

“De Maria numquam satis” —St. Bernard

THE TRIUMPH

SPRING 2005

A Signal for the Nations



Of the Immaculate Heart of Mary

PRESENTING MARY—MODEL OF PURITY, FAITH AND OBEDIENCE TO GOD—TO OUR WORLD

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An Arch For Mary—A Shrine For Life

Arch in “Queen City” would surpass Gateway Arch

By Brother John M. Samaha, S.M., past co-president, Mariological Society of the United States.

When discussing a project to honor our Blessed Mother some years ago, the counsel of the late, great Franciscan Father Alfred Boeddeker of San Francisco was loud and clear: “Think BIG!” A decade later we find another zealous Marian devotee and avid pro-life advocate, who never heard of the beloved Father Alfred, taking this advice to heart. Buffalo attorney Laurence D. Behr is thinking in gigantic proportions.

The magnificent dream that inspires Behr and his team is a towering arch to honor Mary's Immaculate Heart over a shrine memorializing the

Holy Innocents. The perception that the Blessed Mother powers this group of planners, features a 700-foot (70 stories high) Arch of Triumph of the Immaculate Heart of Mary overshadowing an International Shrine of the Holy Innocents. A huge dream? Most definitely—the tallest monument in the world, and certainly an immense undertaking.

A WONDER OF THE WORLD

Behr, who founded Western New York Lawyers for Life ten years ago, wants the ascendable arch to “rank among the man-made wonders of the world.” Definitely, it would surpass the 630-foot Gateway Arch in St. Louis, to become the world's tallest monument.

To this end, Behr and his collaborators have formed the



Artistic Conception of the Arch of Triumph of the Immaculate Heart of Mary

Association for the Arch of Triumph of the Immaculate Heart of Mary and the International Shrine of the Holy Innocents, a New York non-profit corporation. Fundraising has commenced for this bold and unprecedented initiative to advance the Culture of Life and Civilization of Love, and to overcome, the present Culture of Death.

A resplendent, golden arch is planned to commemorate the triumph of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, foretold by her-

self at Fatima in 1917. The triumphal arch will stand over a shrine to the Holy Innocents. Such a world-class shrine will promote devotion to Mary's Immaculate Heart, while also

A resplendent, golden arch is planned to commemorate the Triumph of the Immaculate Heart of Mary

directing, in a powerful new way, the world's attention to the plight of the innocent unborn.

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Proclaim the Culture of Life! Help Build “The First Great Shrine of the New Millenium”! Details on p. 12

Pope Entrusts Respect for Human Life to Mary

VATICAN CITY, DEC. 8, 2004 (Zenit.org).

John Paul II entrusted to the Virgin Mary respect for human life and the search for peace, as he celebrated the 150th anniversary of the dogma of the Immaculate Conception. “Help us to build a world where man's life is always

loved and defended, every form of violence banished, the peace of all tenaciously sought,” the Pope implored during the homage he offered today before the statue of the Immaculate Conception in Rome's Piazza di Spagna.

Among the thousands of pilgrims at the piazza were groups of young people, and

men and women religious, who mingled with numbers of workers from nearby stores. The Pope arrived at 4:20 p.m. in the piazza, where he received Walter Veltroni, mayor of Rome, as well as the vicar of Rome, Cardinal Camillo Ruini. During the meditation on the Blessed

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Mary's 1947 Triumphant Entry into America Recalled

Fr. Pavone Defends Charges at Arch of Triumph Banquet

BUFFALO, NY, Nov. 16, 2004
Christian Wire Service

Father Frank A. Pavone, Director of Priests for Life, was honored for his dedication to the pro-life cause at a banquet held near Buffalo, NY on Sunday, Nov. 14, by the Association for the Arch of Triumph of the Immaculate Heart of Mary and International Shrine of the Holy Innocents, a lay Catholic association that is working to erect the world's tallest monument as a tribute to Mary, and the triumph of her Immaculate Heart which she prophesied at Fatima in 1917.



The evening commenced with a reenactment the Coronation of the Western Pilgrim Virgin Statue of Our Lady of Fatima, which occurred in Buffalo's cathedral on December 8, 1947. That statue had been commissioned by Fatima seer Sister Lucia, and sent by her with Blue Army founder, the late John Haffert, to travel across America. According to Haffert's autobiography, "To Shake the World," Cardinal Spellman of New York did not want the statue to enter America through New York City. Haffert therefore brought it through Ontario and into the Buffalo Diocese. Buffalo's then Bishop John O'Hara placed a golden crown upon the statue, enthroned upon a special altar in the cathedral, in a colorful ceremony attended by thousands. At the banquet, as in 1947, a Knights

of Columbus color corps processed with a replica of the original statue, placing it beneath a triumphal arch of flowers. It was crowned, while the banqueters sang "Hail Holy Queen," by Marlene Behr, wife of Laurence D. Behr, the Buffalo, NY attorney and pro-life activist who heads the Arch of Triumph association.

Behr then explained the origins of the Arch project in a compelling dream he had in September 2000, of a "Shrine of the Golden Arch of St. Mary." He defended the Church's special veneration of Mary, and proposed that Mary's revelation at Fatima, Portugal in 1917, "Jesus wishes to establish in the world, devotion to my Immaculate Heart," is consistent with many biblical prophecies concerning Mary's important part in God's plan for the salvation of the world, beginning in Genesis and Exodus and running throughout Scripture, up to the "woman clothed with the sun, with a crown of twelve stars upon her head and the moon beneath her feet," of Revelations 12:1.

Behr said that the proposed triumphal arch's purpose is to promote awareness of and devotion to Mary's Immaculate Heart, as a means to lead the world closer to Christ and bring about the end of abortion, just as the appearance of Our Lady of Guadalupe to St.



Juan Diego in Mexico in 1531 swiftly ended the Aztec practice of human sacrifice. Behr claims an increasing number of supporters for the proposed Arch shrine, across the U.S.A. and Canada, and worldwide.



Addressing the overflow crowd of over 500, Father Pavone responded to charges filed with the IRS against Priests for Life and other Catholic groups, as well as two archdioceses (Denver and St. Louis), by the group calling itself "Catholics for a Free Choice," claiming that such activities amount to partisan politicking, and asking the IRS to revoke Priests for Life's tax-exempt status.

Father Pavone commented, "I continue to be amazed that some people seem to think it is inappropriate for the Church to speak up against baby killing—dismembering a child. I am not ashamed to appear to be opposed to a party that says it is okay to crush the heads of babies. Something is very wrong when one's loyalty to a political party is greater than one's loyalty to God and fundamental human rights." Pavone stated: "We have a

message that goes far beyond any political party—we have a message that is eternal and reaches from one end of the universe to the other: That every human life is a manifestation of the glory of God, and

that an attack on any human life is an attack on God Himself." Respecting the proposed Marian Arch of Triumph and Holy Innocents shrine, Pavone said, "One reason I have wanted to support the Arch of Triumph project from the beginning—a very simple reason—is that the pro-life message in the many different ways it is conveyed is often very easy to ignore. We will never reach the numbers of people we have

I continue to be amazed that some people seem to think it is wrong for the Church to speak up against baby killing

to reach and convert, if reaching them depends on their voluntary consent. We have to go beyond that. Imagine once this massive structure is standing there, and so many people who have no intention of thinking about life and the sacredness of life, or the Blessed Virgin Mary, or even God Himself, nevertheless will be confronted with this massive structure. We have to reach the unwilling audience, because there are things they need to know that they may not even know that they need to know, but they need it nevertheless."

Behr presented Father Pavone with an award in recognition of his "selfless, courageous and persevering advocacy on behalf of the weakest and most vulnerable members of society—the unborn, the sick, and the elderly."

The TRIUMPH of the Immaculate Heart of Mary
 Volume 1, Issue 1

The Triumph is Published in Buffalo, NY by the Assoc'n for the Arch of Triumph of the Immaculate Heart of Mary and Intern'l Shrine of the Holy Innocents, Inc., a 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation formed to spread devotion to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. For more information, call 1-866-205-6512, or visit www.archoftriumph.org.

Subscriptions: The TRIUMPH is free, but voluntary subscriptions (\$13.00/yr) will help keep TRIUMPH free for many! Send payment to our address, below. TO REQUEST ADDITIONAL FREE COPIES to distribute, please call our toll free number, above.

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Mary, Mother of Unity: The Immaculate Conception—150 Years Later

Tim Drake

In 1854, Pope Pius IX made a decision that changed Catholic-Protestant relations forever. Some thought his proclamation of the Immaculate Conception – the dogma that Mary was conceived without original sin – would cause a rift between Catholics and their separated brethren. For many, it has.

But for many Protestants, the way the Church defined Mary's immaculate conception made a difference – such a difference, in fact, that they became Catholic. Former Presbyterian minister, Marcus Grodi, still remembers his reaction to Mary shortly after he converted to the Catholic Church.

"I had been a Catholic for about five months when I was invited to participate in a Marian procession," said Grodi, president of the Coming Home Network and host of EWTN's "The Journey Home" television program. "They were carrying a Mary statue on a platform and I thought, 'in some pagan country this could look like we were carrying our goddess.' If you don't understand what it's all about it would seem pretty weird and could pose problems for unity."

The Marian procession struck at the heart of Grodi's Protestant misconceptions

about what Catholics believe about Mary. Often seen as a sign of division between Catholics and Protestants, Mary is increasingly becoming a sign of unity.

"Mary can be a sign of unity for all Christians by studying her life and impact together," said Dwight Longenecker, a former Protestant and author of *Mary: A Catholic Evangelical Debate*. "Mary can be the starting point for a discussion on the incarnation which can be fruitful and illuminate the things we do share. Remembering that unity is not conformity, we can acknowledge shared hopes and beliefs while still being quite clear on our differences, and Mary can be a catalyst for these discussions."

Among those differences, one of the most contentious is the Catholic doctrine of Mary's immaculate conception. Many Protestants have a difficulty with this teaching because it is not explicitly found in Scripture. Neither is the Trinity, say many Catholic apologists.

"The Immaculate Conception, while not explicitly set forth in Scripture, is nonetheless a biblical teaching," said Leon Suprenant, Jr., president of the Steubenville, Ohio-based Catholics United for the Faith. "The first promise of a Redeemer in Genesis 3 contains a reference to the enmity,

or complete opposition, between the Redeemer's mother and Satan." Furthermore, Suprenant points out that when Mary conceives of the Holy Spirit, she is greeted by the angel as already being "full of grace", even though Christ has not yet died on the Cross for sinners. "All generations call Mary 'blessed' (Luke 1:48) not because of her own merit, but because the Lord had done great things to her, including preparing her as the immaculate vessel by which He would enter the world," Suprenant said.



"Of all the people I've interviewed, the No. 1 barrier that slows them down is Mary," said Grodi. Grodi has worked with nearly 1,000 Protestant ministers and has interviewed more than 400 on his television program. "The number one issue that draws them is authority. Once many of them accept the issue of au-

thority, it gets them over the speed-bump of Mary." Still, issues with Mary often remain.

"It always lingers," Grodi said. "The immediate underlying issue is not the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception or her Assumption, but the fact that she creeps into one's prayer life. When converts are used to praying only to God, Mary remains a barrier because of their misunderstanding on the Communion of Saints," agreed.

"Mary played little or no role for me with my Calvinist background," said Presbyterian convert to Catholicism, Dr. Kenneth Howell, director of the Newman Institute of Catholic Thought at the University of Illinois, Champaign-Urbana. "Yet the more I came to understand the Biblical foundations for Catholic doctrines, the more I became open to seeing her as a vital part of my spiritual life." After his conversion, in June 1996, Howell remembered that becoming Catholic meant having an intimate relationship with the Mother of God. "I said, 'Lord, help me to love your Mother the way that you do,'" Howell said. Over the next several months Howell's prayer life became more Marian.

Mary also often plays a role in bringing lost Catholics back home. Catholic attorney

Larry Behr flirted with agnosticism and atheism during his college years. After returning to Christ at the age of 21, he rediscovered Mary through a confrontation with a sinful older man in a college bar. "After I exhorted him to be obedient to God, he told me that his best friend was Mary and then went out, I hope never to return," Behr said. "I was very struck by the fact that Mary had been caring for him despite his sinfulness, and seemed to be bringing him home, to Jesus." Behr immediately set out to read more about Mary, especially in papal encyclicals about her role in the Church, which he found thrilling.

"Mary brought me back into the Church over 30 years ago," said Behr, who is now working to erect the Arch of Triumph of the Immaculate Heart of Mary – the world's tallest monument as a tribute to Mary and a call to conversion – in Buffalo, NY. "I'm appreciative of her power to draw people to the Church. That is who she is in God's plan of salvation. She is our mother, and the mother is usually the unifying force in any family."

Tim Drake is the author of *Young and Catholic: The Face of Tomorrow's Church*.

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Dogma of Immaculate Conception Opened a New Era

Interview With Italian Journalist Vincenzo Sansonetti

ROME, Jan. 7, 2005 (Zenit.org). Proclamation of the dogma of the Immaculate Conception was a providential event that reinvigorated "an exhausted Church" by reminding the faithful of "the existence of original sin and Christ's redemption." So says Vincenzo Sansonetti, who worked for the Italian episcopal conference's newspaper *Avvenire* from 1976 to 1989. In this interview with ZENIT he high-

lighted striking passages of his new book "The Immaculate Conception. From Pius IX's Dogma to Medjugorje" ("L'Immacolata Concezione. Dal Dogma di Pio IX a Medjugorje"), published in Italy by Piemme. Since 1989, Sansonetti has been special envoy of and responsible for the cultural pages of the weekly *Oggi*; he also contributes to reviews such as *Mass Media*, *Studi Cattolici*, and *Timone*.

Q: When and why did the Holy See, all of a sudden,

change its position on this mystery of faith, the object of devotion since the very first years of the Church?

Sansonetti: Rather than a change, one may speak of progressive maturation through the centuries which led the Popes to "support," with discretion but attention, popular devotion and the liturgical feast, for centuries already present in the Church. The Popes were like arbiters in the disputes, often bitter, between the "maculates" and the "im-

maculates," led by Dominicans and Franciscans.

However, if one wishes to identify a crucial point, it must be found in the forced exile of Pope Pius IX, forced to flee to Gaeta, a fortress located in the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies, to remove himself from the fierce anti-Catholic and anti-papal persecution of the Roman Republic, led by Freemason Giuseppe Mazzini.

On a cold morning of January 1849, Pope Mastai Ferretti went out on the balcony of the palace that

offered him hospitality, and saw a stormy sea. He was worried. Cardinal Lambruschini, who was by his side, said to him: "Your Holiness, the world will only be cured of the evils that oppress it ... by proclaiming the dogma of the Immaculate Conception. Only this doctrinal definition will re-establish the sense of Christian truths."

A few days later, from Gaeta, Pius IX published the encyclical "Ubi Primum" in which he asked all bishops worldwide to define them-

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Abortion Argument Unravels:

How the unborn child defends itself against its mother, confirming that it is a separate human being from the start

Alex Williams, Australia

While the demand for abortion grows, so does the scientific case against the arguments often used to support it. Recent powerful evidence comes from immunology.

Half a century ago, when the amazing mechanism of the human immune system was first being uncovered, Nobel prize-winning biologist Sir Peter Medawar made a significant comment. He declared that the survival of the genetically different child within a mother's womb contradicted the immunological laws that were thwarting their attempts at tissue transplantation.

The immune system normally detects the presence of any "foreign" tissue in the body and it immediately sets up a defence against it (primarily what is now called the "killer T cell" mechanism).

This caused early experiments in organ transplantation to fail—the recipient's immune system attacked and rejected the donor's "foreign" organ tissue. So why doesn't the mother's womb detect the presence of the "foreign" tissue of the developing embryo and try to attack and reject it? We now know that it does!

And this is the cause of many miscarriages.

Recent research has shown that the developing child puts up a very specific defence against the killer T cell attack. And as long as the defence mechanism works properly, the pregnancy will proceed to full term. However, when the defence mechanism fails, miscarriage results.

In a landmark 1998 paper, researchers at the Medical College of Georgia, in Augusta, USA, found that the mammalian embryo (they worked with mice) produces a special enzyme, called indoleamine 2,3-dioxygenase, or "IDO," which suppresses the mother's T cell reaction and allows pregnancy to proceed. Follow-up work in humans revealed the same effect, and it was also demonstrated that the IDO was produced on the embryo side of the placental membrane (which separates mother from child) and not on the mother's side. Further work in mice showed that IDO production peaked during the formation of the placenta—the most crucial time for establishing that vital link between mother and child. And the most recent work in humans has established beyond doubt that IDO is a specific mechanism at the



"In my mother's womb you knew me."

mother-child interface for preventing the mother's immune system from rejecting the child.

But what does this have to do with abortion? Well, a common argument in favour of abortion is that a mother has the right to control what happens to her own body. However, this research shows very clearly that the baby is not part of the mother's body. The baby has a unique genetic makeup (only half its chromosomes come from the mother, the other half come from the father, and each combination of chromosomes is unique) and that condition is sufficient to cause the mother's immune system to identify the baby as "foreign" and it mounts an attack via the killer T cell system. In the mouse experiments, when IDO production was artificially suppressed, the mother's womb rapidly

rejected the embryos. It is only because the baby is normally well prepared for life in the womb by producing IDO and suppressing the mother's T cell reaction, that pregnancy can be healthy and go full term.

This research also highlights the fact that the child's individuality—its unique genetic makeup—exists from the moment of conception. At conception, the new person's genetic instructions come together for the first time—in a single cell called the zygote. But it is not until day 6 that IDO production kicks in. Why day 6? Well day 6 is a preparation for day 7, when the new embryo first attaches itself to its mother's womb so

that it can draw nutrients from its mother's bloodstream. This is exactly the time when the mother's killer T cells would normally begin to attack and reject it—if not for the amazing protection already provided by IDO production on the previous day.

Psalm 139:13 tells us that God "knit me together in my mother's womb" and in Isaiah 46:3 God says "you whom I have upheld since you were conceived" (NIV). IDO is a marvellous part of God's system for individually "upholding" us in the womb and we should not violate it, or indeed the commandment not to take innocent human life, through the proliferation of abortion.

Prayer To Christ Unborn

Dear Lord Jesus in the womb of Blessed Virgin Mary, before your birth You filled the unborn Baptist with the joy of the Holy Spirit. Inspire us to see You in every unborn child. Grant us the perseverance to defend vulnerable human life from abortion, abandonment, experimentation, and all violations. Fill us with reverence for the moment of your Incarnation in Nazareth when the Word became flesh. Amen.

To receive a FREE Arch of Triumph prayer card, email your name and address to Kelly G. Smith, kgsniagfalls@hotmail.com, or write to Kelly, at 2740 Woodlawn Ave., Niagara Falls, NY 14301.

FROM THE MAILBAG:

Immaculate Conception Dogma Implies Full Humanity from First Moment

Dear Editor,

Saint Maximillian Kolbe stated that the Blessed Mother must be very pleased that she is called the Immaculate Conception, "because it indicates the special grace that lies at the source of her being, the grace which she received at the first instant of her existence." Recently reading this passage revealed to me, even more clearly, that not only does human life begin at conception, but that

the human soul is created at conception! God cannot create a mass of blood or a blob of tissue "without original sin." He cannot remove original sin from a stone, a tree, or a sand dune; He can remove original sin only from a soul.

How, therefore, can any Catholic, accepting the dogma of the Immaculate Conception, believe that human life and an immortal soul does not begin at the very moment of concep-

tion? To be even more candid, how can any Catholic (since to be Catholic requires belief in all the Church teaches) continue to call himself/herself Catholic and also be Pro-Choice, thinking erroneously that a human life is not being killed by abortion? "Either life is always and in all circumstances sacred, or intrinsically of no account. It is inconceivable that it should be in some cases sacred, and in other cases of no ac-

count." (Anonymous)

It is my sincere hope and prayer, as I finish this letter, that St. Maximillian's words and intercession will help Catholics to develop a stronger conviction of the belief in this most beautiful title of Our Lady. What will consequently follow is a stronger respect for the sanctity of life, from conception to natural death, as well as a strong desire to help those wavering souls of all faiths to accept and

support the sanctity of all human life.

Raymond Micco

We could not agree with you more, Raymond! Unfortunately, too many refuse to think through the consequences of their politically influenced convictions for their faith, and thus, for their immortal souls. We join our prayers with yours for our brothers and sisters of whom this is true.

-Editor

True Devotion to Mary

Prof. Mark Miravalle, S.T.D.

How much should the Mother of Jesus be loved? It is a question easily answered if we turn our gaze to the Son, whom our holy Faith impels us to imitate in everything. A common expression used today poses it simply and succinctly: "What would Jesus do?" How much did the Incarnate Son love his mother?

The Sacred Heart of Jesus loves the Immaculate Heart of his Mother infinitely, without limits, divine or human. It is precisely from that Immaculate Heart that the Sacred Heart received its sacred humanity, and these Two Hearts, in the totality of their respective beings, are inseparably united in mutual love and in their mission for the redemption of the world by the heavenly Father. Both as Son and as Savior, Jesus possesses a love for his immaculate and co-redeeming mother that knows no bounds. It is precisely the same mother, the object-person of his infinite divine and human love, that he bestows to each one of us from the victory of Calvary.

Our love will never begin to rival Our Lord's love for her. We, therefore, are likewise called to pursue an infinite love of the Mother, although coupled with the humility that our finite hearts will never achieve the endless love for the

Immaculate One possessed by our Lord's Most Sacred Heart. Is it possible then, to love the Mother of Jesus too much? Theologically and metaphysically, it is not possible to love the Mother of Jesus and the Mother of all peoples too much.



St. Louis de Montfort, "Apostle of Mary"

To love is to will the good for the beloved, even unto the greatest sacrifice of offering one's life (cf. Jn. 15:13). To will the good for the Mother of God, to will that she receive the praise and honor desired by the Most Holy Trinity, and that humanity freely accept her as a gift from the Son—which will then allow her to distribute most generously the graces of the Redeemer into human hearts for their salvation—this love of the Mother can never be too much, even if it calls for suffering and sacrifice on behalf

of her earthly children called to live and spread this love.

Sadly, it is possible to have forms of "false devotion" to Mary, as St. Louis Marie de Montfort points out (True Devotion, nn. 92-104). False devotion either attaches a personal agenda of self-gain to an external Marian devotion, or, even more seriously, distorts Mary into an end unto herself. "Mariolatry" or the worship of Mary as a goddess would be to place the human mother of Jesus on a level equal to her divine Son, a blasphemy for any Christian and more painful to the Immaculate Heart than it would be for any other human heart. For she seeks only to be the immaculate transparency to her Son for the human family, as she was crafted immaculately to be by the Father of all mankind.

False devotion to Mary is not loving her too much, but too little. It is a disordered "affection" that seeks to change her into something she is not, namely God; or seeks to acquire personal benefit (i.e., the good opinion of others, an ecclesial facade covering vice, intellectual pride in attacking authentic Marian devotion by the common faithful, etc), without an authentic love of the Mother of God in the heart. The regrettable existence of false devotion to Mary can never be used as legitimate examples of lov-

ing the Mother of Jesus "too much," but rather its ontological opposite.

St. Bernard of Clairvaux's famous Marian maxim, *De Maria numquam satis*, "Concerning Mary, never enough," conveys the veneration and honor which the Church traditionally grants to God's greatest masterpiece. To this maxim we can appropriately add the specific goal of love, which constitutes the purpose of the Mother of All Peoples Weekly Marian Internet Magazine: to bespeak the "whole truth about Mary" without compromise, so as to

enkindle a greater love of her Immaculate Heart the world over.

May every son and daughter of the Church aspire to grow daily in their love of the Mother of All Peoples with renewed zeal, without fear of excess, and in imitation of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, whose love of the Mother exceeds all human understanding. Let us all live the truth which is captured in the famous motto of St. Bernard of Clairvaux, *De Maria numquam satis*—"Concerning Mary, never enough"—we cannot love our Blessed Mother too much.

Act of Consecration to the Immaculate Heart of Mary

I, N., a faithless sinner, renew and ratify today in thy hands, O Immaculate Mother, the vows of my Baptism; I renounce forever Satan, his pomps and works; and I give myself entirely to Jesus Christ, the Incarnate Wisdom, to carry my cross after Him all the days of my life, and to be more faithful to Him than I have ever been before.

In the presence of all the heavenly court I choose thee this day, for my Mother and Mistress. I deliver and consecrate to thee, as thy slave, my body and soul, my goods, both interior and exterior, and even the value of all my good actions, past, present and future; leaving to thee the entire and full right of disposing of me, and all that belongs to me, without exception, according to thy good pleasure, for the greater glory of God, in time and in eternity. Amen.

Prayer of St. Louis de Montfort, prayed daily by Pope John Paul II.

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Arch of Triumph Billboard Goes Up in Clarksburg, WV!

THANKS to Rose Marie Seftick, Thomas Condron, DDS, Jeannine Amos, Erlinda de la Pena, M.D., and Gerald Casillo, for a beautiful billboard, featuring the Immaculate Heart on a sky-blue background, on E. Pike and Joyce Street in Clarksburg, West Virginia! For information on sponsoring a billboard in your area, please contact Jerry Casillo, by email (miride@aol.com), or telephone (716-694-4955).

Liaisons Represent Arch Association at Catholic Conferences

Our Local Liaisons across the USA, Canada, and worldwide render loving service to Our Lady, and to the Arch of the Triumph of her Immaculate Heart, by helping to spread the word about our great undertaking. One very important means for this, is representing us at Catholic conferences in their areas. In just recent months:

- Maureen DiPoala of Webster, NY, Linda Gruttadauria of Greece, NY, Don Meek of Buffalo, NY and others all assisted at our table at an October, 2004 Father Corapi conference in Rochester, NY, sponsored by Holy Family Communications
- Deacon Charles "Chuck" Fosmire of Plymouth, MI, and Roger and Catherine Ayers of Metairie, LA, handled our table at a November 2004 Fullness of Truth conference, in Kenner, LA
- Deacon Chuck, with Lee F. Bowers of Houston, TX, were at our table at the New Evangelization of the Americas conference in Dallas, TX, in January 2005
- Steve and Marion Bradley of Grand Island, NY represented us at Catholic conferences in Toronto and Buffalo

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Pope Sees Beauty as a Means of Evangelization

Necessary to Make the Luminous Face of God Shine, He Says

VATICAN CITY, NOV. 9, 2004 (Zenit.org).

John Paul II presented beauty as the “path” for the Church to proclaim the Gospel to contemporary society.

Attending the Public Session of the Pontifical Academies today, the Pope said that “the path of beauty” is the “privileged itinerary for the encounter between the Christian faith and the cultures of our time and a precious instrument for the formation of the young generations.”

The papal address to the academics, read on behalf of the Holy Father by Archbishop Leonardo Sandri, substitute of the Secretariat of State, said that “in 2,000 years of history, the Church has journeyed

in many ways on the path of beauty through works of sacred art, which have supported prayer, the liturgy, family life and Christian communities.”

The address continued: “Splendid architectonic masterworks, paintings, sculptures and miniatures; musical, literary and theatrical works, together with other works of art erroneously considered as minor, are authentic treasures that make us understand, through the language of beauty and symbols, the profound harmony that exists between faith and art, between human creativity and the work of God, author of all authentic beauty.”

“Could humanity enjoy today such a great artistic patrimony if the Christian community had not encouraged

and supported the creativity of numerous artists, proposing to them as model and inspiration the beauty of Christ, splendor of the Father?” John Paul II asked in his address.

“However,” he added, “for beauty to shine in all its splendor, it must be united to goodness and holiness of life; that is, it is necessary to make shine in the world, through the holiness of his children, the luminous face of the good, admirable and just God.

“The testimony of Christians, if it is to make an impact on modern society, cannot cease to be nourished by beauty in order to become an eloquent transparency of the beauty of the love of God.”

The task of Christian intellectuals, and in particular of

artists, is “to nourish the love of everything that is an authentic expression of human genius, reflection of the divine beauty,” the Pope stated.

The Public Session of the Pontifical Academies was opened by Cardinal Paul Poupard, president of the Pontifical Council for Culture, who in his address presented “art and beauty as a bridge between culture and faith.”

The Church must journey on the “path of beauty” to “witness with efficacy and communicate the Gospel,” thus

promoting “a new Christian humanism for the third millennium,” the cardinal said.

The session was attended by members of the pontifical academies whose coordination council is under Cardinal Poupard: the St. Thomas Aquinas Academy, the Academy of Theology, the Academy of the Immaculate, the International Marian Academy, the Academy of Fine Arts and Classics of the Virtuosi of the Pantheon, the Roman Academy of Archaeology, and the Academy of Devotion to the Martyrs.

Pope John Paul II on Marian Sanctuaries:

“Sanctuaries are the Church’s capital, because they are the focal points from which the Word of God is proclaimed and where the sacraments are celebrated, where the prayers are held and the Church congregates on a stage greater than a parish. They are the sites where pilgrims’ experiences merge with the life of the Virgin and the experiences of the nation, the country, and every region with the unceasing love of the Church and its Mother.”

FROM THE EDITOR:

The Meaning of the Immaculate Heart of Mary

Because of this great undertaking on behalf of Our Blessed Mother, Our Lord, and their innocent unborn, already many non-Catholics (and Catholics as well) are beginning to ask what is meant by the “Immaculate Heart of Mary.” In light of Mary’s revelation at Fatima on July 13, 1917, “Jesus wishes to establish in the world, devotion to my Immaculate Heart,” this is critical information for any Christian, to say the least. Indeed, one Baptist minister earnestly wrote us that he had visited a Catholic bookstore seeking this information, and had even called a priest he picked from a phone book, who unfortunately admitted that he “doesn’t really know” what “Immaculate Heart of Mary” means.

This is not a thing far off or hidden from us. Any Christian, or anyone at all, of good faith and with a knowledge of the Gospel, should be able to say what is meant by Mary’s Immaculate Heart. “Immaculate” means clean, pure,

without spot; such a heart is totally free of sin and viciousness; it is the pure heart of an innocent child, like whom Jesus taught we must become, in order to enter into the Kingdom of God.

“Love believes all things,” wrote Saint Paul; he might have written as well, “Purity believes all things,” understanding both love and purity in their most exalted senses as uniting us with the very heart of God—and the things believed by them, to be His things. Love that is of God, and holy purity, exist together, and assist each other.

The Virgin Mary’s purity of heart, if greater in degree, is not of a kind different from the purity of that little girl named for her whose inquiring letter evoked the famous editorial, “Yes, Virginia, there is a Santa Claus.” It is the same purity that responded to the message of an angel, “Be it done unto me according to thy will.”

That is why we know Mary to be our loving Mother—and why those Christians

who do not look beyond the reported fact of Mary’s physical virginity, to gaze upon the spotless soul of Mary and marvel at its shimmering beauty, deprive themselves of the greatest blessing of salvation after knowing God Himself—and indeed, self-limit their knowing of Him. An artist’s true greatness cannot be fully appreciated without contemplating his greatest creation, nor can God’s. Mary herself exclaimed under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, “My soul doth magnify the Lord” (Luke 1:46).

Cardinal Ratzinger’s commentary on the Third Secret of Fatima makes it clear that Mary’s Immaculate Heart is offered for our contemplation and imitation, in full accord with scriptural principles:

In biblical language, the ‘heart’ indicates the center of human life, the point where reason, will, temperament and sensitivity converge, where the person finds his unity and his interior orientation.

According to Matthew 5:8, the ‘immaculate heart’ is a heart which, with God’s grace, has come to perfect interior unity and therefore ‘sees God.’ To be ‘devoted’ to the Immaculate Heart of Mary means therefore to embrace this attitude of heart, which makes the fiat - ‘your will be done’ - the defining center of one’s whole life. It might be objected that we should not place a human being between ourselves and Christ. But then we remember that Paul did not hesitate to say to his communities: ‘imitate me’ (1 Cor 4:16; Phil 3:17; 1 Th 1:6; 2 Th 3:7,9). In the Apostle they could see concretely what it meant to follow Christ. But from whom might we better learn in every age than from the Mother of the Lord?”

How perfectly this understanding of Mary’s important role in our spiritual lives, is

mirrored by this entry in the diary of St. Maria Faustina, on Christmas Eve, 1936:

“During Holy Mass today, I was united in a particular way with God and His Immaculate Mother. The humility and love of the Immaculate Virgin penetrated my soul. The more I imitate the Mother of God, the more deeply I get to know God. Oh, what infinite longing envelops my soul!”

The violence and wars of the last century, and the violent start of the new millennium, are intimately intertwined with the impurity and lust so rampant in our world. Impurity and hatred are mates, just as are purity and love. But, Mary promised at Fatima that in the end, her Immaculate Heart will triumph, and the world would know peace. This, we believe, will occur only with the establishment of devotion to Mary’s Immaculate Heart, in our world.

The Roots of the Triumph in Scripture and Prophecy

*Queen of All Hearts Magazine,
March-April, 2004 (Reprinted
by permission)*

LAURENCE D. BEHR*
Part I of II

Much attention is paid to the prophetic messages delivered by Mary at Fatima, Portugal in 1917, and to their great significance for our world today. Not only Mary's portentous messages are significant, however. The very fact of Mary's appearances at Fatima, and of her many other approved appearances in recent centuries, strongly supports the beautiful Marian devotions that have always marked Catholicism. Indeed, for those who believe in them, Mary's appearances underscore the authenticity of our Holy Catholic Church, which declares those Marian appearances that survive strict scrutiny to be worthy of belief by all Christians.

Following the Second Vatican Council an exaggerated ecumenism led many Catholics to downplay Marian devotion, in favor of the "basic" elements of our faith shared with Protestants. Fortunately, devotion to Our Lady rebounded and is growing, and there have even been encouraging signs of interest in Mary among Protestants. There remain, however, millions of Protestants, especially among evangelicals and fundamentalists, who deeply distrust all things Marian. Sad to say, some Catholics, both clergy and laity, also still see Mary as her Son was seen—a stumbling block and a source of division.

Nothing could be less true. Progress towards reuniting Christianity cannot be bought by denying our common Mother, whose offspring and seed all Christians are:

"And she brought forth a man child, who was to rule all nations with an iron rod***. And the dragon was angry against the woman: and went to make war with the rest of her seed, who

keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ." (Apoc 12:; 17)

So long as some children deny one of their parents, they can never be truly of one mind and spirit with their siblings, whether spiritual or natural, who know and who love both. Our effort, then, must be to bring Mary to those who know her not; for as Mary herself revealed at Fatima, "Our Lord wishes to establish in the world, devotion to my Immaculate Heart."

Early Protestant leaders did not reject the Church's beliefs about and reverence for Mary, although some disagreed as to the degree or manner in which we ought to honor her. Martin Luther in particular is known to have had devotion to Mary. It was only after the false and unscriptural heresy of "sola Scriptura"—only what Scripture explicitly teaches is to be believed—took hold and worked its harm that the Protestant reaction against Mary began in earnest. Thus, "sola Scriptura" has hindered Protestants' understanding of Mary, although the scriptural basis undergirding all Catholic doctrines concerning Mary has been proven in numerous papal teachings.

We may hope prayerfully that, with Fatima and the other great Marian interventions in our world, God now has set the stage for the conversion of the Protestants back to the one, true Faith; for when He completely fulfills Mary's Fatima prophecies, including the Triumph of Her Immaculate Heart, she will be vindicated and her disbelievers, converted. And not only Protestants will be brought to the truth through Mary, but many from non-Christian religions as well. In particular, the Moslems, who greatly revere Mary and share our belief in the Bible, have been singled out in prophecy for conversion through Mary's mighty agency. Mary's prominent, future role in bringing

both peace to the world, and conversions to our Faith, was predicted in private revelation even before the "Age of Mary," said to have commenced in 1831 with the apparitions of Mary to St. Catherine Laboure. Saint Louis de Montfort (1673-1716), the "Apostle of Mary," wrote:

"The power of Mary over all devils will be particularly outstanding in the last period of time. She will extend the Kingdom of Christ over the idolaters and Moslems, and there will come a glorious era in which Mary will be the ruler and Queen of human hearts."

In the hope, then, of planting seeds that will bring forth fruit, let us explore somewhat the strong biblical support for Mary's important role in salvation, and especially for the Triumph of her Immaculate Heart which she prophesied at Fatima in 1917, saying, "In the end, my Immaculate Heart will Triumph, and the world will know a period of peace."

Prefiguration is a form of prophecy by which the Holy Spirit foreshadowed, in the people and events of the Old Testament, the greater things to come in the future. It does not inform us of the things to come, as much as it enables us, when God's plan is fulfilled, to recognize His hand and design, and to believe with passion and conviction in the things He does. Well-recognized instances include the bread and wine offered by Melchisedek, and also the Passover meal, which prefigure the Eucharist; Melchisedek himself, prefiguring Our Lord's High Priesthood (Heb 5:7); Joseph, sold by his brothers into slavery only to become a great ruler who forgave and saved his brothers, prefigures Christ, Who was crucified by his own, but is their merciful King and Savior; Moses, who led his people out of slavery in Egypt, prefigures Christ leading us out of the darkness of sin. Jesus himself



Miriam singing the song Moses wrote

used prefiguration, when He told the Jews they would receive only "the sign of Jonah"—like Jonah who went into the belly of the whale for three days, Christ would die and rise again on the third day (Mt 12:39).

No Christian can deny the importance of prefiguration. Now then, when God's plan concerning Mary is being manifested, the time is ripe to contemplate how her great role in salvation was prophesied in Scripture, by prefiguration in great women of the Old Testament.

THE FIRST MARY

We begin with Miriam, the sister of Moses and Aaron. Miriam was "the first Mary"—Miriam is Mary's name in Hebrew, and the Douay Rheims Version actually names Moses' sister, "Mary." The very name Miriam or Mary, it is to be stressed, means a royal Lady, an exalted one (see Encyclical, *Ad Caeli Reginam* (1954)). At the Bible's first mention of her, Miriam/Mary led the Israelite women in a song of triumph, after the Pharaoh's army drowned in the sea. Her song is one of several by Old Testament women that anticipate Mary's great Magnificat (Lk 1:46-54):

"So Mary the prophetess, the sister of Aaron, took a timbrel in her hand: and all the women went forth after her with timbrels and with dances: and she began the song to them, saying: let us sing to the Lord, for He is gloriously magnified, the

horse and his rider he hath thrown into the sea." (Exodus 15:20-21)

Nothing more is said about the first Mary as having any role in the delivery of the Jews from Egypt, and she might be regarded as unimportant—except that many centuries later the prophet Micah, the same who foretold that the Messiah would come from Bethlehem and would rule the whole earth (Micah 5), rebuked the Jews in the Lord's name, saying:

"For I brought thee up out of the land of Egypt, and delivered thee out of the house of slaves; and I sent before thy face Moses, and Aaron, and Mary." (Micah 6:4)

The Exodus of the Israelites from Egypt prefigures Christ's leading the saved into heaven. Moses was lawgiver and ruler, Aaron, a priest. Christ combines the office of ruler and priest in Himself—He is our King and our High Priest. So, when Micah reports the Lord as saying, centuries following the Exodus, "I sent before thee Moses, and Aaron, and Mary," is not that for us today a clear indication that Christ, accompanied by Mary, will lead the saved into His Father's Kingdom?

* Executive Director, Association for the Arch of Triumph of the Immaculate Heart of Mary and International Shrine of the Holy Innocents, Inc. Mr. Behr, who is also President of Western New York Lawyers for Life, is a partner in the Buffalo, NY law firm of Barth, Sullivan & Behr.

Arch for Mary, from p. 1

A CALL TO RETURN TO GOD

"It will," declared Mr. Behr, "serve as an international signal call to conversion and a return to God, to an ever greater love of purity, and rejection of abortion and immorality." He expects the shrine to be particularly effective, because it will be a "marvelous tourist attraction" with the potential to draw "millions of visitors annually of all faiths and of no church affiliation at all."

The importance and urgency of this focus for the pro-life movement is expressed well by Father Frank Pavone, of Priests for Life, when he stated: "We need to stir the attention of the public to pro-life issues, whether they want to hear about them or not. A sign as public and visible as the proposed arch and shrine will certainly serve this purpose." Father Pavone is among nearly 30 national Catholic pro-life and spiritual leaders who are on record in support of this great project.

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF SHRINES

Inspired by an article he read about the significance of shrines and the meaning of pilgrimage, Behr was deeply struck by the pastoral mission of shrines. He was impressed by the clarion call of Pope John Paul II in the 1987-88 Marian Year to understand the "geography of faith" (Redemptoris Mater.) Pope Paul VI, a few years earlier, had described shrines as "spiritual clinics" and "centers of spiritual refreshment."

Behr realized that shrines have a special vocation in salvation history, and that he and others might participate in this mission. Just as God calls each of his creatures to a special role in this life, so does He designate shrines, through his Church, for a particular purpose. Larry Behr felt compelled to take action. And so, this project began to take form from that inspiration.

THE LAYOUT

These are the general plans for the Arch and Holy Innocents Shrine project. The Arch will include three chapels, one in each leg and one in its peak, along with a museum or gallery, book and gift shop, and a refreshment

area. Administrative office and meeting facilities will be located on upper floors in the arch's legs. Elevators will carry visitors to an observation platform beneath the Chapel of the Triumph under the Arch's peak.

A two-level International Shrine of the Holy Innocents, centered beneath the apex of the arch, will recall Herod's slaughter of innocent babies described in Matthew's Gospel (2:16-17), and connect that incident to the plague of abortion commonplace worldwide. That chapel will contain a statue of Mary holding the Christ Child as Prince of Peace; a statuary group of Mary, Joseph, and Jesus on the Flight into Egypt; and a large mural of Our Lady of Guadalupe, an expectant mother.

Once donations mount, the appropriate site along Buffalo's Outer Harbor on Lake Erie

proposed Arch of Triumph and Shrine.

Some naysayers have objected that Mary would not want such a grand monument erected in Her honor. But has anyone ever heard Mary complain about the many shrines and cathedrals and basilicas dedicated to Her? At Lourdes, and more recently at Fatima, She encouraged such devotion to Her Immaculate Heart.

Besides, this dream is indicative of a mission...more than a mere monument. Scoffers are expected, but recall the sage counsel of Gamaliel in the Acts of the Apostles (5:39), that if this is the work of God, it will endure.

Others may protest that this money should be spent on the poor. However, the money has not yet been contributed, those who will donate generously will continue to share freely with other worthy causes. For this reason Jesus rebuked Judas for objecting when Mary

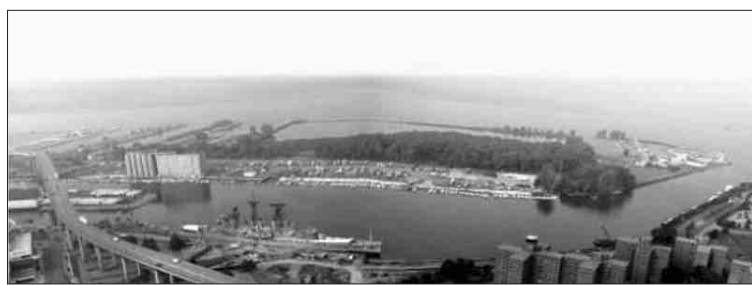
Magdalene anointed Jesus' feet with costly perfumed oil. Money is readily available for the needs of the poor and the

sick. Only our lack of faith and selfishness hamper generosity.

SHRINES STIMULATE FAITH

World religions have erected great shrines to stimulate faith in God. Only love of God produces genuine charity. In our lifetime, God has again offered convincing proof.

Larry Behr and his collaborators see a 21st century connection to the Guadalupe event. A reminder of the Fatima message, and relationship to the great pro-life and Marian achievements of Buffalo native, Venerable Father Nelson Baker. They point to a parallel of their project with what produced the shrines of Our Lady of Guadalupe, Our Lady of Fatima, and Father Baker's Our Lady of Victory (www.OurLadyofVictory.org).



Projected Site in Buffalo, NY, on Lake Erie

GUADALUPEAN MESSAGE

They find inspiration for the pro-life movement and the project they spearhead, in what has transpired in the life of the Church in times preceding ours, relating these to the whole chain of Marian apparitions and messages from Guadalupe in 1531, to the here and now.

In the United States of America alone, since the Roe vs. Wade ruling in 1973, it is estimated that 40 million innocent, unborn babies have been killed by abortion. Why, then, would it not be appropriate to establish a shrine commemorating the killing of these millions of innocent human persons? And why not in Buffalo? This city was a focal point for the 1992 "Spring of Life" program of the national pro-life movement.

At that time there were six abortion centers in the Buffalo area; today there are two. Since that time, surgical abortions have either been discontinued or drastically reduced in some area hospitals. These facts do not spell failure, but victory in the making.

BRINGING NEW LIFE TO OUR NATION

At Guadalupe, Jesus triumphed through Mary, resulting in the conversion of millions, and the elimination of Aztec human sacrifices. Could not Jesus triumph in a similar way today through Mary, who would bring new life to a nation which thus far honors death over life, since all fifty states have laws which allow killing innocent children through abortion?

Such a triumph could convert millions of Americans and others, to the principle that the right-to-life stated in the Declaration of Independence can and must be guaranteed by law for all human persons, born and unborn.

Laurence Behr is not claiming an apparition from

the Virgin Mary. But he and many others do believe that his inspiration comes from God. If the source is only human inspiration, it will fade. If it finds its origin in God, then the project will succeed, provided that those who believe in it persevere in their belief and are willing to stand up and be counted.

The originator of this boldly and clearly conceived project has done his homework carefully. He is articulate and waxes eloquent when presenting the dream of the Arch of Triumph of the Immaculate Heart of Mary and the International Shrine of the Holy Innocents. He translated convincingly this dream into concrete terms. His motivation is solid.

A distinguished team of directors, advisors, supporters—individuals and groups—have joined ranks with him. All pieces seem to fit well in a sharply distinct and integrated plan.

NEVER ENOUGH FOR MARY

While some may regard this as fantasy and folly, more will understand it as faith in action, hope expressed plainly, love demonstrated in living. The whole concept is redolent of the revered Church adage, *De Maria nunquam satis*, "we can never do enough for Mary." After all, Jesus Christ is our model. What has he done? Now it is our turn to respond.

Let the final word be that of Laurence Behr himself: "In conclusion, dear friends, we are poised to carry forward this vision into realization. Our need for your prayers and your financial support, as we launch our national and international campaign, is great. Please consider prayerfully what God might wish you to do for this great endeavor on behalf of Our Lord, our Blessed Mother, and the innocent unborn at this time."

[Reprinted from *Queen of All Hearts Magazine*]



Arch Association Director Laurence Behr (right) with Fr. Frank Pavone and Dr. Paul Schenck, of Priests for Life

will be chosen for construction. When sufficient funds are accumulated, permitting building to commence, three or four years should see completion of the entire project.

The cost is estimated at approximately \$100 million, which will come primarily from generous faithful here and abroad. Hopefully organizations and foundations will also contribute. With the faith characteristic of a zealous visionary, Behr believes that a million faithful will offer \$100 each for this sacred cause.

The project's intent is, of course, spiritual regeneration and moral uplift. More than 4,000,000 visit the Gateway Arch in St. Louis each year. Pilgrims, and tourists of all backgrounds from around the world, will be attracted to the

ONE NATION, UNDER GOD HISTORY FORGOTTEN

Did you know that 52 of the 55 signers of "The Declaration of Independence" were orthodox, deeply committed, Christians? The other three all believed in the Bible as the divine truth, the God of scripture, and His personal intervention. It is the same Congress that formed the American Bible Society. Immediately after creating the Declaration of Independence, the Continental Congress voted to purchase and import 20,000 copies of Scripture for the people of this nation.

Patrick Henry, who is called the firebrand of the American Revolution, is still remembered for his words, "Give me liberty or give me death"; but in current textbooks, the context of these words is omitted.

Here is what he actually said: "An appeal to arms and the God of hosts is all that is left us. But we shall not fight our battle alone. There is a just God that presides over the destinies of nations. The battle, sir, is not to the strong alone. Is life so dear or peace so sweet as to be purchased at the price of chains and slavery? Forbid it Almighty God. I know not what course others may take, but as for me, give me liberty, or give me death." These sentences have been erased from our textbooks.

Was Patrick Henry a Christian? The following year, 1776, he wrote this: "It cannot be emphasized too strongly or too often that this great Nation was founded not by religionists, but by Christians; not on religions, but on the Gospel of Jesus Christ. For that reason alone, people of other faiths have been afforded freedom of worship here."

Consider these words that Thomas Jefferson wrote in the front of his well-worn Bible: "I am a real Christian, that



"Where the spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty." 2 Cor. 3:17

is to say, a disciple of the doctrines of Jesus. I have little doubt that our whole country will soon be rallied to the unity of our creator." He was also the chairman of the American Bible Society, which he considered his highest and most important role.

On July 4, 1821, President Adams said, "The highest glory of the American Revolution was this: "It connected in one indissoluble bond the principles of civil government with the principles of Christianity."

Calvin Coolidge, our 30th President of the United States, reaffirmed this truth when he wrote, "The foundations of our society and our government rest so much on the teachings of the Bible that it would be difficult to support them if faith in these teachings would cease to be practically universal in our country."

In 1782, the United States Congress voted this resolution: "The Congress of the United States recommends and approves the Holy Bible for use in all schools."

William Holmes McGuffey is the author of the McGuffey Reader, which was used for over 100 years in our public schools with over 125 million copies sold until it was stopped in 1963. President Lincoln called him the "Schoolmaster of the Nation." Listen to

these word of Mr. McGuffey: "The Christian religion is the religion of our country. From it are derived our nation, on the character of God, on the great moral Governor of the universe. On its doctrines are founded the peculiarities of our free Institutions."

Of the first 108 universities founded in America, 106 were distinctly Christian, including the first, Harvard University, chartered in 1636. In the original Harvard Student Handbook, rule number 1 was that students seeking entrance must know Latin and Greek so that they could study the Scriptures: "Let every student be plainly instructed and earnestly pressed to consider well, the main end of his life and studies, is, to know God and Jesus Christ, which is eternal life, John 17:3; and therefore to lay Jesus Christ as the only foundation for our children to follow the moral principles of the Ten Commandments."

James Madison, the primary author of the Constitution of the United States, said this: "We have staked the whole future of all our political constitutions upon the capacity of each of ourselves to govern ourselves according to the moral principles of the Ten Commandments."

SAINTS CORNER:

Mary and What Heaven Is Like

It was then, indeed, that Adam and Eve, the ancestors of our race, cried out piercingly, with joyful lips: "Blessed are you, our daughter, for canceling the punishment of our transgression! You inherited from us a corruptible body, but you bore in your womb, for our sakes, the garment of incorruptibility. You took being from our loins, but you restored to us our well-being. You put an end to our travail, and broke through the swaddling-bands of death. You made available to us again our ancient home: we were the ones who locked Paradise, you the one who opened the way to the Tree of Life. Through our actions, sad times overtook good; but through yours, yet better times have come again out of sadness. How, then, shall you, the Immaculate One, taste death? For you, death will be the bridge to life, the stairway to heaven, the ford to the banks of immortality. Truly you are blessed, O most blessed one! For who has been offered in sacrifice but the Word himself, suffering all that we have learned he did?"

All the chorus of the saints joined in the applause: You have fulfilled the prophecies! You bring us the joy we have been waiting for! Through you, we have been released from the bonds of death! Come to us, holy and life-giving treasure – come to us who long for you, for you have brought our longing to its end!

—Saint John of Damascus

Saint John of Damascus (c. †749) was the last of the Greek Fathers of the Church

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One Glory

Count it not strange that Mary, of all creatures
Elect and beautiful, untouched of blight,
Was not to see her Son's transfigured features
With Peter, James and John on Tabor's height.

Her breast had been His halo. Through long morrows
Of mothering she watched Him; through the toss
Of multitudes and tempters; through the sorrows
That brought Him to the thorn-crown and the Cross.

She wept and bled with Him at every station
Of Calvary, yet rightly Holy Writ
Records her not at His transfiguration:
She knew His glory. She was part of it.

—Clifford J. Laube ["One Glory" appeared in the first issue of *Queen of All Hearts Magazine* (Montfort Missionaries), in May, 1950.

Pope Entrusts, from p. 1

Virgin that he composed for the occasion, the Pope said: "Once again we are here to honor you, at the foot of this column, from which, with love, you watch over Rome and the whole world." The Pope's visit to the square is part of the city's annual popular tradition. This occasion was especially marked by the 150th anniversary of the day when Pope Pius IX proclaimed "as truth of the Catholic faith" the Virgin Mary's "preservation from all stain of sin," John Paul II said. After the meditation, John Paul II offered a floral homage to the Virgin, while Cardinal Ruini incensed the image. The flowers had been gathered that same morning in the Vatican Gardens: 150 roses placed in a basket and tied with a ribbon with the Vatican coat of arms.

Two readers proclaimed, respectively, excerpts from the Letter to the Ephesians and from Pius IX's dogmatic bull "Ineffabilis Deus." The homily ended with an emotional imploration of the

Holy Father to the Virgin: "May you accompany every Christian on the path of conversion and holiness, in the struggle against sin and in the search for true beauty, which is always the sign and reflection of divine Beauty." John Paul II also prayed, with a clear and firm voice, to the Virgin Mary for "peace and salvation for all peoples." After the Mass, the Pope prayed the Angelus with several thousand pilgrims who weathered the rain in St. Peter's Square. "The privilege of being preserved from original sin means" that Mary "is the first redeemed by her Son. Her sublime beauty, a reflection of that of Christ, is a pledge for all believers of the victory of divine Grace over sin and death," John Paul II told his listeners.

That is why "the Immaculate Conception appears as a beacon of light for humanity of all times" who "leads us to believe and hope in God, in his salvation and in eternal life," and "illuminates, particularly, the path of the Church engaged in the New Evangelization," the Holy Father stressed.

New Era, from p. 3

selves on the dogma of the Immaculate Conception.

The result was virtually a plebiscite and, on December 8, 1854, the Pope pronounced the solemn declaration that "the Most Blessed Virgin Mary, from the first moment of her conception, by special grace and privilege of God and in view of the merits of Jesus Christ, was preserved immune from all stain of original sin."

Q: The promulgation of this dogma took place in a period, heir to the Enlightenment, which in Italy enabled Giuseppe Mazzini to say: "A new era is arising which does not admit Christianity" and that was, as you affirm, characterized by a certain decadence in the life of the Church. Do you believe that this historical and ecclesial event had some affinity with what happened, for example, with the apparition of

the Virgin of Guadalupe and, therefore, that it must be interpreted as the response of grace to an impossible human situation?

Sansonetti: The Guadalupe apparition in Mexico completed the evangelization of Latin America in the 16th century. The proclamation of the dogma of the Immaculate Conception, gave back vigor, in the mid-19th century, to an exhausted Church in a tight spot, by recalling the existence of original sin and the redemption of Christ. They were providential events, which corresponded to a mysterious divine plan. And it is amazing that, four years after the proclamation of the dogma, on February 11, 1858, Our Lady appeared in Lourdes calling herself the Immaculate Conception, confirming the dogma.

She could have done so earlier -- there were tens, if not hundreds, of Marian ap-

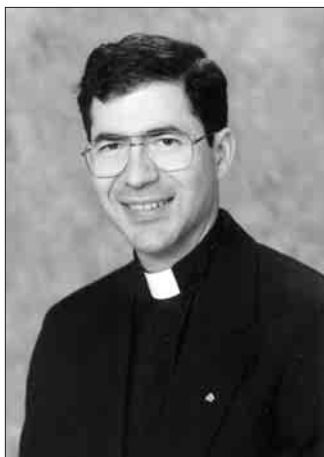
paritions prior to Lourdes -- but the Virgin respects the human way, the steps of the Church. And she described herself as the "immaculate" only after Pius IX's Bull of December 8, 1854.

Q: Can you tell us something about the supernatural events that reporters of that time wrote in regard to the promulgation of the bull "Ineffabilis Deus"?

Sansonetti: On the morning of December 8, 1854, in St. Peter's Basilica in the Vatican, a ray of light fell on Pius IX at the moment of the reading of the bull "Ineffabilis Deus." An amazing phenomenon, because in no season, and much less so just before winter, and from no window of the Vatican basilica, could a ray of light reach the apse where the Pope was. It was seen as a kind of heavenly approval, the hope of a joyful future in the midst of the tormented life of the Church at the time.

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**Fr. Matthew Habiger, OSB,
Past President, Human Life
International**

“The protection of life will not be achieved if the activities of the Church and the pro-life movement are directed only to those who voluntarily seek out the message. We need to stir the attention of the public

to these issues whether they want to hear about them or not. A sign as public and visible as the proposed Arch and Shrine will certainly serve this purpose, as well as many other noble purposes. Be assured of my prayers and my willingness to [help] bring this vision to reality.”

**Fr. Frank A. Pavone,
Priests for Life**

“I am confident that [Our Lord and His Blessed Mother] will use this arch for the Triumph of their Sacred and Immaculate Hearts and for the conversion of our culture.”

**Peter J. Kreeft, Ph.D.,
Boston University**

“I believe it will be a silent but powerful witness to the world that we in America stand up for the lives of our unborn little brothers and sisters.”

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“We certainly wish you well in your endeavor, and will be praying that it comes to fruition.”

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“I certainly encourage and support your efforts in such an important and noble undertaking. You have been in my prayers and Masses and will continue to be there.”

Fr. John Corapi, S.O.L.T.

“I have no doubt that the arch would be a powerful witness, and surely this could, with the aid of Our Lady, be an instrument in turning many away from the culture of death. Please know that your hopes toward that end are backed by my heartfelt prayer and support.”

**Fr. Richard John Neuhaus,
The Institute On Religion
And Public Life
(First Things Journal).**

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