



echoes

FROM LOURDES

November-December, 2020
Vol. 12 No. 2

A PUBLICATION OF THE LOURDES CENTER ♦ MARIST FATHERS AND BROTHERS



“HIS LIGHT SHINES IN THE DARKNESS.”
(John 1:5)





FR. GEORGE SZAL, S.M.

THE DIRECTOR'S LETTER

THE WORD BECAME FLESH

“He has dispersed the arrogant of mind and heart; He has cast down the rulers from their thrones, and has lifted up the lowly.” (Luke 1:51-52)

Usually a time of celebration and joy with family and friends, the Christmas holiday has also always been a time of suffering for many. For those whose lives have been marked by loneliness, poverty, sickness or the death of dear ones, the joy of Christmas is muted or nonexistent. The worldwide horror of the Covid-19 virus has only made things worse. That this was so at the first Christmas came to my attention when I recently saw a sculpture of the Visitation of Mary and Saint Elizabeth done by the artist Peggy Parker. She portrayed both of them as poorly clothed African women. Both look very distressed. Mary is rushing into the comfort of the outstretched and loving arms of her aged and miraculously pregnant cousin Elizabeth.

Mary's agonized look puzzled me and so I asked Peggy, “Why did you make Mary look so sad and frightened? Doesn't it say in the Gospel of Luke that she greeted Elizabeth with the joyous words, ‘My soul magnifies the Lord, my spirit rejoices in God my Savior?’” “Yes!” she said, “but recall that the middle of the Magnificat announces Mary's

prophetic vocation when she says, ‘He has brought down the mighty from their thrones and has exalted the lowly’ - Kings, like Herod, don't appreciate prophets criticizing them and announcing their downfall. In addition, did not Jesus Himself say, “Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you kill the prophets and stone those sent to you ...” (Matt. 23:37). He was crucified for calling us to a conversion of heart - rich and poor alike. Therefore, from the start, Mary put herself in the way of a lot of suffering just by saying, “Yes!” to becoming the Mother of the Messiah. She became a prophet.

In addition, even though Mary was espoused to Saint Joseph, she probably suffered from gossip in the village of Nazareth. There are no secrets in a small town, and she was pregnant before marriage. After their marriage, they had to travel to Joseph's hometown of Bethlehem for the census and experienced more suffering. Joseph's own relatives treated them as if they had some deadly virus and turned them away. Why was that? Because King Herod had his eye on Bethlehem for in Joseph's family there were descendants of ancient King David. According to the prophets, the Messiah who was

to inherit the throne of David his father - Herod's throne - and rule forever would be born there (Luke 1:32). Herod had already killed his own wife and two sons because he thought that they were after his throne. Thus, he watched with murderous intent for any newborn boys born in Bethlehem. Abandoned by their own family, Mary and Joseph had to take shelter in a miserable stable for Jesus' birth. Then they had to escape Bethlehem by making a dangerous trip through the desert to Egypt before Herod carried out the murder of that town's innocent children.

There was a lot more suffering in store for Mary in her prophetic role as the mother of the Messiah. The point is that any Christian who says “Yes!” to God and becomes a disciple of Christ has to expect suffering as part of the package. Love hurts, and real love hurts a lot. St. Bernadette knew this. Those who are in power do not want their authority questioned by anyone who claims allegiance to an authority higher than theirs. France had been through a terrible revolution before St. Bernadette was even born. Violent outbreaks of civil unrest after her death would continue in that country almost to the end of the 19th century. Thousands had

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Director's Letter

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shed their blood for the faith during the Reign of Terror. Waves of anticlericalism spread through the country. Monasteries, convents, and thousands of Catholic schools were confiscated. The Church was in turmoil and had lost its influence. In the middle of this mess, the Blessed Virgin Mary appeared to St. Bernadette with a message of peace. "Build a chapel, wash in the waters of Massabielle, make pilgrimages of faith, do penance, pray the Rosary," she said. The way to peace on earth is through humble, heartfelt prayer and penance, not through threats and violence.

The old pastor of my family's parish used to erect a huge Christmas tree in the sanctuary of the church. When Christmas was over, he would take it down, chop off the branches and make it into a cross for Lent. "Real love," he said, "is very often a harsh and a dreadful thing. Love in the dimension of the Cross is awesome! It is prophetic. It is like the total gift that a mother makes for her child, a sweet pain. Mary, our Mother, invites us to share in her gift of love. This love is God's solution to the crisis in our world!" This is the message of Christmas. This is the message of Lourdes.

May you have a Blessed Christmas and New Year full of the joy of discipleship.

Peace,

Fr. George Szal, S.M.

Director



Mary as Prophet - He has filled the hungry with good things... Luke 1:53
2015

Commissioned by Virginia Theological Seminary
Award 2016 Faith & Form Honor Award
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Readers Write

Enclosed is an offering in thanksgiving to Our Lady of Lourdes. I asked the Blessed Mother to let my mammogram report come back normal. Well, it did. I am enclosing an offering for a Mass as thanksgiving to Our Lady. She has been very good to me. She always seems to hear my prayers and answers my requests. I have great faith in Our Lord and the Blessed Mother. Also, I use my Lourdes water faithfully. **DK**

I am enclosing an offering to thank Our Lady of Lourdes for a large healing of a serious disease which lasted two years. It was a disease of unknown origin and left me completely exhausted with bleeding problems, a very swollen spleen and liver and many other painful and distressing symptoms. My prayer partners and I prayed constantly and I was anointed daily for six months with Lourdes water. When I saw the doctor last week, everything had returned to normal and I was pronounced “cured!” We all realize it was constant prayer to the saints and to our loving Mother who interceded for me to Jesus. “Praise and Thank God. I am healed!” **EO**

I would like to tell you of a miraculous cure of a relative. She had cancer of the kidney. One had to be removed and she had repeated chemotherapy treatments and was gravely ill. We used the Lourdes Water on her and sent in petitions to the Lourdes Center. Last month doctors said it could only be a miracle. She is completely cured and has absolutely no sign of the tumors. Thank you, Our Blessed Lady. **FF**

Enclosed is a Novena offering in thanksgiving to Our Lady of Lourdes. I asked Our Blessed Mother to let the doctor find me in good health with no problems when I went for my sixth month checkup recently. He gave me good news and I feel that the Blessed Mother answered my prayers. She has taken care of me in so many ways and I thank Our Lord and her every night in my prayers. Also, please send me three bottle of Lourdes water. I will be sending other offerings in the future. I will not let Our Lady down. **DJK**



MARIST GUIDANCE

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

It Makes Lourdes Special

There are many happenings that take place at the destination of land of apparitions. But there is one event that needs to be brought to light. A very special phenomenon takes place as the sick line up for the baths and await their turn. All have the same reaction: Their thoughts turn away from themselves, stop worrying about their personal pains and sickness and begin to notice others worse than themselves.

Grace Abounds at Lourdes

There is no doubt that the mercy and compassion of God is very available and plentiful in these surroundings and that means His grace is most available as well. You may think that not actually being there puts us at a disadvantage in that we are not aware of the plight of others, so may not be moved by grace to be captivated by their suffering or to be able to turn our thoughts away from self.

Grace May Well Abound at Home

What will prevent us at home to participate in such a phenomenon in noticing the depths of sickness of another and what they must endure? We will then react in the same way as the pilgrims at Lourdes and begin praying for others suffering far worse than ourselves! How can we do that? The following will explain.





MARIST GUIDANCE

Continued from previous page

We Read About the Sickness of Others

While it is true that we at home do not see those in various stages of ill health we read about them in the Echoes in the section: Readers Write. Here is what I mean...

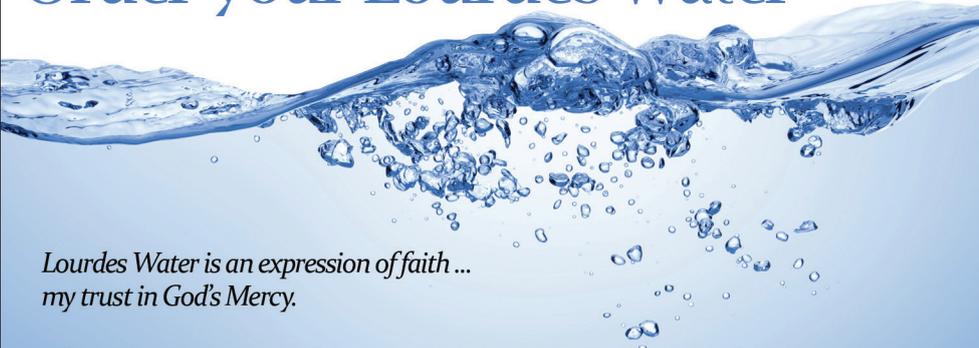
I am sorry to hear that Fr. Lacasse has passed. Father is the one who started me on donating to Our Lady of Lourdes. He had prayed for my son who was undergoing surgery for cancer. He was in surgery for 24 hours for a tumor the size of one

and a half grapefruit that was removed from his head. He survived, but had a lot of problems. He is on stomach feeding only, can't speak clearly because half of his tongue has been removed and has no teeth. But he is alive. He sent Fr. Lacasse a thank you letter for his prayers. I will miss Fr. Lacasse. He is at peace now with God. -- **California**

Can you who have just read this not be touched in the depths of your soul at the suffering barely mentioned, yet immensely reveal-

ing. The sick at Lourdes seeking a possible cure for themselves become taken in by the plight of another while we at home, upon reading the story of another sick person, can very well react in the same way by prayers and invocations to God for assistance to others more in need. In this way, the striking phenomenon at Lourdes can be experienced at home as well. May our prayers for one another well up from below reaching up to the throne of God. When we forget self and pray for another, God does not forget us!

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.

KATHLEEN M. BOWEN, MA
MICHAEL M. WALSH, MA
VERNON REICHLE, IL
ROBERT MANKOS, NJ
PETER VU, MN
JOHN KEATING, IL
BOB STEWART, NY
JUDITH DUDARYK, MI
JESSE AYALA
MARY AYALA
STEVEN CHAMBERS, MT
JOHN B. CORTEZ, GA
JOSEPHINE VENDETTI, NY

JOSEPH ROMERO, NM
RICHARD VRANGO, MT
MARY D. GIBBONS, NH
RITA M. RAIMONDI, NH
MARGARET WALSH, NC
FRANK S. TOROK
ELIZABETH STRAIN, MA
ROBERT BASHAW, NY
JOANNE FREITAS, HI
HELEN PINKLEY, AZ
CORINNE NEBRASKA, OH
FRANK TRUCHON, IL
SYLVIA MCMANIS, NM
BENJAMIN MILLER, LA
AGNES MAREK, MS
BARBARA BOHNE, IN
MARY GERSTEL, PA
JOSEPH GRABOWSKI, MI
CECILIA DUNN, MI

MICHAEL S. GALIARDI, PA
HELEN ENGLAND, CA
MARY LOU CANNULI, NY
JOSEPH BENDZUNAS, NY
MARGARET CURTIN, MA
MARY ANN BOEHM, AZ
ANN MORGAN, CA
MARTHA S. DIORIO, NY
RUTH MASON, MA
SYLVIA AGUILAR, AZ
ROBERT C. STERLING, MI
THOMAS A. STERLING, MI

Our Gift Center



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

- 2021 WALL CALENDAR (LIMITED SUPPLY).....\$10.00
- OUR LADY OF LOURDES MEDAL IN GROTTA.....\$5.00
- BROWN SCAPULAR.....\$3.00
- OUR GIFT FROM MARY SCAPULAR BOOKLET.....\$3.00
- BROWN SCAPULAR BOOKLET AND BROWN.....\$5.00
SCAPULAR
- 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

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 _____





On Friday, November 13 and Friday, November 27
and Friday, December 11 and Friday, December 25,
The Marist Fathers and Brothers of the Lourdes Center
will be praying for you.

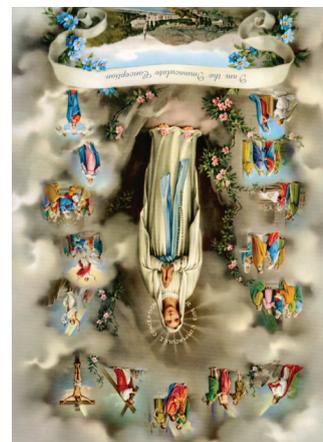
*You can count on it, on the second and the fourth Friday of every month, we hold a special prayer day
when we say special prayers and offer Mass at our chapel for our extended Lourdes family
... including you.*

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

Lourdes Echoes

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to Our Lady and interest in her shrine at
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