

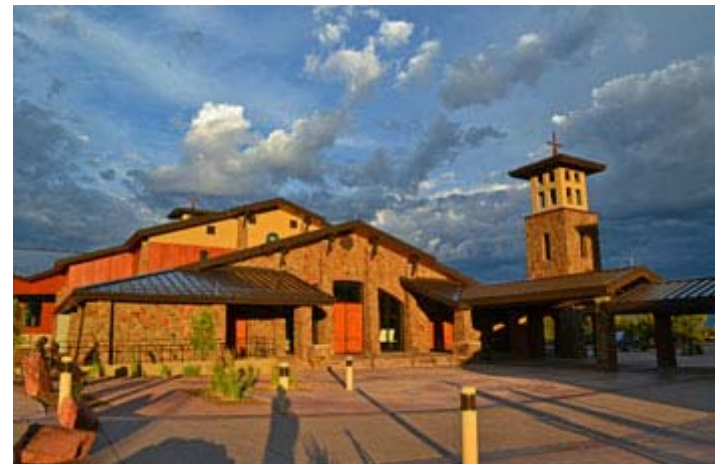
## THE ARMY'S MINI PILGRIMAGE TO SANTA FE, NEW MEXICO SEPTEMBER 4-7, 2015

ALL 56 OF US — DEVOTEES AND DEVOTEES' RELATIVES AND FRIENDS, BOARDED THE CHARTERED BUS AT 6:30 A.M. ON FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 4 FOR THE SPIRITUAL ARMY OF GOD THE FATHER'S FIRST MINI-PILGRIMAGE TO SANTA FE, NEW MEXICO. THE DRIVE WAS LONG NECESSITATING AN OVERNIGHT STAY IN FLAGSTAFF, ARIZONA. A BEAUTIFUL RAINBOW (WHICH IN THE OLD TESTAMENT IS A SIGN OF GOD'S COVENANT) WELCOMED US AS WE ENTERED FLAGSTAFF. THIS WAS THE FIRST REVELATION AND MIRACLE OF THE PILGRIMAGE. THE COMPLIMENTARY APPETIZERS AND BEVERAGES AT EMBASSY SUITE'S EVENING RECEPTION WAS A WELCOME TREAT AND AFFORDED BONDING AND RELAXATION TO THE PILGRIMS.

AT BREAKFAST, THE NEXT MORNING, REGINA (AND HER MOM GERTRUDE), WERE IN FOR A SURPRISE — HER BOYFRIEND WYNN AND THEIR BABY RAELENN, WYNN'S MOM (AND HER MOMMY TOO) MARIVIC, AND HER AUNT EDEN WERE THERE. THEY WERE NOT EXPECTED AS MARIVIC HAD JUST HAD CHEMOTHERAPY A FEW DAYS BEFORE AND DID NOT THINK SHE CAN TAKE THE LONG DRIVE. WYNN, ON THE OTHER HAND, HAD A JOB INTERVIEW THAT FRIDAY MORNING. THEY DROVE AFTER WYNN'S INTERVIEW AND ARRIVED AT THE HOTEL AROUND MIDNIGHT OR SO.

AFTER A QUICK YET APPETIZING BREAKFAST, WE LEFT IN TIME FOR AN EARLY MORNING MASS AT SAINT FRANCIS DE ASIS CHURCH. THE CHURCH, ON TOP OF A SHORT WINDING ROAD (WITH A GORGEOUS VIEW) ON EAST ROUTE 66, WAS BEAUTIFUL AND ITS PASTOR, FR. PAT MOWRER (AND ITS PARISHIONERS WE MET) WAS WARM AND WELCOMING.

THE DRIVE TO SANTA FE WAS ANOTHER SIX HOURS OR SO. AS IN ALL PILGRIMAGES OF THE ARMY, WE PRAYED -- A LOT! EACH AND EVERYONE ONE OF US TAKING TURNS IN LEADING THE PRAYERS. THANKS TO OUR LEADER SEATED RIGHT BEHIND THE DRIVER, WHO SEEM TO HAVE A PAIR OF EYES AT THE BACK OF HIS HEAD, CATCHING ALL THOSE WHO WERE SNOOZING! SOMEWHERE BETWEEN THE PRAYERS, THE MOVIE SCREENINGS, THE PILGRIMS WERE TOLD ABOUT **THE CASE OF THE REAPPEARING EUROS** [SEE GOD TOUCHED ME COLUMN ON PAGE 5 OF THE OCTOBER ISSUE OF OUR 1<sup>ST</sup> SATURDAY NEWSLETTER], THE SECOND REVELATION AND MIRACLE OF THE PILGRIMAGE.





AT LORETTO CHAPEL, WE WERE HAPPY TO SEE THE OTHER ARMY PILGRIMS — RUTH AND BON, WITH THEIR YOUNG KIDS BROOKLYN (11), BELLA (8) AND NOAH (6) WHO TRAVELED BY AMTRAK, ARRIVING A NIGHT EARLIER. ALSO, JJ, WHO FLEW SOLO, ARRIVING IN TIME FOR HIS DIVINE MERCY PRAYERS AT THE CHAPEL.

INSIDE, PILGRIMS MARVELED AT THE FAMOUS SPIRAL STAIRWAY, WHICH HAS BEEN THE SUBJECT OF “LEGEND AND RUMOR”, THE CIRCUMSTANCES SURROUNDING ITS CONSTRUCTION AND ITS BUILDER. THE STAIRCASE IS AN IMPRESSIVE WORK OF CARPENTRY. IT ASCENDS TWENTY FEET, MAKING TWO COMPLETE REVOLUTIONS UP TO THE CHOIR LOFT WITHOUT THE USE OF NAILS OR APPARENT CENTER SUPPORT. THE SISTERS OF LORETTO CREDIT ST. JOSEPH, THE PATRON OF CARPENTERS, WITH ITS CONSTRUCTION, SINCE AT THAT TIME THE CHURCH NEEDED A WAY TO GET UP TO THE CHOIR LOFT.

THEY PRAYED FOR ST. JOSEPH'S INTERCESSION FOR NINE STRAIGHT DAYS. MANY WITNESSES, UPON SEEING THE STAIRCASE, FEEL IT WAS CONSTRUCTED BY ST. JOSEPH HIMSELF, AS A MIRACULOUS OCCURRENCE.

DEVOTEES CLAIM THEY FELT A SENSE OF CALM AND PEACE WHILE IN THE CHAPEL — DESPITE THE SEEMINGLY IRREVERENT ATMOSPHERE AS TOURISTS FLOCKED TO GET IN, TAKE PHOTOS OF THE STAIRCASE AND THEIR SELFIES, AND CONVERSATIONS TAKING PLACE IN THE MIDST OF AN AUDIO RECORDING GUIDE.

I SPOTTED A NUMBER OF US WHO FOUND SANCTUARY IN SOME CORNER OF THE CHAPEL — WHO, I SUSPECT WERE THEN ASKING AND THANKING SAINT JOSEPH FOR HIS POWERFUL INTERCESSION!



AS WE ARRIVED AT OUR HOTEL FOR THE NIGHT AT HOMEWOOD SUITES, WE WERE GREETED BY ANOTHER RAINBOW CREEPING ON THE ROOFTOP OF OUR HOTEL, AS EXODUS 13 STATES: *"And the Lord went before them by day in a pillar of cloud to lead the way . . ."* (EXODUS 13:21). THE THIRD REVELATION AND MIRACLE OF THE PILGRIMAGE.

ON OUR WAY TO THE STEAK AND SHRIMP BUFFET AT A RESTAURANT WALKING DISTANCE FROM THE HOTEL, WE RECEIVED A CALL FROM RAINA AND CARLOS. THEY ARE PREGNANT [FINALLY, AFTER A SERIES OF EXPENSIVE FERTILITY PROCEDURES]!!! – THE FOURTH MIRACLE AND THE REALIZATION OF A REVELATION TO THEM AT OUR 2014 PILGRIMAGE IN EUROPE. FOR THOSE TO WHOM THIS UPDATE WAS TOLD, IT WAS RATHER A CHALLENGE TO BE TIGHT-LIPPED ABOUT IT, UNTIL WE ALL BOARDED THE BUS ON OUR WAY TO SANTUARIO DE CHIMAYO, THE NEXT MORNING. THERE WAS JUBILATION IN THE BUS, A LOT OF TEARY EYES AND CHOKING THROATS, AS WE ALL PINNED OUR EARS BACK TO RAINA AND CARLOS ANNOUNCING THE GOOD NEWS, THANKING GOD AND ASKING US ALL FOR CONTINUED PRAYERS FOR THEM AND THEIR MIRACLE!



WE WERE AT THE SANTUARIO DE CHIMAYO EARLY THAT MORNING READY FOR OUR GUIDED TOUR. EL SANTUARIO (THE SHRINE) IS COMPRISED OF TWO CHAPELS (THE CHAPEL OF THE CHRIST OF ESQUIPULAS AND THE CHAPEL OF THE HOLY CHILD OF ATOCHA). BOTH CHAPELS HAVE BEEN A PLACE OF HEALING FOR MANY PILGRIMS AND VISITORS. THE CHAPEL OF THE CHRIST OF ESQUIPULAS IS DEDICATED TO THE SUFFERINGS, PAIN (PASSION) OF JESUS CHRIST, WHILE THE CHAPEL OF THE HOLY CHILD IS DEDICATED TO THE CHILDHOOD OF JESUS, TO THE HOLY FAMILY AND TO FAMILIES.

OUR GUIDE, HELEN MARTINEZ, TOLD US ABOUT THE LEGEND THAT THE SANTUARIO DE CHIMAYO, ALSO CALLED THE SANTUARIO DE NUESTRO SEÑOR DE ESQUIPULAS, WAS BUILT AFTER A LOCAL FRIAR PERFORMING PENANCES SAW A STRANGE LIGHT BURST FROM A HILLSIDE NEAR THE SANTA CRUZ RIVER. CURIOUS, THE FRIAR SOUGHT THE SOURCE OF THE LIGHT, WHICH WAS COMING FROM THE GROUND. DROPPING TO HIS KNEES AND DIGGING IN THE SANDY SOIL WITH HIS BARE HANDS, HE UNCOVERED A CRUCIFIX, LATER CHRISTENED NUESTRO SEÑOR DE ESQUIPULAS. THREE TIMES THIS CRUCIFIX WAS TAKEN IN PROCESSION TO THE NEIGHBORING VILLAGE AND THREE TIMES IT DISAPPEARED, ONLY TO BE FOUND AGAIN BACK IN ITS HOLE IN THE HILLSIDE. DECIDING THAT OUR LORD OF ESQUIPULAS WANTED TO STAY IN CHIMAYO, THE PEOPLE BUILT A SMALL CHAPEL ON THE SITE OF THE DISCOVERY.



THE STORY OF THE INFANT JESUS OF ATOCHA AND HIS MANY MIRACLES TO THE PEOPLE OF ATOCHA TOUCHED MANY A HEART OF THE PILGRIMS. IT WAS AWESOME TO SEE THE COUNTLESS INFANT SHOES, THE CRUTCHES AND WHEELCHAIRS LEFT BEHIND, THE MESSAGES OF THANKSGIVING, THE ROSARIES HANGING — ALL PROOFS OF THE MIRACLES OF CHIMAYO.

OF COURSE, WE ALL WENT TO VISIT "EL POCITO", WHICH IS IN A TINY, CANDLE-LIT SIDEROOM OFF TO THE SIDE OF THE ALTAR OF THE SANTUARIO CHURCH. THE DOOR TO THIS ROOM IS TINY AND MOST WHO ENTER MUST STOOP. YOU MUST KNEEL TO REACH AND SCOOP OUT THE "TIERRA BENDITA" (SACRED EARTH) WHICH IS IN THE TINY HOLE IN THE STONE FLOOR. WE ALL TOOK OUR SHARE OF THE HOLY SAND, WITH LUCY TAKING THE MOST — TO SHARE WITH HER IMMEDIATE FAMILY AND ALL RELATIVES, HER FRIENDS, ALL THOSE SHE KNEW WHO ARE SICK AND IN NEED OF HEALING. EL SANTUARIO WAS BUILT ON THE GROUND BELIEVED SACRED BY NATIVE AMERICANS AND IT WAS BUILT ON THE SITE WHERE THE CRUCIFIX OF NUESTRO SEÑOR DE ESQUIPULAS WAS FOUND BURIED IN THE SOIL AND WHERE THE MAN WHO DISCOVERED THE CRUCIFIX, DON BERNARDO ABEYTA, WAS CURED OF HIS AFFLICTION WHILE DIGGING IN THAT SOIL.



THEREAFTER, WE WENT BACK TO FLAGSTAFF TO SPEND ONE NIGHT'S REST BEFORE GOING BACK TO LOS ANGELES. ONCE AGAIN, ANOTHER RAINBOW GREETED US. THE FIFTH REVELATION AND MIRACLE OF THIS PILGRIMAGE.

ON SEPTEMBER 7 WE HEADED EARLY FOR MASS BACK AT SAINT FRANCIS DE ASIS. FR. PATRICK WAS HAPPY TO WELCOME US A SECOND TIME AND WAS THANKFUL FOR THE MUSIC AT MASS PROVIDED BY OUR OWN CANTOR, MARILYN. AT THE END OF THE MASS, AT THE FACADE OF THE BEAUTIFUL CHURCH, WE TOOK A GROUP PICTURE, WITH THREE OF ITS WONDERFUL PARISHIONERS CLICKING AWAY NUMEROUS CAMERAS, IPHONES AND IPADS. ALL THE PHOTOS TAKEN SHOWED WHAT LOOK LIKE THE RAYS OF THE FROM THE ROOF OF SAINT

*two rays denote Blood and the water that makes souls the Blood which is the life forth from the very depths of agonized Heart was opened OF SAINT FAUSTINA, 299)*

AS EXPECTED THE DRIVE BACK OR SO, CONSIDERING THE CLOSURES ALONG THE WAY. PILGRIMS. WE PRAYED HARD TOUCHED OUR HEARTS AND ABOUT OUR FAITH.

MAYBE SOME OF US JOINED MIRACLES OF HEALING, PEACE, [SEE THANK YOU COLUMN ON 1<sup>ST</sup> SATURDAY NEWSLETTER],

SHARE A LOVE OF GOD AND BELIEVE THAT NO MATTER WHAT WE HAVE BEEN TOLD OR HAVE EXPERIENCED OURSELVES, GOD CAN AND DOES WORK MIRACLES.

*“When Jesus walked on the water, He taught us that faith is a prerequisite to miracles, and He promised His disciples that wondrous things could be accomplished as long as their faith didn't falter. Sometimes, however, the miracle is not the one that cures our tormented bodies; sometimes the miracle is faith itself.”* ◻



DIVINE MERCY ICON, COMING OUT FRANCIS DE ASIS CHURCH. *“The Water. The pale ray stands for righteous. The red ray stands for of souls ...These two rays issued My tender mercy when my by a lance on the Cross.”* (DIARY

TO LA TOOK MORE THAN 10 HOURS HOLIDAY TRAFFIC AND THE ROAD BUT IT DIDN'T FEEL THAT WAY TO US AND LONG. WATCHED MOVIES THAT MADE US A LITTLE MORE INFORMED

THE PILGRIMAGE IN SEARCH OF OR GUIDANCE. SOME FOUND THEM PAGE 12 OF OCTOBER ISSUE OF OUR SOME MAYBE DIDN'T. BUT WE ALL