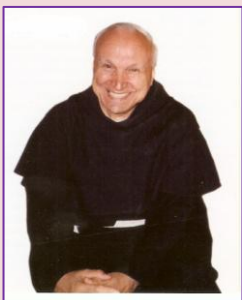


FORGET NOT LOVE

A Newsletter of the Sisters Minor Of Mary Immaculate



In Memoriam

Rev. Fr. Elia M. Bruson, OFM Conv. (Father Smile) died Gaudete (Joyful) Sunday, December 15, 2002. When Father was diagnosed with cancer he wrote the following testament. I give to Jesus, through the hands of Mary, my whole self, especially that which worries me. Jesus, help me to say YES to You always. I give You my limitations, worry, suffering, for the Sisters Minor of Mary Immaculate, for Chiara Lubich and her pilgrimage to India, for my Dear Brothers, for my dear ones, and for the salvation of all men. January 6, 2001, Saturday, Epiphany

With Advent, we begin our spiritual preparation for the “coming” of the Lord in HISTORY, in MYSTERY, and in MAJESTY. This Advent, let us prepare for this coming, in the most perfect way possible – with the grace of a humble and good Confession. Everywhere we will be hearing “Peace on Earth”. One place where we can find true peace on earth is in the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Once we have our spiritual houses clean and in order, we can begin decorating them with all the virtues that love will inspire. Only then, will we be ready to receive Jesus on His Birthday. Only then will it be truly Christmas! Sr. Carolyn Mary Cossack, SMMI

The Advent Wreath symbolizes the children of Israel waiting for the Messiah through the centuries as well as our own spiritual preparation to welcome the Christ Child, the Holy Messiah on Christmas morning. The Advent Wreath is a set of four candles set in a wreath of evergreen. The evergreen, sometimes richly decorated, symbolizes the beauty of Christian hope in the loving promises of God. The perfect circle of the wreath represents the eternity of God. The four candles mark the four Sundays of Advent which immediately precede Christmas. One of the candles is lit on each Sunday of Advent so that by Christmas all the candles are lit! Three of the candles are violet colored reflecting the penitential spirit of the Advent Season. One candle is rose colored reflecting the joy of the Gospel on the third Sunday of Advent. The four candles represent, not only the four weeks of Advent when we wait for the coming of the birth of Christ on Christmas, but of the four thousand years that the Jews waited for the coming of Jesus as the Messiah. It also reminds us that we are now waiting for Jesus to come again... at the end of the world! The candles of the Advent Wreath are given the following names:



St. James Church, Syracuse, NY

The **PROPHECY CANDLE**, a reminder of the foretelling of Jesus’ birth by the Old Testament prophets.

The **BETHLEHEM CANDLE**, recalling the words of the Prophet Micah that the Christ Child would be born in Bethlehem.

The **SHEPHERDS’ CANDLE** – a reminder of the first people to worship the baby Jesus. This is the rose colored candle and reflects the anticipated joy of the Gospel for this Sunday.

The **ANGELS’ CANDLE**, lit on the Sunday before Christmas in remembrance of the Angel who spoke to the Virgin Mary at the conception of Jesus and of the Angels who appeared to the shepherds in the fields outside Bethlehem that First Christmas Eve. Rev. Charles DiMascola, 11/29/09

Preparing for Jesus? Here are a few suggestions:

Forgive someone every day ; Go to Confession.
Pray an extra decade of the rosary each day for our nation.
Make a difference in someone’s day, SMILE at people.
Visit the sick and comfort the sorrowful.
Offer up a sacrifice for our Holy Father, Bishops and priests.

Make one sacrifice at every meal.
Add ten minutes of prayer to your day for reconciliation.
Relinquish your desire to control once each day.
See something that needs to be done and do it out of love.
Start a healthy habit, like daily exercise for Advent.



WHO ARE YOU, IMMACULATE CONCEPTION?

ON DECEMBER 8, 1854, PIUS IX PROCLAIMED THE DOGMA OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION. "THREE YEARS [LATER HE] WENT TO VISIT THE TOWN OF IMOLA WHERE HE ONCE HAD BEEN BISHOP. WHILE THERE, HE CALLED AT THE CONVENT OF THE GOOD SHEPHERD. ONE OF THE NUNS HAD ASKED HIM WHAT HIS FEELINGS WERE AT THE MOMENT HE MADE HIS INFALLIBLE PRONOUNCEMENT THREE YEARS PREVIOUS.

"WHAT I DID EXPERIENCE AT THE TIME, NOT EVEN A THOUSAND HUMAN TONGUES COULD EXPRESS. WHEN I BEGAN TO RECITE THE DECREE, I KNEW THAT MY VOICE WAS FAR TOO WEAK TO BE HEARD BY EVERYONE IN THE BASILICA (ABOUT 40,000 PERSONS WERE PRESENT). BUT WHEN I CAME TO THE WORDS OF THE DEFINITION ITSELF, GOD GAVE SUCH POWER TO THE WORDS. TO ME THAT WAS LIKE GOD'S SPECIAL HELP AND I WAS SO STRUCK BY IT THAT I HAD TO STOP FOR A MOMENT BECAUSE I HAD BEGUN TO WEEP.

"THEN, WHILE GOD, THROUGH THE MOUTH OF HIS UNWORTHY VICAR, FINISHED THE DECREE, MY SOUL BEGAN TO UNDERSTAND AS NEVER BEFORE HOW INCOMPARABLY PURE THE BLESSED VIRGIN WAS. MY HEART WAS OVERCOME BY THIS KNOWLEDGE OF HER IMMACULATENESS. MY SOUL WAS FLOODED WITH UNSPEAKABLE JOY, JOY WHICH IS NOT OF THIS EARTH. NO EARTHLY HAPPINESS COULD GIVE YOU ANY IDEA OF WHAT I FELT AT THAT MOMENT. I DO NOT HESITATE TO SAY THAT AT THE SIGHT OF THE BEAUTY OF HER PURITY, I WOULD HAVE DIED HAD NOT GOD SUPERNATURALLY SUSTAINED ME!"

IMMACULATA MAGAZINE, DECEMBER 1964



The Miraculous Medal

"My son, keep your father's commands and do not forsake your mother's teaching. Bind them upon your heart forever; fasten them around your neck. When you walk, they will guide you; when you sleep, they will watch over you; when you awake, they will speak to you" (Proverbs 6:20-22).



Yes, "fasten them around your neck." This practice Scripture mentions and several promises are tied to this; the Virgin Mary also recommends it, without forgetting to join promises to it, those being special protection and numerous graces. It was November 27, 1830. Catherine Labouré, novice of the Daughters of Charity, sees a kind of painting of the Immaculate Virgin. Rays of light are coming from her hands and an inscription in golden letters surrounds her. Then the painting turns; she then notices the letter M with a cross above it, and underneath, the Hearts of Jesus and Mary. After having looked at it at length, she hears a voice: "Have a medal coined following this model. All those who will wear it will receive great graces, especially those wearing it around their necks. I will bring many graces to those who place their trust in me." (K 1011)

St. Maximilian loved to underline this: everybody can wear the Miraculous Medal. He was one to never take it off. But this wasn't enough for him; he would go to the unbelievers and propose it to them. He even went to the sinners in the hope that they would accept it, and little by little, mend their ways. Thus, he distributed thousands of medals.

When asked what could be done for the Immaculate, one of his favorite answers was the following:

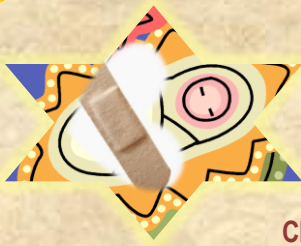
"Distribute the medal wherever possible, even to children so that they might wear it around their necks, to the aged and especially to the young so that, under her protection, they may have the force capable of pushing away the many temptations and traps that in our times threaten them. Distribute it also to those who do not go to church, who are afraid of confessing, who make

fun of religious practices, who laugh at the truths of faith, who are plunged in the mud of immorality or who live in heresy outside of the Church: oh! especially to those, the medal of the Immaculate must be offered, to incite them to want to wear it, and at the same time fervently plead for their conversion through the Immaculate." (K1122)

Therefore, no one was excluded. Not even the occupying forces during the war. Not even the most desperate cases: Some might be worse than others. If he is willing to wear the Miraculous Medal, it must be given to him. (K 97) Father Kolbe's solicitude towards others reached these points. In fact, he had a precise objective: "His idea was to convert the whole world by the Miraculous Medal." (Positio..., p.18 (C.Kita).

To all those wearing it, the Miraculous Medal is at the same time a sign of the graces the Immaculate can give them, and the means she uses to accord them. For those adhering to the MI, it is also the sign of their consecration. Father Maximilian often mentioned it, by indicating that this sign, because external, testified that the members of the MI belong to the Immaculate and invited them to join themselves to her in a more binding way. In 1938, he wrote that the Miraculous Medal "constitutes, in a certain way, the external sign of total internal consecration to the Immaculate." (K1226 56, 200, 508, 911Q; 1011; 1046; 1248; 1330)

St. Maximilian Kolbe, Friend and Doctor of Prayer, Part 2, Chapter 4 part 4 The Miraculous Medal, Fr. Jean Francois de Louvencourt OCSO



AN APPROPRIATE PRESENT - Their reaction surprised me: 18 four year olds sat in stunned silence.

Christmas is a birthday? "Yes, it is Jesus' birthday. It is the most special birthday of all." Jennifer objected, "But, that's not fair!" "What's not fair?" Jennifer continued, "It's not fair. WE get all the presents. It is Jesus' birthday. HE should get the presents." They all agreed.

During story time, the children heard about a little girl who hung up a Christmas stocking for Baby Jesus. Later, she thought, "What if Santa doesn't have an extra gift for a baby?" She made a tough decision. She stuffed her treasured baby blanket into the stocking for Jesus.

Patrick cynically remarked, "Jesus doesn't need a blanket. He's up in heaven and it's warm there." "Patrick, whenever somebody is cold, Jesus needs a blanket. Jesus told us how we can give Him a present. He said that whatever we do for another person who needs something, it is the same as if we did it for Him."

We decided to have a Birthday party for Jesus in the nursery school. The little ones were excited about the presents they would bring.

On the day of the Christmas Birthday Party for Jesus, the children came dressed up, and laden with birthday presents. All 18 paraded over to the Church where a life-sized Infant Jesus lay before the altar on His straw-filled manger bed. After singing Happy Birthday to Jesus, each child placed his gift beside the manger. A birthday cake awaited us in the in the nursery school.

When I went to gather the gifts for needy children, I was puzzled to find one present right on the little belly of the Infant. It was an unwrapped box of band aids with a used checkered hair ribbon taped to the box. It was from Jason. Later, Jason's mother phoned to apologize. She had taken her little son to the corner store to find an appropriate gift. She led him to the toy counter. He was determined to go to the first aid supplies and insisted on the band aids. There was no wrapping paper at home, so Jason's mother taped his sister's hair ribbon to the box.

"Why Band-Aids?" I wondered. His mother had no clue. Later, I remembered when she brought Jason to register for the 3 year old program a year and half before. Jason had a torn, faded dish towel wrapped around his little hand. He had cut his hand as they were leaving the house. His mother gave him the towel to stop the bleeding because she didn't have anything else. I cleaned Jason's hand, applied a Band-Aid, and put a few extra Band-Aids in his shirt pocket. You would have thought he received the best gift in the world! *Sr. Carolyn Mary Cossack, SSMMI*

MI Village November Meeting – We had a surprise guest at our meeting this month. Erin von Uffel is working on the cause of Sr. Marie de Mandat-Grancey, D.C. who found the House of Mary at



Ephesus, Turkey. Erin met our Sisters at Ephesus. While she was there she prayed for the safety and care of her father.



When she returned to the US she found out that her father is now a resident at the same nursing home where Sr. Amanda works. So, she came to share with us. She spoke about her journey of faith and about the powerful intercession of Sr. Marie. We were informed about a new book that Rev. Carl G. Schulte C.M. wrote: ***The Life of Sr. Marie deMandat-Grancey, D.C. & Mary's House in Ephesus.*** More information can be found at www.SISTERMARIE.COM After she spoke to us about Sr. Marie several members bought the book. We continued with *our* meeting after Erin left.



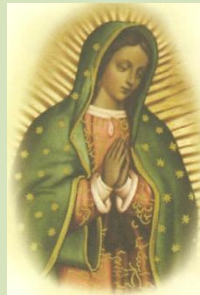
Sr. Lauren came from Italy to visit the Sisters during November. The Sisters shared some time together at an apple orchard one day.



Our chapel and prayer schedule at

Holy Name of Jesus Convent, 305 Washington Blvd., Stamford, CT 06902
(203) 323-4546 until 8PM

Weekday chapel schedule: 7:30 AM Rosary, 8:00 AM Mass
Holy Hour for Life – Every Wed 11-12 Mass in Church at 12:15PM
Holy Hour to pray for priests, religious and vocations – 2nd Fri at 7PM
MI meeting – 3rd Sunday of the month -4PM – 6PM Children welcome!
www.sistersminormi.org



MI LIFE - *Sacrifice for God and Country* by Msgr. Ted Malanowski is available at www.amazon.com. Msgr. was the chaplain for Terry Schiavo for 5 years. All proceeds go to his mission in Haiti or to www.Terrisfight.org. Nice Christmas gift!

OUR LADY OF GUADALUPE – PRAY FOR US!