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# 1<sup>ST</sup> SATURDAY DEVOTION NEWSLETTER

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May 2014

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### LEAVING AN IMPRINT OF A MOTHER'S FAITH

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"Children are like wet cement."

Moms know this often used description is true. You can do some shaping and molding, but it's never easy and kids grow up quickly and become "hardened" in such a hurry! A mom hopes to leave a significant imprint in that wet cement, and by the grace of God, that imprint can be a blessing and reminder of grace all her child's life.

The Bible hints to us that God specifically chose Mary to be the mom of Jesus to help imprint the wet cement of the Savior. There was something about both Mary and Joseph that led God to choose them to love, raise, form, and shape the Messiah!

Some are a little uncomfortable having anyone talk about a human imprint being made — a mere mortal making an impression — on the Lord, our Savior, the Son of God. Yet if we listen carefully, the Holy Spirit quietly whispers this truth to us.

After Jesus, at age 12, had declared that he had to be focused on his Father's work, the spiritual work of the temple, the Bible says:

Then he [Jesus] went down to Nazareth with them [Mary and Joseph] and was obedient to them. But his mother treasured all these things in her heart. And Jesus grew in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man (Luke 2:51-52 NIV11).

Even after realizing at some level his responsibility to honor God and even after amazing everyone in the Temple courts with his understanding and answers to religious questions as he visited with the great teachers of Israel (Luke 2:45-47), Jesus went home and was obedient to his parents and continued to grow up under their influence into the young man God was wanting him to become!

Jesus was still wet cement, and Mary and Joseph were responsible for molding, shaping, and imprinting that cement! They weren't alone in this; God was at work shaping Jesus' life (Luke 2:40), much like he is partnered with any godly parents in forming children of faith (Psalm 139:13-16; Ephesians 6:1-40).

Mary and Joseph's influence on Jesus was no accident! They were chosen by God (Luke 1:28-32). God chose them for some reasons we will probably never know, but Scripture does give us clues about some of the reasons he chose Mary and her betrothed, Joseph, to raise the Messiah. They were people of righteous character (Luke 1:34; Luke 2:39-40), gracious compassion (Matthew 1:19), and had godly family connections (Luke 1:5-17; Luke 1:39-45) with a group of very devout people who longed for God to intervene and bring redemption (Luke 2:21-38).

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## OVERVIEW FOR THE MONTH

May is the month when Catholics traditionally focus on Mary, the Mother of Jesus. The practice dates back at least 700 years and is still observed around the world today. May is seen as the beginning of new life and the start of summer, in Europe, Asia, and North America, which makes this a logical time for the celebrations of Mary, who brought life into the world.

This month of devotions in the church calendar is characterized by special hymns and the use of flowers, which bring nature into the church. There are several Marian feast days in May, including Our Lady of Fatima, Our Lady of the Most Blessed Sacrament and Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

The celebration of May as a holy month for Mary has been ratified by several popes through the ages. Pope Benedict XV ordered a prayer for peace in 1915 during World War I and Pope Pius XII called for May devotions in 1939, at the start of World War II.

Perhaps the most well-known of the May Marian devotions is the crowning of a statue of Mary with flowers. This became particularly popular in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, with a procession of school-age boys and girls dressed in their finery, following the statue in a procession.

Marian devotions have sometimes been criticized by people who misunderstand Catholic devotion to Mary, the Mother of God. Mary is not worshipped in the way that Catholics worship God. She is honored as the mother of Jesus and as a woman free from sin. Devotions to Mary are an integral part of Catholic life.

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Source: Anthony F Chiffolo, 100 Names of Mary: Stories and Prayers, [Saint Anthony Messenger Press, 2002]. □

## FEASTS FOR MAY

The feasts on the General Roman Calendar celebrated during the month of May are:

- 1 Joseph the Worker, Opt. Mem.
- 2 Athanasius, Memorial
- 3 Philip and James, Feast
- 4 Third Sunday of Easter, Sunday
- 10 St. Damien Joseph de Veuster, priest, Opt. Mem.
- 11 Fourth Sunday of Easter, Sunday
- 13 Our Lady of Fatima, Opt. Mem.
- 14 Matthias, Feast
- 15 Isidore the Farmer (USA), Opt. Mem.
- 18 Fifth Sunday of Easter, Sunday
- 20 Bernardine of Siena, Opt. Mem.
- 21 Christopher Magallanes and companions; Eugene de Mazenod (Canada), Opt. Mem.
- 22 Rita of Cascia, Opt. Mem.
- 25 Sixth Sunday of Easter, Sunday
- 26 Philip Neri, Memorial
- 27 Augustine of Canterbury, Opt. Mem.
- 31 Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Feast

The feasts of St. John I (May 18) and St. Bede, St. Gregory VII and St. Mary Magdalene de Pazzi (May 25), are superseded by the Sunday liturgy. The Solemnity of the Ascension (May 29) is celebrated on June 1 (Sunday) in most dioceses in the United States. □

# HIGHLIGHTS OF THE MONTH

## JOINING MARY IN A PRAYER FOR PEACE

### THE STORY OF FATIMA

*By: Hallie Reidel*

On a spring day in 1916, three children watched their family's sheep on a hillside in rural Portugal. Completely oblivious to the fact that their country was at war and that Pope Benedict XV was begging Mary's intercession and lamenting World War I as the "suicide of Europe," the children sang, danced, and played games.

When it began to rain, they took refuge in a cave-like rock formation and prayed the customary daily rosary. In a hurry to get back to their games, they said only the first words of each prayer as they fingered the beads: "Our Father, Hail Mary, Hail Mary, Hail Mary..."

Who could have predicted that these ordinary children were on the threshold of an experience that would transform them radically and give birth to a message of peace that still resonates today? But on that warm afternoon, Lucia dos Santos, age ten, and her cousins Francisco and Jacinta Marto, ages nine and seven, saw the first of three visions of an angel. And these visions were only meant to lead up to something even more extraordinary—the apparitions of Our Lady of Fatima.

#### Messages from Heaven.

The heavenly messenger identified himself as the "Angel of Peace" and told the children that it was important to pray and offer sacrifices for those who do not believe in God. In the final apparition, the angel appeared holding the Eucharist. He offered it to the children, saying, "Take and drink the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ." Again he invited them to intercede for those whose sins grieve the Lord.

Though not fully understanding the angel's invitation, the children responded with wholehearted simplicity. They allowed Jesus to fill them with his desire to reach those who didn't believe, and they began to pray and look for opportunities to make small sacrifices as a way of intercession.

#### Our Lady of the Rosary.

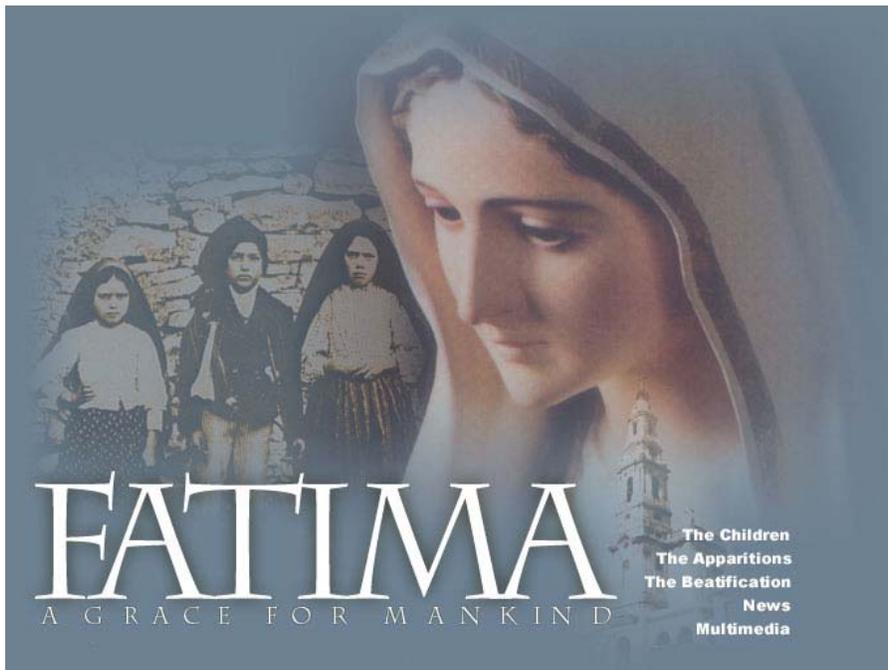
A few months later, on May 13, 1917, as the children were pasturing their flocks in a field owned by Lucia's father, they were frightened by a flash of light. They thought a storm was coming and took cover. At the next flash, however, they saw a ball of light at the top of a low tree. In that light stood a beautiful Lady.

When the Lady said she was from heaven, Lucia asked her to take them there too. To their delight, she promised to do so: Jacinta and Francisco would go soon, while Lucia would remain "for some time more." The Lady then asked the children to embrace whatever suffering might come their way, offering it both as intercession for those who had rejected God and as a way of "consoling" the Lord. The children agreed. "You are going to suffer a great deal," the Lady warned, "but the grace of God will be your

comfort." She told the children to say the rosary every day for world peace and gently corrected their "efficient" shortened method of praying! Then the Lady left, promising to return on the thirteenth of the month for the next five months.

In the second apparition, on June 13, the Lady showed the children a vision of hell that shook them to the core. She taught them a prayer to add at the end of each decade of the rosary: "O my Jesus, forgive us our sins, save us from the fires of hell, and lead all souls to heaven, especially those most in need of your mercy." With every apparition, the Lady asked that believers entrust the world to her Immaculate Heart and say the rosary every day for peace and for conversions.

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## THE VISITATION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY – MAY 31

*Excerpted from the Reed of God, Caryl Houselander*

And Mary rising up in those days went into the hill country with haste, into a city of Judah. [Lk. 1:39]

How lyrical that is, the opening sentence of St. Luke's description of the Visitation. We can feel the rush of warmth and kindness, the sudden urgency of love that sent that girl hurrying over the hills. "Those days" in which she rose on that impulse were the days in which Christ was being formed in her, the impulse was his impulse.

Many women, if they were expecting a child, would refuse to hurry over the hills on a visit of pure kindness. They would say they had a duty to themselves and to their unborn child which came before anything or anyone else.

The Mother of God considered no such thing. Elizabeth was going to have a child, too, and although Mary's own child was God, she could not forget Elizabeth's need -- almost incredible to us, but characteristic of her.

She greeted her cousin Elizabeth, and at the sound of her voice, John quickened in his mother's womb and leapt for joy.

I am come, said Christ, that they may have life and may have it more abundantly. [Jn. 10, 10] Even before He was born His presence gave life.

With what piercing shouts of joy does this story of Christ unfold! First the conception of a child in a child's heart, and then this first salutation, an infant leaping for joy in his mother's womb, knowing the hidden Christ and leaping into life.

How did Elizabeth herself know what had happened to Our Lady? What made her realize that this little cousin who was so familiar to her was the mother of her God?

She knew it by the child within herself, by the quickening into life which was a leap of joy.

If we practice this contemplation taught and shown to us by Our Lady, we will find that our experience is like hers.

If Christ is growing in us, if we are at peace, recollected, because we know that however insignificant our life seems to be, from it He is forming Himself; if we go with eager wills, "in haste," to wherever our circumstances compel us, because we believe that He

desires to be in that place, we shall find that we are driven more and more to act on the impulse of His love.

And the answer we shall get from others to those impulses will be an awakening into life, or the leap into joy of the already wakened life within them. □



*... I am your Mother Mary.*

*Today is the day of renewal of your faith in God. The passion of my son Jesus is the way that reopens the relationship of humanity to God our creator. Come my children rekindle the fire of love, hope and humility that brought humankind close to God in the day of creation. This is the time that you offer all your prayers to God through the passion and blood of my son Jesus. My beads of rosary are the way to light your path towards God's Heart. Prayers you must include those lives that have been wasted by their own neglect, whose hearts are uncommitted to the path of God's will. If you're not with God's own path, the evil one grabs that heart as his own possession and claims it before the Almighty.*

*There is only one Master to serve. The choice is clear, eternal life or eternal damnation. God is merciful but He never forces His will to anyone's heart.*

*Thank you my children for adhering to my call.*

*- Mary, Your Lady of Peace and Carmel*

*040514*

# KNOWING OUR SAINTS

## THE LIFE OF ST. MARY MAGDALENE DE' PAZZI

FEAST DAY: MAY 25

*The Carmelites: The Post Tridentine Period 1550-1600 (Vol. III)*

Born in 1566, Catherine de' Pazzi was destined to live during one of the more difficult periods in the history of the Catholic Church and to become one of the Order's and indeed the Church's most exalted mystics. Even as a girl she was attracted to prayer, solitude, and penance. She had a deep devotion for the Eucharist, receiving his first Communion at the age of ten and shortly thereafter making a vow of virginity.

In the family, Catherine was called Lucrezia out of respect for her paternal grandmother, Lucrezia Mannucci. But this



was never really accepted by Catherine herself because of her love for Catherine of Siena who had lived two centuries earlier but whose life would have a deep impact upon de'Pazzi's.

Born into a noble Florentine family, Catherine received religious training from the Jesuits. At the age of nine she was taught how to meditate, using a recently published work explaining how one should meditate on the Passion of Christ. Year later, this book

was one of the items she brought with her to Carmel.

In 1583, Catherine was received as a novice in the enclosed Carmelite monastery of St. Mary of the Angels in Florence, Italy in 1583. She took the name Maria Magdalen. Because of illness, a fever accompanied by violent coughing that appeared to put her life in jeopardy, her first profession was anticipated.

The Florentine monastery was frequently a gathering place for women of the court of Florence -- among them the future wife of Henry IV of France. Others more familiar with the lives of the religious leaders and members of the religious orders came calling, giving the saint the opportunity to become very familiar with the shortcomings of life in the Church.

Mary Magdalen's sudden cure after her profession was followed by a state of ecstasy which lasted forty days.

Every morning after Mass, the young sister fell into an ecstasy lasting two hours. At other times she experienced "excesses of love."

These ecstasies continued into the year 1585 often with such frequency that one other nun recorded "We can hardly find a free moment to speak to her, as she is constantly in a state of elevation of mind." Often these ecstasies involved colloquy.

This time of spiritual consolation was followed by "the lion's den," a five-year period of "the greatest trial and affliction of spirit," beginning on Trinity Sunday, June 16, 1585. Gone was the sense of joy in God's presence. Her whole life seemed a mistake. She was severely tested against chastity. She underwent doubts about her vocation. Ecstasies were still experienced but they brought little comfort. She was tempted to run away from the monastery and commit suicide.

The Church in the second half of the 1500's was struggling with its interior difficulties as well as forces for change from the outside. The Council of Trent had concluded in 1563, three years before Catherine de' Pazzi was born. But the people and the hierarchy were still struggling to implement the doctrinal statements and the reforms called for by the Council years after Pope Paul IV confirmed all the Council's decrees on January 26, 1564. Within the lengthy list of the Council's reforms was that of religious life.

The ecstasies of Sr. Mary Magdalen continued. In some, Jesus was urging her to reform the Church and her community. Together with the spread of the Gospel and an anxiety for the salvation of souls, this theme of the renewal of the Church and of religious life in the Church, became her major focuses.

Mary Magdalen wrote a dozen letters which exist today, dating from July 25 to September 4, 1586, dictated by the saint while in ecstasy. Each of the 12 letters deals with the same topic: the urgent need for the renewal of the Church and in particular of religious.

### **Letters of St. Mary Magdalen de'Pazzi on the Renewal of the Church**

On the feast of Pentecost, June 10, 1590, in a vision of the saints, Mary Magdalen was freed from "the lion's den." Her ecstasies began occurring less frequently but they only ceased with her last illness, beginning in 1604.

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# GOD TOUCHED ME

## DOES THE LORD REALLY GUIDE?

*I trust in the Lord with all my heart and lean not on my own understanding.  
In all my ways I acknowledge Him and He directs my paths.*

*(Proverbs 3:5-6)*

*By GC, a devotee*

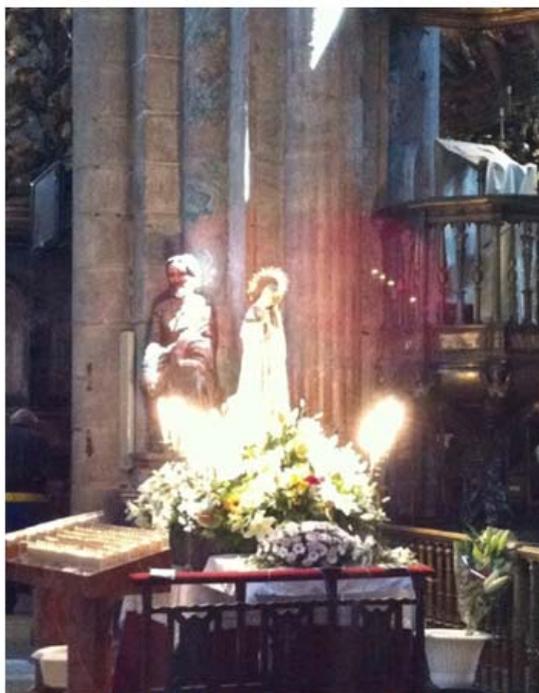
I woke to the sound of old ladies singing. It sounded like my grandmother and her friends from her Block Rosary Crusade were on procession outside. It was the feast day of Our Lady of Fatima, May 13, 2012, and I was in a hotel room, on my last morning in Santiago de Compostela. After spending the previous week with a group walking the last hundred kilometers of the French Way of the Camino de Santiago, I was flying home to Zürich in a few hours. A glance at my phone told me it was 5:06, too early to be awake. I rolled over to go back to sleep, but was awakened by a pure, bright, dazzling light, in the shape of a woman with a veil with her palms outstretched. I could not make out any features, just her silhouette. I jumped up. It was 5:13 a.m. I could still hear the singing. I brushed my teeth, got dressed, and was running on cobblestones of the Fuente de San Antonio by 5:20. I wanted to catch up with that procession.

Following the singing, I sprinted through the cold streets of Santiago towards the cathedral. Running past the walled convents, the monastery gates, the closed cafes, and boarded up souvenir shops, I had imagined that I'd arrive at the square and find the singing grannies wrapped snugly against the cold. I was surprised to arrive at the Plaza del Obradoiro and find it silent and empty. It was 6:10 and still dark. The cathedral was not due to open for another hour. I did not feel like going back to my hotel. When I finally convinced myself that there were no processions of singing grannies hiding around the corners, I made my way to the arches of the Palacio de Raxoi. From there, I had the view of the famed western façade of the cathedral all to myself. I sat on the cold pavement, waiting for sunrise or for the cathedral doors to open, whichever came first.

I thanked God for calling me to this pilgrimage, and for my family for understanding my need to follow His call. I

thanked God for the silver scallop shell Rosary in my hands (scallop shells being the sign of St. James) which had mysteriously shown up on my mom's altar in Manila and which she had given to me for my pilgrimage. I thanked Him for the wonderful people I walked with. I thanked Him for the bouts of illness He sent over the previous two years to make me question the path I was on, and for the voice in my heart that had been exhorting me to quit my job and start on a new path. I thanked Him for leading me to my spiritual mentor, who taught me that the heart is our connection to God, and that when hearts talk, we should listen. I thanked Him for the dream He sent one night, where Jesus, the Blessed Mother, and my guardian angel instructed me on prayer and walking uncharted paths. I thanked Him for the dream where an angel with a flaming sword raised a wall of fire behind me to keep me from turning back. I recalled the homily at the special pilgrims' service we attended when we first arrived in Santiago. We had gathered around a fire in the church courtyard. The priest had given us black cards. These signified our old lives, he said. He asked us to meditate on the old skins we had shed on our journey to Santiago, and then to throw the black cards into the flames. Pilgrims always start their journeys heavily laden

with all the stuff they think they need, he said. But the pilgrim's journey, a metaphor for our earthly experience, is like a refining fire. As we go through our journeys, whether as pilgrims walking an ancient pilgrimage path, or as pilgrim souls in this human experience, we come to realize that they don't need so much after all. And if we allow ourselves to surrender and abandon our lives to God, we allow room for Him to step in and do His thing. God works His greatest works in and for and through us when we surrender our free will to His. Wave upon wave of gratitude washed over me as I pondered these lessons under the arches of the Palacio de Raxoi.



I took this photo in Santiago on the feast day of Our Lady of Fatima, on the day when the events in this piece took place. This is a special picture for me. In the red hazy glow around the Blessed Virgin, I see the face of St James. He is wearing a wide pilgrim's hat. (He looks quite handsome and dashing.) On the top part of the column (a little bit to the left of the middle), I see the face of the sorrowful Virgin Mary with a veil. Just below the sorrowful Virgin is the Holy Family. On the upper left corner of the photo, I see Jesus with his crown of thorns. I also see a stern-faced God the Father. The red glow around the "real" statue of Our Lady of Fatima form His robes. Whenever I focus on this part of the picture, I pray, "Lord have mercy". (I have this picture printed out on an 8 x 11 page and have it in my prayer room. At this 8 x 11 size, these figures are more evident.)

The cathedral doors opened at 7:15. I attended Mass and afterwards prayed a Rosary before Our Lady of Fatima, who was beautifully adorned in white lilies for her feast day. I went behind the altar to kneel by St. James' tomb, and climbed the steps to embrace his statue above the main altar. I didn't really know much about St. James before this pilgrimage, but now I felt we were close friends. "Please help me to come back again someday, St James," I prayed.

Some weeks later, I found myself in Los Angeles on my last work-related trip. After months of email correspondence, I finally met my spiritual mentor. I spent a day with him and his family. At some point, he had an errand to take care of at the Convent of the Sister Disciples of the Divine Master. I waited for him in the gift shop. There were various statues of the Blessed Virgin on sale. A veiled Virgin Mary with rays of light shining from her outstretched palms caught my eye. "Tito, I've seen her before!", I said excitedly when he came back. I told him how she woke me early that one morning in Santiago. "That is Our Lady of Grace and the Miraculous Medal," he said.

I bought the statue and brought it home to Zürich. Later, I would find that I had more than a dozen Miraculous Medals at home. Members of the Legion of Mary occasionally distributed the blessed medals to passersby along Bahnhofstrasse in Zürich. Given that I am the type of person who never turns down anything free, I would always gratefully accept, stick the medal into my purse, and promptly forget about it. Over the years, I had inadvertently amassed quite a collection. While I had initially thought that I had first met Our Lady of Grace in Santiago de Compostela, she has actually been watching over, protecting, and guiding me for much much longer.

P.S. St. James heard and answered my prayer. In just a few weeks, two years after the pilgrimage described here, I will be back on the Camino, with my backpack and hiking boots, heading towards St. James and Santiago de Compostela! ☐

***If you have any personal articles  
or God's miracle in your life  
you want to share with the devotees,  
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(702) 274-4315 and/or (213) 385-7798***

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### **Leaving an Imprint of a Mother's Faith**

The role of a human mother and father shaping the development of the Messiah doesn't diminish the divinity of Jesus; it was part of God's plan. In Jesus, God chose to become human flesh and live among us as one of us

(John 1:14). Jesus was God among us and one of us in every way (Hebrews 2:14-18; Hebrews 4:14-16).

Mary and Joseph remind us of the divine partnership that each of us has in forming God's child "on loan" to us for a while. Our role is to shape, influence, mold, and imprint that child in ways that glorify the Father. We see parenthood redefined as something much more than contributing DNA to make a baby. We see the vital role of moms and dads as nurturing a child to discover his or her calling, the calling God designed into that child when the Father created that child uniquely, with purpose and for relationship with him (Psalm 139:13-16).

So on this Mother's Day, I want to remind each mom — biological mom, adoptive mom, grandmother mom, church mom, foster mom — that you are so much more than a Michelangelo. Legend has it that someone once came to Michelangelo and asked if he could watch as he sculpted. For several days, Michelangelo did nothing other than look at the huge block of marble from every angle and in different lighting conditions. Finally, growing tired of this indiscernible process, the onlooker broke the great sculptor's concentration and asked what in the world he was doing. Michelangelo reportedly said, "I am looking for the masterpiece to release that is hidden in the marble."

**As a mom, you are called to unlock the masterpiece embedded in the gift of the child God has placed in your care. Yet you have far more influence than just releasing the masterpiece embedded in marble. God chose you to add value, to help shape, to use your influence, and to leave your imprint in the formation of a person who will live forever! You don't work in marble, or even wet cement, but in flesh and blood and soul. You are a divine partner with God, seeking to leave an imprint of faith, hope and love in a child given you by grace to love, influence and mold.**

So on this day, mom, we especially thank you for daring to dance with the divine to help us, your children, find our calling and know our Father's love.

Happy Mother's Day and thanks for all you have done to leave an imprint of faith in our lives! ☐

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### **Joining Mary in a Prayer for Peace the Story of Fatima**

Word of the apparitions spread far and wide, and crowds began thronging to Fatima. The local governor, an atheist, decided to put a stop to the "nonsense." On August 13, he locked the children up in a dank jail and threatened to boil them in oil unless they denied the visions. But they held firm, and the Lady appeared to them on August 19 after their release.

The Lady had promised that a miracle would take place at her October 13 meeting with the children, and about

seventy thousand people gathered at the field to see it. That day, in the midst of a rainstorm, the sun appeared and dried up both the muddy field and the wet pilgrims. It then spun about and plunged wildly toward the earth. Witnesses saw constantly changing colors around them. Many fell to their knees begging forgiveness.

Not long after that dramatic apparition, both Francisco and Jacinta became ill during a "Spanish flu" epidemic and died.

The brother and sister were beatified on May 13, 2000, with Lucia looking on. A few days later, Pope John Paul II explained why Francisco and Jacinta were worthy of this honor. "They lived the Christian virtues to a heroic degree despite their young age," he said. It was "the heroism of children, but true heroism." Furthermore, said the pope, their holiness didn't depend on the apparitions but "on their fidelity and commitment in responding to the extraordinary gift they received from the Lord and from Mary... . Because of their fidelity to God, they are a shining example to children and adults of how to comply in a simple and generous way with the transforming action of divine grace."

### **Francisco-Making Jesus Happy**

Before his encounters with Mary, Francisco Marto was not especially remarkable. Lucia observed that he was compliant to the point of being a pushover. He rarely stood up for himself. When another child stole Francisco's handkerchief, he did not try to retrieve it but said, "Let them have it! What do I care?" He loved animals; in fact, he once used what little money he had to buy a bird from two older boys who were torturing it.

Francisco was not overly spiritual. He prayed his daily rosary but did not hesitate to use Jacinta's shorthand method. The first time he saw the Lady, he told Lucia to throw a stone at her to see if she was real.

Francisco changed after Mary appeared to him. He often disappeared to pray and would refuse to play until he had finished his rosary. Francisco also suggested that as a sacrifice the children should give their lunches to the sheep. (Later, Jacinta improved on the idea by giving the food to poor children.)

When the children were arrested, Francisco remained resolute. Convinced that they really were about to be thrown into boiling oil, he told Lucia: "If they kill us, we will be in heaven in a few minutes! How lucky we are! I don't mind anything. I hope Jacinta isn't afraid!"

Francisco's young heart was moved by the thought of Jesus grieving over our sins. Hearing him sobbing one night, his father asked why he was crying. Francisco answered, "I was thinking of Jesus, who is so sad because of the sins that are committed against him." In his sincere and childlike way, he wanted to make it up to Jesus, to make him feel happy.

In the year following the apparitions, Francisco spent much time before the Blessed Sacrament. As he and Lucia

walked to school, he would say, "You go to school while I stay here in church. It's not worth my learning to read, as I will soon be going to heaven." He treasured this time with the "hidden Jesus" and used it to ponder the heavenly messages Mary had given him.

What brought about such a change in an ordinary boy? The answer seems to lie in the way he welcomed the revelations he had been given. With simplicity and generosity, he devoted himself to an intense prayer life and to freely renouncing even innocent childhood pleasures.

### **Jacinta-Determined to Help the Lost.**

Jacinta may have looked like Francisco, but she had a very different temperament. Lively, joyful, and impulsive, she loved to dance and play. She gathered flowers and embraced lambs, but she was competitive too. "The slightest conflict ... was enough to make her sulk in a corner," Lucia said, and to get her to come back and play, "it was necessary to let her choose the game and the partner she liked to play with."

But Jacinta was very deeply affected by the June 13 vision of hell. From that time on, she missed no opportunity to pray and offer sacrifices for others. It was not enough that she herself had a guarantee of heaven -- she didn't want anyone to go to hell. As her way of interceding, she offered her lunch to poor children, eating bitter acorns and unripe olives instead; she gave up dancing and denied herself water even in the heat of the summer.

During Jacinta's sickness, her relationship with Mary deepened. When Francisco was dying, Mary asked Jacinta if she was willing to suffer and intercede longer. She agreed. Later, when Mary revealed that Jacinta would die alone in a dark hospital, she answered, "Jesus, now you can convert many sinners, because this sacrifice is such a big one." In Lisbon, when she underwent surgery to remove two ribs without general anesthesia, the doctors heard her crying out, "It is for your love, my Jesus! ... Now you can convert many sinners."

Such heroic action by a little girl is nearly unthinkable, but Jacinta's young heart was ravished by love for the Lord and the desire that everyone be with him for eternity. Her response to God's grace enabled her to endure incredible sacrifices with love and patience, all the time interceding for those who risked eternal separation from God.

### **Peace for the World.**

The message of Fatima invites each of us to do our part to bring peace into the world and into every individual heart by praying the rosary daily and by interceding for those who don't believe.

It seems like such a tall order, given all the dangers and challenges of the modern world. We quickly resonate with the words of John Paul II at Fatima in 1982: "My heart is oppressed when I see the sin of the world and the whole range of menaces gathering like a dark cloud over

mankind." But the message of Fatima calls us to embrace the pope's next statement as well -- that despite the clouds, his heart "also rejoices with hope."

The witness of Francisco and Jacinta urges us to say yes to God as lovingly and completely as they did. The choice is ours. As the pope put it in October 2000, "We can turn this world into a garden or reduce it to a pile of rubble... . Today, as never before in the past, humanity stands at a crossroads. And once again, O Virgin Most Holy, salvation lies fully and uniquely in Jesus, your son."

There is hope in God's mercy! The power of prayer, as demonstrated in the lives of Francisco and Jacinta Marto, can be an inspiration to us. Let us imitate them and allow Jesus to fill us with his own love and concern for the world. Let us pray for peace and make a difference in our world! ☐

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*Continued from Page 5*

### **The Life of St. Mary Magdalene De' Pazzi**

But it is not because of her experience of ecstasy that Mary Magdalen was canonized but for perfection of love, manifested in fidelity to daily duty and sincere dedication to the needs of others. She rose early to light the fire in the kitchen or laundry and spent hours cooking and washing. She was devoted to the aged and infirm; she would have dearly loved to be the nurse of the monastery. From 1595 to 1598 she was in charge of the junior professed. In 1598 she was elected novice mistress; in 1604, sub-prioress.

It was in this year that Mary Magdalen took to her bed. For some time she had been suffering hemorrhages, fever, and coughing spells. Violent headaches were part of her suffering to the point she could not eat. "To suffer, not to die" is the motto attributed to her and the perfect expression of her spirit.

She received the Anointing of the Sick on May 13, 1607 and died 12 days later on May 25, 1607 in the early afternoon. The nuns were present reciting the "Symbol" of St. Anastasias a prayer which was so dear to the dying woman. She was 45 years old. Her last words were recorded to be "Benedicts Deus." (Blessed be God!)

Following her death at age 41, various miracles occurred when people visited her grave.

One year after her burial, permission was given to bring it back into the cloister, into the room where she died. Her body was found to be intact. The process for beatification began in August 1611. She was beatified by Pope Urban VIII in 1626 and canonized by Pope Clement IX on April 28, 1669.

The Carmelite monastery has moved a couple of times from the monastery where the Saint lived and died. However, her incorrupt body remains with the community. ☐

## **MORE ON SAINT MARY MAGDALEN DE PAZZI**

[www.bobandpennylord.com](http://www.bobandpennylord.com)

Saint Mary Magdalen de Pazzi was endowed with many Heavenly gifts. She was able to foretell the future. She told Alexander de Medici that he would be Pope but that he would have a short reign. His papacy lasted twenty-six days!

Sometimes a gift and other times a cross, Mary Magdalen was granted the Grace to read men's hearts.

Many witnesses attested she bi-located, appearing to different people in different places at the very same moment.

The Lord made her an instrument of healing and many were healed through her prayers and intercessions.

Her ecstasies came more and more frequently. There were those times, when she was experiencing heavenly rapture, when her body would become taut and remain stiff, almost lifeless like rigor mortis had set in. Then there were those other times when the sisters were completely unaware anything was happening. How could they know, she was communicating with Jesus and possibly one of His Heavenly Court; as Sister Mary Magdalen went about her daily duties.

There were occasions when they could tell she was sharing in the Passion of Our Lord Jesus, the agony plainly revealed on her face and body. She looked like one of the women of Jerusalem who followed Jesus and wept. At other times, Sister Mary Magdalen could have been Veronica boldly going past the centurions and wiping her Lord's bleeding Face. Then there were those times when she evidenced excruciating pain, her face and eyes filled with horror and unbearable grief. Was she standing beneath the Cross beside Mother Mary as her Son took His Last Breath; was she crying out for Mary, who dared not weaken that those around her would be strong? Was she like her namesake, Mary Magdalen who had wiped His Feet with her tears and now was prostrate at those same Precious Feet? Whatever part she may have been reenacting in the Passion, it was obvious she was there with her Lord and His Pain.

And then there were those times, when they thought they would lose her; only the weight of her body kept her from soaring up to Heaven. She looked as if she did not want to come back. She later shared with the sisters (under obedience to her Superior) that she was ecstatically engaged in conversation with her Spouse Jesus, at other times with Mother Mary, and then those joyful times with Jesus' Heavenly Army of Angels. Was she seeing Our Lord, the Lord of Easter Sunday, He Who had risen? Was He standing at the gates of Heaven and she wanted in? All they knew, she was not with them, and they did not know if it was the kindest thing to do to pray she not leave them. ☐

## SPIRITUAL ENRICHMENT RECOMMENDED

- You are enjoined to practice Eucharistic Adoration at least an hour a week. Let us render God adoration, thanksgiving, reparation and petition. Kindly check with your respective parishes for schedules. Some churches are open 24-hours for Eucharistic Adoration.
- Pray at least one rosary of the Blessed Virgin Mary daily.
- Pray the Chaplet of the Divine Mercy at 3:00 PM and at 9:00 PM daily.
- Pray the Angelus at 6:00 PM daily.
- Pray the Pro-Life Scriptural Rosary [[www.rosaryoftheunborn.com](http://www.rosaryoftheunborn.com)] to make reparation for the crime of abortion.
- Think of ways to make reparation to Mary for the sins committed against Jesus and Mary. A very good one is to join the **First Saturday devotion**; another is the **2000 Hail Mary devotion**.
- This Mother's day, show your mother what she means to you!
- Say the novena to Our Lady of the Blessed Sacrament.
- Read about the life of St. Dymphna and join the Franciscans in a novena to the saint @ [www.franciscanmissionassoc.org](http://www.franciscanmissionassoc.org). ☐

## THANK YOU

*... a small and simple phrase that comes from a grateful heart!*

*Psalm 106:2*

### FOR PRAYERS HEARD AND PETITIONS GRANTED

Thank you, Eternal Father, for Your Will that transformed our sorrow into joy, our tears of anguish into tears of thanksgiving. Our physical and spiritual re-creation, through Your Healing Hands, kept us enclosed and revived in our hope for renewed lives as we look up to the heavens praising You, in Jesus' most Holy Name, through the intercession of Mary, our Blessed Mother, and of the angels and saints.

*God is GOOD! The last blood work and cat scan show no active cancer cells anywhere in my body. Without a doubt, this is due to the Masses and prayers being said constantly for my recovery. During my chemotherapy, I did not have problems, no loss of hair or nausea etc. This has truly been my Easter Miracle. Still keep me in prayer for a while yet! I thank you all from the bottom of my heart for your special prayers and support you have given me these past months.*

*Mary Beth Lee*

*Praise God! The Rays of Blood & Water of the Divine Mercy pierced thru Kristen's body. Her CT Scan is stable! We were embraced by Mama Mary, all the Saints and Angels watched over us and relieved us from "Scanxiety". Dr Sato was graced with wisdom and knowledge by the Holy Spirit; her plans matched our petitions to Father God, Son & Holy Spirit!*

*Dely's in Holy Land with 90% amazing turnaround of her Bell's Palsy. She's extending her gratitude, too! God Bless you more!*

*Aida Tuason*

### 2000 HAIL MARY DEVOTION

The Spiritual Army of God the Father and the 2000 Hail Mary Group of Northern California acknowledge with thanks our generous May sponsors of the 2000 Hail Mary Devotion. We are grateful that we have merited their partnership and support in providing a venue of spirituality and fellowship for the devotees of our Blessed Mother. The devotion continues to be a constant success.

Las Vegas, Nevada

Robert & Evelyn Pua

Los Angeles, California

Regina Asuncion | Marilyn Batino  
Linda Fajardo | Loreto Melo | Ruth Mercado  
Sulay Leon-Pilcher & Carolina Pineda

# SPIRITUAL ARMY NEWS DISPATCH

## THE ARMY CELEBRATES DIVINE MERCY SUNDAY AND CANONIZATION OF SAINTS JOHN XXIII AND JOHN PAUL II

The Spiritual Army of God the Father (the "Army") gathered for the Feast of the Divine Mercy and Thanksgiving Mass for the canonization of Popes John XXIII and John Paul II at the Monastery of the Angels on Sunday, April 27. Divine Mercy devotees from other parishes were also in attendance.



Confession, procession, flower offering and Divine Mercy prayers and the Chaplet preceded the Holy Mass, celebrated by Fr. Vincent Hughes, Associate Pastor of St. Francis of Assisi Catholic Church. Fr. Vincent in his homily pointed

out Pope Francis canonized two of his predecessors, Saints John XXIII (1958-63) and John Paul II (1978-2005) and with Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI, in attendance – a first in the history of the Catholic Church!

Fr. Vincent briefly touched on St. Faustina, who throughout her life reported having visions of Jesus and conversations with Him and His ocean of mercy for all of us! He further emphasized the merciful grace of God that brought forth one incident when St. Faustina was very sick and the Lord asked "if she's going to allow a man to die without her reciting the chaplet at his sickbed. She was taken to the man's bedside and had the prayer recited by the Saint before he permanently expired through the mercy of God Almighty. This was



such a touching experience and paragon of God's Ocean of mercy and forgiveness.

Devotees enjoyed an hour of fellowship partaking on sumptuous turkey croissant sandwiches, chips, mini-chocolate muffins and other snacks graciously provided by generous devotees. □

### WEBSITE'S DONATION | GIFT CENTER PAGE NOW UNDER CONSTRUCTION

The Army's website is being updated to point toward a Gift Center as part of the donation from our good hearted and spirited individuals who believe in our ways of evangelization. The Gift Center spotlights on possible gift items the Ministry offers to benefactors in return for their monetary donation. It can also be an actual donation without any particular gift in return. Wait for further announcement as the logistics is being finalized by our web designer through the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

**TOY DRIVE FOR THE  
CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL  
[ONGOING]**

**FEAST OF THE FATHER  
OF ALL MANKIND**  
SUNDAY, AUGUST 3, 2014  
MONASTERY OF THE ANGELS  
1977 CARMEN AVENUE  
ON GOWER  
LOS ANGELES, CA 90068  
STARTING AT 11:30 AM

ORDINATION OF  
ABBE' JOEL JOSEPH ESTRADA  
TUESDAY, AUGUST 5, 2014  
ST. FRANCIS DE SALES ORATORY  
2653 OHIO AVENUE  
SAINT LOUIS, MO 63118

**PILGRIMAGE TO MOTHER  
MARY'S APPARITION  
SHRINES  
PORTUGAL | SPAIN |  
FRANCE**

DECEMBER 4-21, 2014  
DAILY ACTIVITIES AND OTHER  
INFORMATION ARE AVAILABLE AT  
[WWW.SPIRITUALARMYOFGOD.ORG](http://WWW.SPIRITUALARMYOFGOD.ORG)

\$400 GUARANTEES YOUR  
RESERVATION AND YOU HAVE UNTIL  
OCTOBER 3, 2014 TO PAY  
PILGRIMAGE COST

# DEVOTION SCHEDULE



## THE SPIRITUAL ARMY OF GOD THE FATHER

cordially invites you to the following devotions:

### IN LOS ANGELES:

#### 1<sup>st</sup> Saturday Devotion

The Convent of the Sister Disciples of the Divine Master | 501 N. Beaudry Avenue | (213) 250-7962  
Holy Mass starts at 8:30 A.M. | 1<sup>st</sup> Saturday Devotional Prayers follow.

#### Devotion to God the Father

Every 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of the Month

The Monastery of the Angels | 1977 Carmen Avenue on Gower | (323) 466-2186

11:20 A.M. - Rosary to the Father | 11:50 A.M. - Holy Mass

1:00 P.M. - Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament

Confession ongoing from 11:20 A.M. to 11:45 P.M.

#### 2000 Hail Mary Devotion – May 17, 2014

at the Convent of the Sister Disciples of the Divine Master | starting at 8:30 a.m.

*Please call Victor at (213) 385-7798 if you wish to become a Sponsor of the 2000 Hail Mary Devotion.*

### IN LAS VEGAS:

#### 1<sup>st</sup> Saturday Devotion

at The Cenacle House in The Enclave | 8455 West Sahara Avenue #172, | Las Vegas, NV 89117 at 1:00 PM  
Cenacle will be at 10:00 AM before the devotional prayers.

*Please call Evelyn at (702)274-4315 for entry to The Enclave or for more information.*

#### Devotion to God the Father

Every 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of the month from 2:00 to 3:30 P.M.

at The Cenacle House in The Enclave | 8455 West Sahara Avenue #172, | Las Vegas, NV 89117

#### 2000 Hail Mary Devotion – May 31, 2014

*Please call (702) 255-9616 or (702) 274-4315 for*

*dates and venues for the coming months or for more information or if you wish to Sponsor the Devotion.*

### IN LAUGHLIN, NEVADA:

#### 1<sup>st</sup> Saturday Devotion

St. John the Baptist Catholic Church | 3055 El Mirage Way

Holy Mass starts at 8:00 A.M. Devotional prayers follow.

### IN NORTHERN CALIFORNIA:

#### 1<sup>st</sup> Saturday Devotion

#### 2000 Hail Mary Devotion

*Please call (650) 766-2071 for dates and venues for the coming months or for more information.*

*For Sacramento:*

*Please call Precy Rieta (916) 564-3733 | Caring Sturgill (916) 897-3194 | Maria Rosario (916) 230-7756.*

### IN SAN DIEGO

#### Rosary to the Father

Monday – Saturday after the 8:00 A.M. Mass [Look for Iris Haj]

St. Mary's Church | 1160 S. Broadway | Escondido, CA 92025

### IN THE PHILIPPINES

#### 2000 Hail Mary Devotion - Metro Manila Area

Letty Rollan has organized the 2000 Hail Mary Devotion in various areas of Metro Manila through the members of the "Mother Butler." Please call her U.S. Vonage phone (510) 779-6652, text her at Manila #916-384-9300, and/or call her Manila landline 939-4677. Mention Mila Lumba's name to be recognized