

echoes

FROM LOURDES

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A PUBLICATION OF THE LOURDES CENTER ♦ MARIST FATHERS AND BROTHERS



Rejoice, O Pure Virgin!! Your Son is risen! With Himself He has raised all the dead! Rejoice, all you people!

(Paschal Kontakion)



FR. GEORGE SZAL, S.M.

THE DIRECTOR'S LETTER

AUTHENTIC HEALING: A REVOLUTION OF THE HEART

*"I do not promise you happiness in this life, but in the next."
- Our Lady to St. Bernadette, 1858*

As I write this message the streets and sidewalks outside of the Lourdes Center are almost entirely empty. Here, as elsewhere in this great country of ours, the threat of the Coronavirus (COVID-19) has caused the closure of schools and restaurants, the cancellation of sporting events, concerts and any other gathering of more than 20 persons. Some local governments have proposed keeping people at home by imposing martial law. Many dioceses have lifted the Sunday obligation and forbidden the celebration of the Eucharist until further notice. They have even cancelled the celebration of the Easter Vigil this year! The panic over the fear of death has gripped the whole world.

Naturally, sensible people want to follow the instructions that they are given to do what they can to prevent the spread of sickness, suffering and death. However, persons of faith do not panic at the thought of suffering and death. They know that fear is the root of all evil in the world. As the eminent Jesuit theologian John Macmur-

ray, SJ wrote: "The maxim of illusory religion runs, 'Fear not; Trust in God and He will see that none of the things you fear will happen to you'." He then goes on to say, "That of real religion, on the contrary, is 'Fear not; the things you are afraid of are quite likely going to happen to you, but they are nothing to be afraid of'." The real faith of the real Christian is based on belief that by His Cross and Resurrection Christ has set us free from our slavery to the fear of death, a fear by which the devil holds the

world enslaved to sin. (Hebrews 2:15)

About 6 million pilgrims visit Lourdes every year. Some come as tourists. Those who come for healing don't come because they have colds, but come seeking a cure from something serious like cancer, incurable paralysis or birth defects, etc. In the 18 apparitions she made to St. Bernadette in 1858, all Our Lady asked of Bernadette was to have a chapel on the spot, to have processions, to drink from the spring in the grotto and to pray for the conversion of sinners. Healings were never promised. Yet from the first there have been miraculous cures at Lourdes. After long and rigorous investigation by a board of physicians, only 70 of them have been officially declared truly inexplicable and miraculous; like that of Vittorio Miceli in 1963. His femur and pelvic bone had been completely destroyed by a cancerous tumor and were miraculously restored after immersion in the baths at Lourdes. There are "before and after" x-rays to prove it. There have also been thousands of other declared but un-



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Director's Letter

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authenticated healings at Lourdes. As you may read in our "Readers Write" section, even those who have never been to Lourdes claim healings through prayer and the application of Lourdes Water. Millions of others who do not receive the healing that they seek still go away happy. Why?

One answer is that God, in His Divine Providence, has a different view of suffering than that of our fallen human nature. For instance, in the Gospels Jesus heals only a few sick people and raises only three from the dead (Lazarus, the son of the widow of Nain and the daughter of Jairus). He does this to prove that He is God incarnate in our weak human flesh. He does it to underline the truth of His Word, and to give us sinners a reason to trust in Him and convert, but that is only good for those who witness a miracle.

However, for many of us the fear of death fuels an attitude in which the enjoyment of life is the supreme value. If there is no God, or if we believe God is too distant from us to care, then everything must be done to prolong the lives of these who still enjoy life and think little about life hereafter. Unfortunately, all life is not equally valued in our society. "The same medical establishment that scrambles to treat coronavirus victims snuffs out thousands of lives daily, through abortion and euthanasia, so that others might free themselves from responsibilities and 'enjoy' life."



(John Horvat II, "This is the Sure Cure for Coronaphobia" from The American TFP, March 5, 2020). But what is it to truly "enjoy" life? Suffering can only be endured and life really enjoyed when we are free from the fear of death.

This reveals the second reason that God allows suffering. The inevitability of death eventually confronts each one of us. In tragedies like the Coronavirus we experience our limitations. In His agony Jesus Himself said, "Father, if you are willing, remove this chalice from me," and then, "nevertheless, not my will but yours be done," (Luke 22:38). An angel was sent to comfort Him.

In times of suffering people often turn to God and the Church for comfort and aid. In the companionship of processions, celebrations and in

the silence, Lourdes pilgrims learn to trust in the Providence of God. They find meaning and purpose in their sufferings. Some even join their sufferings to those of Jesus and offer them to obtain graces for others. Thus, the greatest miracles of Lourdes are the spiritual and moral miracles that help us to die to ourselves and live for others. If Our Lady were only concerned with physical healing we could not say that she truly loved us. She would endanger our salvation if she cured everyone who came to Lourdes. Instead, she helps us to embrace suffering as the means of our salvation and makes it a sign pointing to the life to come. Christ is Risen! Happy Easter!

Fr. George Szal, S.M.

Director

Readers Write

After many years of medical examinations and biopsies of a spot on my face I was finally diagnosed with a form of melanoma. Extensive surgery was successful in completely removing the cancer. However, transplanting skin and major reconstruction of one side of my face left me with railroad track scars on one side of my face. The first skin graft had failed, and I had to make a decision about whether or not to have another life altering reconstructive surgery. My prayers and those from the many people praying for me worked magic. I became very peaceful, accepting that God's will would be done. With my doctor's advice, I postponed the second surgery. Soon afterwards I received a small bottle of Lourdes Water from my brother, who had in turn received it from my mom. She had been sitting at dinner one day at her assisted living community. While at table a woman whom she had never met before asked why she looked so sad and learned that she was worried about me. Mom was startled to learn that this woman's own daughter had survived melanoma with the help of Lourdes Water. The stranger rushed from the table in her wheelchair. When she came back, she thrust a bottle of Lourdes Water into my mother's hands with instructions to send it to me immediately. As soon as I received it I began applying Mom's Lourdes

water to the skin graft on my face. Within a few short weeks the swelling began to recede and the discolored skin began to turn pink and show signs of life. Two of my doctors were at my next appointment. One exclaimed, "My, you have done some creative work with that bandage." When I told them that I wasn't wearing one they both grew silent and stared. I told them about the Lourdes Water. Without hesitation they both exclaimed that I had received a miracle and that my healing was a gift from God. Here were two men with over 35 years of professional medical experience at the top of their game and they were saying that I'd been given a miracle. I knew that! There is no other explanation. Have faith! **DK**

Hi! I am looking for a way to get Lourdes Water. I am anxious to get MUCH MORE than a teaspoonful in a tiny bottle. The reason is that my sister has just found out that she has a massive cancer in her lungs and that it is not operable. I want her to bless this mass in her lungs and pray that God will help her. Death is estimated in three years because of the enormity of the disease. Please send info of the Lourdes story to me so she can know about it and I will send a donation. I am a Catholic and love God and His son Jesus. Blessings. **NW**

I have been getting Lourdes Water for years and have been giving it away all the time. On one occasion our daughter was visiting us from Greece and took a bottle of it back with her in case someone should need it. It wasn't long after that her father-in-law grew deathly sick with pancreatitis. His wife was told that she should begin making funeral arrangements because he would not survive for very long. The mother-in-law took out the tube that was in his mouth, gave him a little Lourdes Water and sprinkled some on him. Soon he remarked, "I can breathe without the tube." When the doctor came in again he said, "You should be dead. I don't know what happened, but it's a miracle that you are alive. No one in your condition has ever made it." He is up and around now. We thank Our Lady of Lourdes and are sending for more Lourdes Water. God bless you all! **TK**

[For the past 70 years we have been sending 1.25 oz. bottles of Lourdes water - roughly the size of a small Scotch Tape dispenser - free of charge, except for postage and handling, to anyone in the U.S.A or Canada who requests it. We also have a small booklet that briefly describes the life of St. Bernadette, the apparitions and the message of Lourdes to send upon request. We are thankful for any who send donations to help us continue our ministry.] - Editor

Easter...

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

.....is called “Pasch” in Greek, translated “Passover” from which is derived the term “Paschal Mystery.”

.....celebrates the Paschal Mystery, that is, the wonderment of Jesus “passing over” from death to new life, in the resurrection from this world to the Father (see John 13:1). Our dying and rising is the participation in Jesus’ death and resurrection. It is a daily process, having the mind set: no to sin, yes to virtue.

.....has its roots in the Jewish Passover described in the Bible when the Angel of Death “passed over” the homes of the Hebrews sparing the lives of the firstborn males from the tenth plague. The sign that protected each household from that of the Egyptian was the blood of a sacrificed lamb that marked the doors.

.....celebrates the Christian Passover seen now as a fulfillment of the reality foreshadowed by the Jewish Passover: not the blood of a lamb that spares from death but the blood of the Lamb of God (See John 1:36; 1 Cor 5:7). Jesus states, “Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day” (John 6:54).

.....also has its roots in the Hebrew people “passing over” from

the land of their slavery to the land of promise, present day, Israel. But again, the Christian Passover is now seen as the fulfillment of the reality: the land now promised is not real estate but heaven.

.....parade may have had a deeply religious meaning. Those baptized on Holy Saturday Vigil wore new white clothes for a week as a

symbol that new birth has brought new life which bestows a “...sharing in the divine life...” (2 Peter 1:4). Christening, becoming like Christ, is another name for baptism.

.....baptism at the Holy Saturday Vigil was a ceremony unlike today. The adult candidate for this sacrament would deposit his/her

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Easter...

Continued from previous page

old clothes, symbolizing life lived as a pagan, on one side of the baptismal pool, and when emerging from the opposite side, put on new clothes aptly symbolizing the beginning of life in the Spirit.

....in the early Church had a dramatic profession of faith. The priest or deacon would address the candidate for baptism as follows, "Do you believe in God the Father? Do you believe in God the Son? Do you believe in God the Holy Spirit?" To each question the candidate would answer "yes." But answering each question would be followed by a bodily submersion in the baptismal pool. The symbol from death to the old sinful pagan way of life was thereby enacted. Emerging from the opposite side of

the pool and being dressed in new clothes symbolized the coming out of the tomb like Christ and being made a new creature (See Romans 6:2-11).

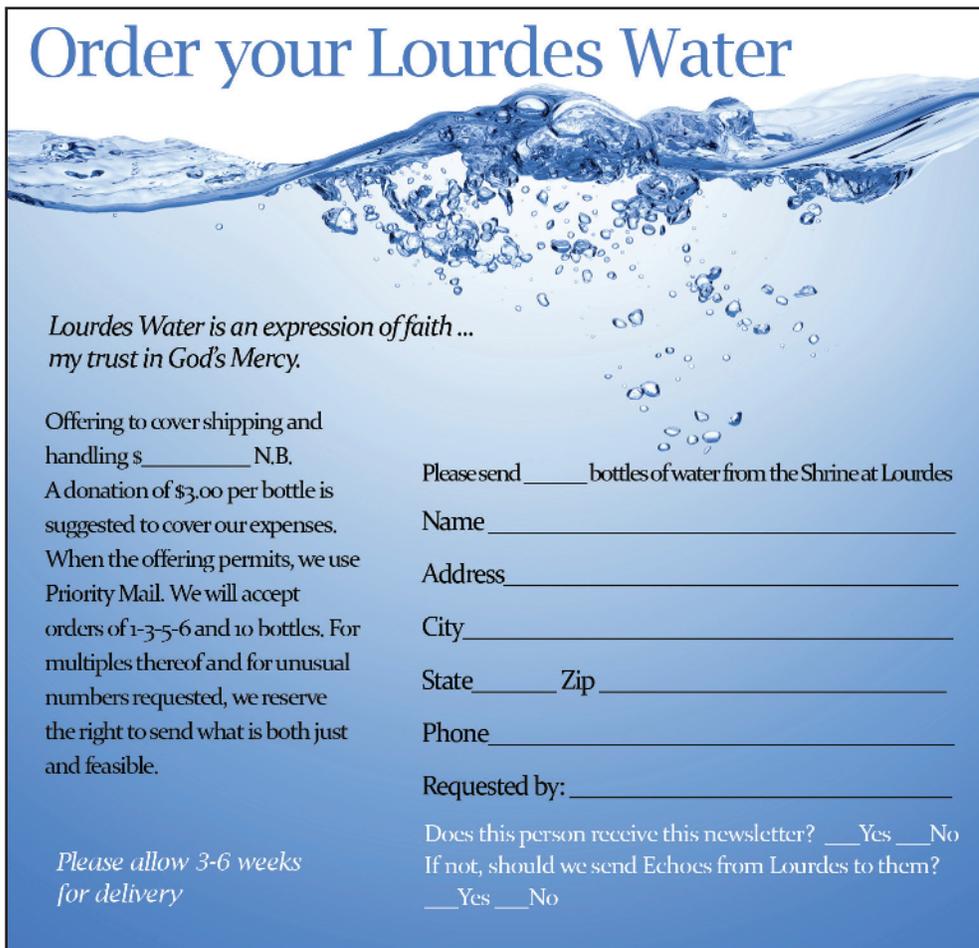
.....brings to mind an old theory that is founded on the description of baptism explained immediately above. This old theory was that a drowning person dies upon rising to the surface for the third and last time. This theory does not correlate with the facts. But it does square with the facts in the light of faith. A mystical death does indeed take place with the third submerging and regeneration in Christ (See Romans 6:2-5).

.....sacrament of "new life" in baptism begins the journey of faith.

The Lenten Season is a miniature journey of what the whole life-journey is about. Once Baptism makes us holy (justified) this share in the divine life, once lost by the sin of the Old Adam, is now restored by the New Adam, Christ. The awesomeness of this sacrament makes possible the rejection of sin that stands in the way of the new life - journeying with Christ our New Leader.

....Sunday must first be preceded by the purifying days of Lent and Good Friday. So, too, the Coronavirus with its dismal darkness threatening death will have its end with the dawn of a new day.

HAPPY EASTER!



Order your Lourdes Water

Lourdes Water is an expression of faith ... my trust in God's Mercy.

Offering to cover shipping and handling \$_____ N.B. A donation of \$3.00 per bottle is suggested to cover our expenses. When the offering permits, we use Priority Mail. We will accept orders of 1-3-5-6 and 10 bottles. For multiples thereof and for unusual numbers requested, we reserve the right to send what is both just and feasible.

Please send _____ bottles of water from the Shrine at Lourdes

Name _____
 Address _____
 City _____
 State _____ Zip _____
 Phone _____

Requested by: _____

Does this person receive this newsletter? Yes No
 If not, should we send Echoes from Lourdes to them?
 Yes No

Please allow 3-6 weeks for delivery



A Gift from You...

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

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 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.

DOT CROSBIE, LA
 JENNIE SIMEONE, CO
 DOTTIE O'REILLY, WA
 LORETTA MANDRY, NY
 ELIZABETH NELSON, WV
 ARCH AND MADONNA MACDONALD, PA
 PATRICIA MOUYARD, PA
 SR. MARY DENIS SCHWARTZ, ME
 OLIVIA JAMISON, MT
 ANNA LOUISE BRADLEY, IN
 JAMES J. LYNCH, JR., LA
 MARJORIE R. LYNCH, LA

MARIA LOPEZ, CA
 MARGARET HOPRICH, OH
 WILLIAM K. WHITE, MA
 JOSEPH DERDERIAN, TX
 ANNETTE TETRAULT, DE
 DAVID AND JANET LYDON, PA
 SIMON BENEDICT JOSEPH ROGERS, VA
 MARY DANICLE, OH
 IRENE BETHWAY, MI
 ARLENE M. STOUT, OH
 GERALDINE P. ADAMS, LA
 SR. M. CLARE KINZEL, O.P., KS
 PETER A. PERALES, TX
 ANN PATTON, OH
 EMMA GRIPSHOVER, KY
 SUSAN LAZAR, PA
 DANTE MAIMONE, OH
 ISIDRO FELIN, CA

VIRGINIA ORSILLO, NH
 NANCY PAUCKE, KY
 NANCY FEHNER
 MATTHEW LOONEY, MA
 CONNIE GUTIERREZ, MA
 GENE PAILLET, LA
 BARBARA FISCHER, CO
 JOYCE JANULLARI, OH
 H.F. WOLF, TN

Purgatorials for the Deceased

Name of Deceased _____

Please send Purgatorial to:

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____

Requested by: _____

Suggested offering: \$20.00 perpetual.

Our Lady's Purgatorial Society

Each year, your enrolled deceased and loved ones are remembered during the 365 daily Masses celebrated by the Marist Fathers. An attractive certificate framed in a blue folder with a colorful picture of Our Lady is sent to the donor or recipient.

Please mail responses to: Marist Fathers, 698 Beacon St. P.O. Box 15575, Boston, MA 02215-0010

Affiliations

Remembrance in 50 Masses Yearly and at our Weekly Perpetual Novena

Requested by: _____

Phone Number: _____

Offering: 1 year \$2.00
 3 years, \$5.00, Lifetime, \$10.00

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____ Zip _____

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 GROTTA

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

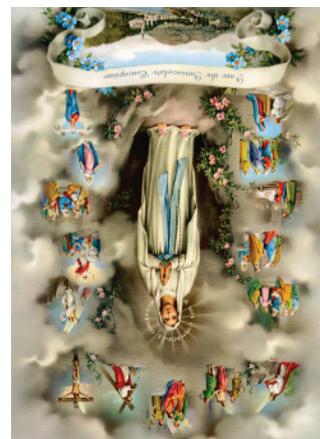
On Friday, May 8 and Friday, May 22
and Friday, June 12 and Friday, June 26,
The Marist Fathers and Brothers of the Lourdes Center
will be praying for you.

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

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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