water I was instantly dry. But that was not all. I could turn my neck all the way to the left, and was not in pain. I had not been able to do this for many, many months. I continue to enjoy this Grace! The daily tours with all the standing and walking were more enjoyable for me. The sermons were outstanding. They gave me a lot to think about. So Thankful! So Grateful! **JV**

Hi Father George, I am so happy for this opportunity to share with you and others my incredible journey. My niece called me to the Knights of Columbus was gifting her and her son with a trip to Lourdes. He suffers from Lyme disease that has spread to his brain. She was thrilled, but anxious. I blurted out, "I'll go with you honey!" She worried, about their ability to participate in many aspects of the pilgrimage - something that makes many families "bow out". I told her the Blessed Mother would make things work out for them. Through her fear she prayed the Rosary and went forward on faith that Our Lady had her back. The entire trip flowed! People were kind and helpful. Doors opened where obstacles and difficulties were antici-

pated. We were in the midst of many other pilgrims, but each of us felt treasured, important, loved - as a child is loved by its mother. My tears would not stop flowing when I witnessed my young nephew going into the waters and as his mother and the assistants guided him to the statue of the Blessed Mother. For me, on a deep level it meant so much for me to be dipped in the baths, participate in the Masses and processions and interact with other pilgrims. This pilgrimage deepened my Catholic faith that perhaps I never had or lost along the way. It will always be a reference point in my daily life, a sort of North Star. **CZ**

Dear Father, The blessings received while in Lourdes are too numerous to count, but among them are: renewed strength, peace of mind and special friendships. Since returning from Lourdes, the graces we have received have been subtle, sometimes silent and, for the most part, unseen, for they are gifts to the heart and mind. This makes them no less miraculous, maybe even more so. I prayed for peace of heart and mind for myself and my 11 year old son - that we might find joy in every day. We now have these. I prayed for improvement and healing for my other son's neurological impairments so that he may overcome the damage done to him by illness and grow into a healthy, happy adult. There has been improvement and healing. I can see that once you have been to Lourdes the blessings will continue to abound throughout one's life journey. Not a day goes by that I do not see yet another blessing. The ability to see them now is perhaps the greatest blessing. **MK**

A Story for The Fall Season

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

“From the mouths of infants...you have brought forth praise” (Matt 21, 16).

Uncle Ben finally pushed himself to visit his sister at her home. Early upon his arrival he realized that she was in a state of anxiety. The kitchen was in disarray: there was a stack of dishes and silverware that needed rinsing before placing in the dishwasher, the heap of clean laundry was waiting patiently to be sorted out, a soiled batch was at the ready, the kitchen table with its cereal box showed signs that breakfast and lunch were about to overlap, and amid all of this, the children were in high gear competing for Mom’s attention.

Uncle Ben to the Rescue

Not without difficulty, Uncle Ben got his sister’s attention and suggested that he take the youngest of the three children off her hands and go to see Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs. Without hesitation, his proposal was accepted. The child was put in the baby seat which was dutifully placed in the rear of the car. They are off to see the movie.

THE QUESTIONS

First Question

On the way, the car would stop at the lights. People were everywhere, on the sidewalk right and left, some crossing in front of the car in both directions. The first question from the back seat was, “Where are all these people going?” Uncle Ben explains that some people are going to work, others are going home after working all night. Some are going shopping for food or clothing, some to put money in the bank or draw some out to pay their bills,



some to see their doctors, others to visit family members and friends sick in the hospital, others are out visiting their friends, or simply taking a walk. Silence from the back seat.

Second Question

While driving on their way, our little occupant in the rear takes note of the birds lined up on the wires. The question comes, “What are all those birds doing up there?” Uncle Ben explains that summer time has ended and the birds will find it too cold to stay around for the winter. So, in order to escape the cold wind and snow, they are all gathering to head south where they will find warmer weather. Silence

from the back seat.

Third Question

The car was now out of the city and well into the suburbs. The trees on both sides of the road could not be missed. The question this time was, “Why are all those leaves falling from the trees?” Uncle Ben, once again, offers an explanation and informs him that the summer sun had turned the green colored leaves into brown and red. It is time for them to fall from the trees on to the ground. In that way room will be made on the branches for the new green leaves to grow in the spring and summer months of the next year

Conclusion

In place of the dead silence there was a pause. Then the child exclaimed, “Isn’t it all so wonderful!” “What is all so wonderful?” asked Uncle Ben. Then came the reply, “The whole thing!”

MIRACLES

There are independent medical evaluations

Pope Saint Pius X established the Lourdes Medical Bureau to investigate cases of medical miracles. This Medical Bureau is a medical institution and not under Church supervision. Over 7,000 people have asked to have their cases declared as miraculous cures, yet fewer than 70 been signed off on by both the Church and the Lourdes Medical Bureau as being cures with no scientific explanation. Because this system for rigorous investigation was established early and openly, verified miracles from Lourdes are considered to be the most reliable and least controversial.



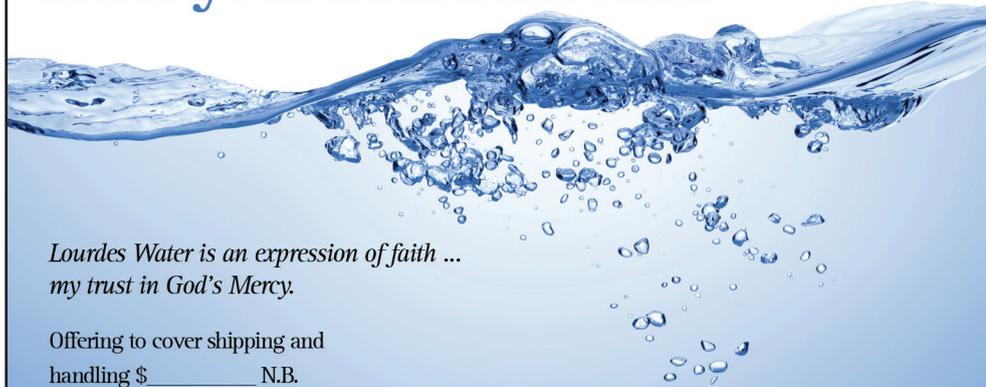
Bernadette did not avail herself of the waters at Lourdes

Never in good health herself, St. Bernadette suffered greatly, and with silent good nature, in the final years of her life. She held fast to Our Lady's promise that she wasn't promised "happiness in

this world, but in the next."

When she was 22, she joined the Sisters of Charity of Nevers. She was content to be apart from public life, regarding herself as a tool, such as a broom, which had served its purpose and then "the broom placed behind the door once it has been used." The teacher who had been harsh to her in her student years was to be her novice mistress and as harsh to the young sister as she had been to the student. It was not until this nun realized the sanctity with which Bernadette was bearing her final affliction of tuberculosis of the bone that she realized what a truly holy young woman she had been privileged to teach and guide. Despite her agony, Bernadette declined the opportunity to revisit Lourdes in search for a miraculous cure. She died a holy death at age 38 on April 16, 1879.

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

A Gift from You...

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

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____ Zip _____

Name _____

Address _____

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.

MARY JEAN MIZERA, SD

BERT SHIPLEY, FL

SILVESTRE MAGDAONG

BETTY RIZZO, LA

ANNA M. FARRELL, NJ

DOLORES JABUREK, IL

REV. JOHN J. SULLIVAN, GA

NORMA M. VASSALLO, CA

BRO. ERNEST MORASCI, GA

JULIE CHARLET, TX

MARY REICH, VA

BETTY C. WEAMER, MO

ROBERT. M. BEER, IA

PETER MAY, AZ

ROSE LOFTUS, TN

JAMES BELLAND, MN

ESTHER HEFFENAN, IL

MARLENE PTASZYNSKI, WI

RICHARD DEU

MARGARET LINDLEY, TX

FRANCES SAGONA, CO

SR. TERESA KELLY, NY

THERESA SABARA, NY

EDSON KNIBBS, NY

BARBARA KNIBBS, NY

FREDY MARTINEZ, IA

MARGARET PAGE, ME

CLETUS KRAENZLE, MO

RICHARD DEUTSCH, MN

EDWINA HEIDEL, AL

VICKI HARRIS, TX

MARILYN CULL, NY

ELAINE PERRAULT, VA

FRANCES MANGINO, IL

BETTY DOUCET, LA

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

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*

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 _____

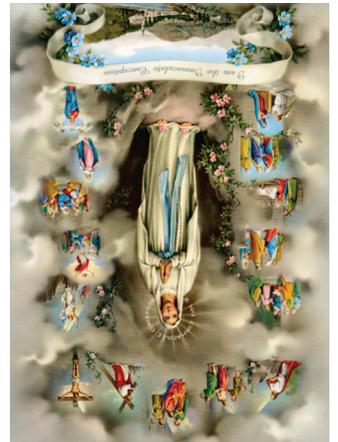
**On Friday, November 8 and Friday, November 22
and Friday, December 13 and Friday, December 27,
The Marist Fathers and Brothers of the Lourdes Center
will be praying for you.**

*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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